

National Inquiry into  
Missing and Murdered  
Indigenous Women and Girls



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

**May 30, 2017**

**Part 1 Hearings: Families and Survivors  
Whitehorse, Yukon  
Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre  
1171-1st Avenue, Whitehorse**

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**National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered  
Indigenous Women and Girls**

**Whitehorse Community Hearings - Day 1**

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**COPY**

**Chief Commissioner Marion Buller  
Commissioner Qajaq Robinson  
Commissioner Marilyn Poitras  
Commissioner Michèle Audette  
Commissioner Brian Eyolfson**

**PUBLIC HEARINGS  
Volume I**

**VERBATIM WORDS WEST LTD.**

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Whitehorse, Yukon  
May 30, 2017

1  
2  
3  
4 AGNES: It is the blessing for our people and all  
5 things that are alive. Creator, for all the  
6 people that are here, Creator, I pray that they  
7 will join hands and that they will give the  
8 energy that they, the people, need to continue on  
9 and to -- to do the very best that they can for  
10 the future generation. This is why we are here.

11 I thank you, Creator for this beautiful day.  
12 I thank you, grandfather sun, for what you have  
13 given us today. I thank you to the galaxies. I  
14 thank you, grandfather Moon, grandmother Moon,  
15 for what you have given to us. I thank you for  
16 our mother earth, for what she has provided to  
17 us. And I pray, Creator, that we will follow in  
18 the footsteps of our ancestors to look after our  
19 land, as -- as we are meant to be here.

20 Creator, hear our prayers. We pray for the  
21 answers that are needed. We pray for all the  
22 sacred things that is happening here today - the  
23 sacred fire, the workers, the people here in the  
24 Yukon, and the ones that have travelled so far to  
25 be here with us today. I pray for their journeys  
26 to be safe.

27 Great Spirit, for the ones that are going  
28 through a hard time today, the ancestors, we ask  
29 you to come and help them. Our grandmas and  
30 grandpas, we call upon you to come and help us.  
31 We need the help that is needed. I ask -- ask  
32 you to guide us in the right direction so that we  
33 are doing the right thing.

34 Great Spirit, look after all the workers,  
35 look after all the people that are here today. I  
36 pray today will be safe and I pray today that  
37 people will have courage. And I pray today that  
38 people will hold each other up. And I pray today  
39 that we will be grateful for why we are here. I  
40 thank you for everything that has been given to  
41 us. [Aboriginal language spoken], Great Spirit.  
42 [Indigenous language spoken] grandfathers  
43 [Indigenous language spoken] grandmothers  
44 [Indigenous language spoken].

45 CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Thank you. In  
46 honour of our Northern sisters, we'll light the  
47 *ku'lik*, please.

## Opening remarks by Chief Commissioner Marion Buller

1 [Silence as *ku'lik* lit by Barbara Sevigny, Elder  
2 Louise Haulli and Lillian Lundrigan]

3 BARBARA SEVIGNY: I will share a little bit about our  
4 *ku'lik*, the traditional oil lamp  
5 [indiscernible/away from microphone].

6 I will share a little bit about we call it  
7 the *ku'lik*, our traditional oil lamp. Today we  
8 use it as a ceremonial tool, but it was a very  
9 important tool for our people. For us it was a  
10 survival tool. It helped melt the snow so we can  
11 have water to drink, dry the clothes, provide us  
12 light when there's 24 hour darkness, provide some  
13 heat, dry the clothing, and a lot of good stories  
14 around the -- around the *ku'lik* when the hunters  
15 came back from their trip and sharing their  
16 stories from -- with their children and their  
17 wives. And brought a lot of calmness. A lot of  
18 children had shared that, you know, they would  
19 purposely make their eyes water and it's with  
20 their eyes and they'd see rainbows around the  
21 flames. So -- and it brought a lot of -- it  
22 brought everybody together. This is more of a  
23 ceremonial size. They were much bigger and there  
24 was multiple *ku'liks* in -- in the -- in the  
25 igloos back then. There was three of them used  
26 for cooking as well, to cook the food. So, it  
27 was very important for us. It was a survival  
28 tool. So today we light it in the memory of our  
29 ancestors because it was not that long ago where  
30 they had stopped using the *ku'lik* as a survival  
31 tool. So, we light it in the memory of our  
32 ancestors, of what they had to live through in  
33 the harsh conditions in -- in the weather. In  
34 the North were our people. Yeah, so today I'd  
35 like to thank Louise for lighting it on behalf of  
36 our -- our ancestors today for everyone.

37 CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Thank you.

38 [hearing din]

39 CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: Thank you.

40 Before we hear from our first family, the  
41 commissioners and our lead counsel -- pardon me  
42 -- want to give you some opening remarks.

43 First, I want to acknowledge the spirits of  
44 the missing and murdered Indigenous women and  
45 girls. I want to acknowledge the survivors of  
46 violence, including the members of the trans and  
47 two-spirited communities. I want to thank the

## Opening remarks by Chief Commissioner Marion Buller

1 elders, who are here with us today, and the  
2 sacred fire keepers for starting us in ceremony  
3 and taking care of us every day.

4 I acknowledge our grandmothers, who share  
5 their wisdom with us. And I also acknowledge and  
6 thank the members of our National Family Advisory  
7 Circle, who support us and guide us in our work.  
8 I want to also acknowledge and honour the people  
9 all across Canada who have worked so hard and so  
10 long to make this National Inquiry a reality. I  
11 thank you for your work.

12 Today is a turning point in our national  
13 history. Now there is a national stage for the  
14 stories and the voices of the missing and  
15 murdered Indigenous women and girls through their  
16 families, and a national stage for the survivors  
17 of violence to share their experiences. I expect  
18 that in this hearing and in hearings to follow we  
19 will hear about mothers, grandmothers, sisters  
20 and aunties, nieces, cousins, and dear friends.  
21 They are and were real people who loved and were  
22 loved, who dreamed and hoped, who laughed and  
23 cried. We'll also hear about those people who  
24 found courage and strength to carry on. This  
25 National Inquiry is about them, their lives.

26 We want families and survivors to trust us  
27 with their stories. We know that their trust is  
28 sacred, treated with respect and thoughtfulness.

29 All of Canada needs to hear the truth about  
30 the violence that Indigenous women and girls have  
31 endured for generations and continue to endure.  
32 Why? This is a sorrowful but essential part of  
33 our national history. We need to recognize and  
34 understand colonization and racism. We need to  
35 heal and we need to craft solutions. When an  
36 Indigenous woman or girl goes missing, is  
37 murdered or is harmed, we are all weaker As  
38 families, as communities and as a nation. We  
39 have lost a life giver, or a life giver has been  
40 harmed. We must remember our women and girls are  
41 sacred.

42 In the midst of stories of loss there will  
43 be stories of courage and resilience. There will  
44 be also stories of healing, reconciliation,  
45 growth, and innovation. We want to hear those  
46 stories too so that we have a better  
47 understanding of systemic violence.

## Opening remarks by Commissioer Michèle Audette

1           In closing, I expect that the voices heard  
2           and the stories told throughout this National  
3           Inquiry will rewrite the national consciousness  
4           about systemic violence experienced by Indigenous  
5           women and girls, trans, and two-spirited people  
6           from coast to coast to coast.

7           Thank you very much.

8           Commissioner Audette.

9           COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE: [Speaking Innu-aimun]

10          Vraiment fière d'être auprès de vous.

11          Aujourd'hui, je suis honorée de me tenir devant  
12          vous ici à titre de commissaire pour l'Enquête  
13          nationale pour les femmes et les jeunes femmes  
14          autochtones assassinées ou disparues.

15          C'est dans le regard de chaque femme, de  
16          chaque jeune fille ou enfant, que depuis le tout  
17          début je réalise l'importance de ces travaux, de  
18          cette enquête nationale, et aussi, non seulement  
19          aux yeux des ces femmes et jeunes filles mais aux  
20          yeux de leurs proches, des gens qui les  
21          soutiennent et qui les appuient.

22          C'est aussi mes yeux, mon coeur qui  
23          ressentent toute cette vérité, toutes ces  
24          histoires, ces récits. Et il est de notre devoir  
25          de s'assurer de ne pas oublier, pour qu'elles ne  
26          tombent pas dans l'oubli et que ceci reste sans  
27          conséquences, surtout les sévices, les lésions,  
28          les injustices, les inéquités dont elles ont fait  
29          l'objet, pour celles qui sont disparues ou  
30          assassinées, que leur histoire soit vaine,  
31          qu'elles ne tombent pas dans l'oubli ou qu'elles  
32          se répètent.

33          Pour moi et mes collègues, les commissaires  
34          avec lesquels je siège, toutes ces vies pour  
35          toutes ces peines et pour toutes les larmes, le  
36          temps est venu après des mois de préparations,  
37          d'acharnement, de détermination, et de recherche  
38          aussi, de recevoir vos témoignages. Ceci est  
39          très, très, très important.

40          Il ne s'agit pas seulement de poser des  
41          questions. Il s'agit de poser les bonnes  
42          questions aux bonnes personnes. Ainsi, nous  
43          espérons obtenir des réponses. Mais si les  
44          réponses ne viennent pas, la force sera  
45          nécessaire.

46          En ce moment ici à Whitehorse, nous  
47          franchissons une étape importante, un jalon très



## Opening remarks by Commissioer Michèle Audette

1 important au niveau de la démarche de l'enquête.  
2 Chaque victime, chaque famille, chaque  
3 communauté, chaque citoyen et citoyenne du Canada  
4 qui nous écoutent aujourd'hui ont les yeux rivés  
5 sur les travaux de cette enquête, une enquête  
6 historique.

7 Enfin ces travaux mettront la lumière sur la  
8 vérité, votre vérité, puis la reconnaissance sur  
9 la violence faite aux femmes et aux jeunes femmes  
10 autochtones, parce que cette enquête doit mettre  
11 la lumière, oui, sur les faits, et surtout parce  
12 que nous croyons en la justice et l'équité, parce  
13 que la crédibilité exige la qualité, parce que la  
14 qualité exige le temps, parce que le lendemain du  
15 dépôt du rapport final est aussi important que le  
16 processus d'enquête.

17 Alors, je me tiens devant vous aujourd'hui  
18 prête, enfin vraiment prête, à amorcer cette  
19 partie charnière des travaux de cette enquête, et  
20 du même coup je tiens à souligner, et surtout  
21 saluer, la contribution des organisations ici  
22 présentes et ceux et celles qui nous écoutent,  
23 les familles à travers le Canada, les  
24 survivantes, les leaders et les communautés,  
25 d'avoir exigé de nous, les commissaires et les  
26 employés de l'enquête, de la rigueur et surtout  
27 de la qualité envers cette enquête. Et c'est sûr  
28 que je partage ce degré d'exigence élevé.

29 Les yeux de ce pays, je dirai même la  
30 planète, nous regardent. L'histoire se  
31 souviendra de ce moment. L'histoire se  
32 souviendra de ces efforts, de ces pages, dont ces  
33 pages dans lesquelles la vérité aura émergé, la  
34 vérité qui émergera pour toujours.

35 The work of which will shed light of the  
36 truth and the knowledge and I am doing this for  
37 you. And the violence suffered by women  
38 and girls, Indigenous women and girls, has to  
39 stop. This inquiry must shine a bright light of  
40 facts because we believe in justice and fairness,  
41 because credibility requires quality, because  
42 quality requires time, because the day after the  
43 final report is submitted as -- is important as  
44 the investigation process. I stand before you  
45 today ready to begin this crucial part of our  
46 work. The eyes of the country and the world are  
47 watching. History will remember this moment.

Opening remarks by Chief Commissioner Marion Buller  
Opening remarks by Commissioer Brian Eyolfson

1 History will remember these efforts. History  
2 will remember these pages - these pages in which  
3 the truth has emerged, the truth that will emerge  
4 forever, your truth.

5 Thank you.

6 COMMISSIONER BRIAN EYOLFSON: Good morning, everyone.  
7 I'd like to recognize the traditional territory  
8 of the Kwanlin Dün, the Ta'an Kwäch'än.

9 It's a pleasure and an honour to be here  
10 with you all today as the National Inquiry holds  
11 its first community hearings as part of the  
12 truth-gathering process.

13 I'd like to say a few words about our  
14 hearings that we're having this week. As you --  
15 as you no doubt know, our mandate requires that  
16 we inquire into and report on systemic causes of  
17 violence against Indigenous women and girls in  
18 Canada. And also, institutional policies and  
19 practices that have been implemented in response  
20 to that violence, including practices that have  
21 been effective in reducing violence and  
22 increasing safety.

23 We have also been directed to make  
24 recommendations on concrete and effective action  
25 that can be taken to remove systemic violence and  
26 increase safety for Indigenous women and girls,  
27 as well as ways to honour and commemorate lost  
28 loved ones.

29 In planning for the hearings, the  
30 commissioners and our staff have been very aware  
31 that the stories about lost loved ones and  
32 stories from those who have experienced violence  
33 can be very difficult to tell, but those stories  
34 need to be told, they need to be heard. It's  
35 very important that those stories are heard as  
36 part of carrying out the mandate of a National  
37 Inquiry.

38 Our mandate also directs us to take into  
39 account that the inquiry process is intended to  
40 be trauma informed to the extent possible and  
41 this has been a very important consideration for  
42 us all along. And we have received helpful input  
43 from family members and organizations, including  
44 grass roots organizations on our processes.

45 We have clearly heard that the inquiry needs  
46 to be flexible in terms of the options that are  
47 available for people who want to share their

## Opening remarks by Commissioer Brian Eyolfson

1 stories. And we indicated that this can be done  
2 in a number of ways, such as speaking with us in  
3 a public hearing, like we are having here today.  
4 People can also speak to us in private or in  
5 camera, or people can speak to a statement taker,  
6 who will record their stories. Stories can also  
7 be expressed through art.

8 This week here we will be holding public  
9 hearings each day that we have hearings, Tuesday,  
10 Wednesday, Thursday. We will also be holding  
11 some hearings in camera at the -- at the same  
12 time as the public hearings and we will be  
13 starting that this afternoon. So, this means  
14 that two commissioners will be holding hearings  
15 elsewhere after the lunch break today while three  
16 commissioners will remain here for the  
17 continuation of the public hearings.

18 We have also planned to have a family circle  
19 that will be held on Wednesday afternoon in  
20 camera, and we have set aside time for two  
21 sharing circles, one later today that will be  
22 public and one on Thursday that will be in  
23 camera. We may have to make adjustments to the  
24 schedule as the week progresses in order to meet  
25 the needs of everyone here who wants to share  
26 their stories with us this week. We also have  
27 statement takers available this week on site.

28 So as we begin the challenging, important  
29 work of hearing the stories in this community  
30 hearing context, we want to ensure that if you --  
31 if you're here and you want to share your  
32 stories, that you have appropriate options  
33 available to be able to do that and have your  
34 experiences heard.

35 We would also be very grateful for your  
36 feedback or suggestions on how we can improve the  
37 process so that we can make adjustments and  
38 continue to strive to be flexible and meet the  
39 needs of everyone who wants to share their  
40 stories with us as we carry out this very  
41 important work. And I look forward to working  
42 with you all this week. Thank you. *Miigwech.*

43 COMMISSIONER MARION POITRAS: Good morning, everyone.  
44 There's lots of people watching and lots of  
45 people listening and I just want to open my heart  
46 and say good morning to everyone, everyone that's  
47 here, everyone that's watching from somewhere

## Opening remarks by Commissioner Marion Poitras

1 else, the supports that you have at home that are  
2 helping you be here today. I just want to say  
3 good morning to everyone.

4 I want to begin by honouring the fact that  
5 we have been asked to be part of what I think is  
6 a very large national ceremony for our country.  
7 I think that the work of the National Inquiry has  
8 been made a reality by all of you, and all of  
9 you, and all of the women across this country and  
10 their supporters, their husbands, their children,  
11 their partners to say Indigenous voice matters  
12 here. The loved ones who have left us or are  
13 suffering in my heart are guiding everything that  
14 this Commission has the potential to reach. And  
15 I want to honour that first and foremost.

16 I am thankful to the fire keepers outside  
17 that began this ceremony for us in Whitehorse  
18 when we came a few weeks ago and they're back  
19 again. I am grateful to the *ku'lik* that you have  
20 had a story about, for fire is the ultimate  
21 symbol of rebirth and I think that's what we're  
22 in the middle of here. It's a sacred element for  
23 every Indigenous community in our country.

24 I am grateful for the prayers, the prayers  
25 that have guided us, the prayers that we have  
26 received today, and the prayers that were sent on  
27 a daily basis from people saying we support you,  
28 we believe in you. I am so grateful. I want to  
29 honour and acknowledge the prayers that have gone  
30 out to the people who are brave enough to be the  
31 first people to speak to us today. Thank you.

32 I want to -- I want to acknowledge that we  
33 don't exist without the symbolism that's made a  
34 reality here, the fire that rebirths us, the  
35 water that we're all dependent on that is a life  
36 giver for us; the land that we're on, that our  
37 women are ultimately connected to forever and it  
38 symbolizes our relationship in the word. The  
39 blankets that you see around the room today,  
40 cotton blankets, again a symbol of the land, the  
41 cotton, and those are created by women for this  
42 purpose - a group of women who came together and  
43 offered the blanket so that we would feel  
44 comfort. Blankets were used for hauling.  
45 Blankets are used to hold babies. Blankets are  
46 used to keep us warm. I'd like you to take your  
47 time to read the messages that are on these

## Opening remarks by Commissioner Marion Poitras

1 blankets from some residents from the Elizabeth  
2 Frye, from the Enaahtig (phoentic) Healing Lodge  
3 in Southern Saskatchewan, from family members in  
4 Saskatchewan, from ex-police officers that came  
5 to hold some space with family members, from  
6 MLAs, from the LGBTQ2S community in Saskatoon.  
7 And they're throughout. They're throughout the  
8 process. They're in all of the spaces that we'll  
9 be using. Please take some time to have a look  
10 at that.

11 I want you to see that there is a basket in  
12 front of us, another symbol of our connection to  
13 the land. This basket is red willow. There is a  
14 Cree tradition of red willow being the first --  
15 the first plant, the first plan to talk to us  
16 for -- for a healing. That red willow and the  
17 red basket, the red cloth offers protection and  
18 healing and the symbolism is it was gifted to the  
19 inquiry as a way for us to collect and gather  
20 your stories, and we offer it in that honourable  
21 tradition of saying we respect what you're  
22 offering us.

23 I want to acknowledge that the earth we call  
24 our mother for a reason. We depend on her for  
25 life. And this is an inquiry from missing and  
26 murdered Indigenous women and girls. And when  
27 our women and girls are honoured and looked after  
28 and supported by our men and we support our men  
29 and we have our boys close to our hearts,  
30 everybody wins.

31 Our women are creators and caregivers. How  
32 we treat our women in this country tells us how  
33 we treat everyone in this country. How our  
34 Indigenous women and girls are treated tells the  
35 world how we'll treat each other. And I want us  
36 to hold that sacred as we move from this. That  
37 as people tell our stories, as these women come  
38 forward and talk to us, as the men come forward  
39 and talk to us, that's what we're honouring, who  
40 we are as a nation.

41 I want to acknowledge that we are next to a  
42 river. And there is going to be a lot of tears  
43 that are going to flow over the course of this  
44 and have flowed already and that they're  
45 necessary, and that we want to gather those too.

46 I want to -- I want to tell you how grateful  
47 I am to be welcomed onto this territory and to

Opening remarks by Commissioner Marion Poitras  
Opening remarks by Commissioner Qajaq Robinson

1 start here and to be starting in a good way, and  
2 to be sent on across this beautiful landscape  
3 that we call our home and to do it in a good way  
4 everywhere we go. But my greatest gratitude goes  
5 to the women who have been telling their stories  
6 forever on this land and nobody has been  
7 listening and nobody wants to hear. And we're  
8 finding each other and we're telling our stories  
9 and they matter. And we have a process now for  
10 you to come and share your truth and I am really  
11 grateful to be part of that. Thank you so much.

12 COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON: [Inuktitut spoken]

13 Good morning. Thank you for welcoming us to  
14 your home, to your land. Thank you and for  
15 teaching me, like you did just now.

16 I am very honoured to stand beside you in  
17 front you have today as the commissioner on the  
18 National Inquiry.

19 A woman shared with me recently how she  
20 learned about violence at a very young age. She  
21 told me about how even as a little girl she knew  
22 she had to protect herself. She knew what houses  
23 she had to avoid, what people she should not be  
24 alone with. She grew up in survival mode. I  
25 refuse to believe that we live in a society where  
26 we are leaving our women, girls, trans and  
27 two-spirited this way. The National Inquiry is  
28 dedicated to finding the truth through in-depth  
29 examination. A part of this inquiry is about  
30 what makes sense. It's about what really  
31 happened, what's really happening everyday. It's  
32 about receiving this information from you, from  
33 families, families of the heart and survivors.  
34 It's not about extracting it. It's about  
35 receiving it as a gift from you and we are so  
36 grateful for that.

37 We will listen to people that for years have  
38 not been seen, have not been heard, have not been  
39 understood, and haven't even been acknowledged.  
40 We want to hear and understand you and  
41 acknowledge you in your words, in your language  
42 on your land.

43 We're travelling across this country to  
44 gather evidence - evidence that will lead us to  
45 the truth, evidence that will lead us to  
46 knowledge, knowledge that will lead us to  
47 solutions - because to move forward it requires

Opening remarks by Commissioner Qajaq Robinson  
Opening remarks by Commissioner Susan Vella

1           this understanding of the past and the present;  
2           because we can't improve a situation if we don't  
3           acknowledge it; because that woman is you, that  
4           woman is me, that woman is all Indigenous women,  
5           that woman is all Canadians.

6           I believe one day women, girls, trans and  
7           two-spirited will live in a safe environment,  
8           they will be able to grow in a healthy and safe  
9           environment. I believe in justice and equity. I  
10          believe that every little change can lead to  
11          great change.

12          After these hearings I hope you will go  
13          home, back to your communities, back to your  
14          nations knowing that this reality can and will be  
15          changed, and that you will have a part in that.  
16          I believe very strongly in this work. Canada  
17          needs this work to be done. Canada needs this  
18          work to be done to be the nation it aspires and  
19          purports to be - a nation we want and can believe  
20          in. I ask to hold -- I ask that you hold onto  
21          this glimmer of hope, hold onto this belief in  
22          humanity. This is not about one commission.  
23          This is not about one moment in time. This is  
24          about who we are, fundamentally who we are as a  
25          society, who we shall be, and what change we  
26          shall make.

27          I am Qajaq Robinson. [Inuktitut spoken] I  
28          am ready to find the truth, honour the truth, and  
29          give life to the truth. [Inuktitut spoken]  
30          Thank you.

31          SUSAN VELLA: Good morning, everyone. Before we call  
32          upon our first family members, we welcome the  
33          opportunity to make some brief opening remarks.

34          The key purpose of public inquiries in  
35          Canada is to restore public confidence in  
36          institutions which have been seriously damaged by  
37          reason of revelation or an incident or a series  
38          of incidents. The public inquiries aim to do  
39          this by shedding light on the circumstances which  
40          gave rise to the tragedy and then to propose  
41          recommendations to ensure such a tragedy can  
42          never happen again.

43          The public inquiry also has an important  
44          objective in promoting - no, demanding social  
45          accountability from institutions that serve  
46          society. I want to acknowledge the pain of the  
47          families of lost loved ones and their -- and the

## Opening remarks by Commissioner Susan Vella

1 survivors of violence who are with us today  
2 wherever you are. But I want to honour the  
3 strength, the determination, and the resilience  
4 of families and of survivors to be with us to  
5 share your stories.

6 Today we begin the truth-finding journey  
7 with hearing from families who have lost loved  
8 ones to violent, wrongful or suspicious death,  
9 and from survivors who have and in some cases  
10 still continue to experience life-destroying  
11 violence. As you will hear over the next three  
12 days, Indigenous women and girls are vulnerable  
13 to violence, which occurs in many forms and in  
14 many environments. Survivors and families will  
15 share with you stories of sexual violence,  
16 domestic violence, and emotional violence. They  
17 will share with you experiences with the law  
18 enforcement system, the coroner's inquest system,  
19 the child welfare system, the health system, and  
20 other institutional systems which they believe  
21 contributed to the high level of vulnerability of  
22 the violence and violent outcomes faced by  
23 Indigenous women and girls. They will share with  
24 you about how poverty, domestic violence, sexual  
25 violence, and the lack of available resources to  
26 help has led many into high-risk lifestyles  
27 leading to violence in one form or another.

28 You will also hear about the affects of  
29 colonization, which has disrupted and in some  
30 cases nearly destroyed Indigenous family, social,  
31 cultural, spiritual, economic, and legal  
32 traditions. You will hear from families and  
33 survivors of diverse Indigenous realities and  
34 backgrounds. You will hear from elders, youth,  
35 mothers, fathers, grandparents, sisters,  
36 brothers, cousins, and members from the LGBTQ  
37 two-spirited communities. But you will hear not  
38 only of the personal challenges which survivors  
39 and lost loved ones have faced but also of their  
40 strength, their gifts, and their resiliencies.  
41 You will hear not only of the problems they faced  
42 but also of the solutions they have to offer.

43 You will hear from families and survivors in  
44 different ways which respect both Indigenous and  
45 Canadian legal traditions. You will be part of  
46 sharing in family circles, observing and listen  
47 to stories told through artistic expression. You



## Opening remarks by Commissioner Susan Vella

1 will listen to individuals who will share with  
2 you their experiences, knowledge, and advice.

3 While the -- we are listening to families  
4 and survivors, there will also be opportunities  
5 for those who wish to provide their statements to  
6 statement gatherers as well.

7 This is the beginning of the family and  
8 survivor truth-gathering process, a process which  
9 will take the Commission to many communities  
10 across Canada over the coming months. As  
11 Commission counsel we are honoured and privileged  
12 to play a role in facilitating that conversation  
13 which is about to begin.

14 With that I call on my fellow commission  
15 counsel, Karen Snowshoe to call upon the first  
16 family members. *Miigwech*.

17  
18 **First Hearing**

19 **Frances Neumann, Tracy Camilleri and Darla-Jean**  
20 **Lindstrom (Family of Mary Johns) with Karen Snowshoe**  
21 **(Commission Counsel)**

22  
23 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you, Susan.

24 Frances, could you please start with a  
25 prayer?

26 FRANCES NEUMANN: Oh, God, guide me, protect me, and  
27 make me a shining lamp and a bright star. Thou  
28 art mighty and powerful. [Aboriginal language  
29 spoken]

30 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you.

31 Chief Commissioner, commissioners, it is my  
32 honour to be of service to you today as  
33 commission counsel. It is more so my honour to  
34 present to you Frances Neumann and her daughter,  
35 Tracy Camilleri -- Camilleri.

36 I'd also like to present to you the supports  
37 who are currently in this tent in support of  
38 Frances and Tracy. Behind me is Tracy's spouse,  
39 Jordan Camilleri. Seated next to Jordan is  
40 Marilyn Jensen, who is the niece of Frances  
41 Neumann. Seated next to Marilyn is Megan Jensen,  
42 who is another niece of Frances Neumann. I would  
43 also like to acknowledge Shirley McLean, who I  
44 believe is also in the tent, who is in the back -  
45 thank you - who is another support and family  
46 member for this family.

47 Bryan, if you would please administer the

Frances Neumann, Tracy Camilleri, Darla-Jean Lindstrom

1 affirmations.

2 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Yes. Good morning. I suppose we'll  
3 start with Frances this morning. Good morning,  
4 Frances. Do you solemnly affirm that the  
5 evidence you will give today will be the truth,  
6 the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

7 FRANCES NEUMANN: [indiscernible/away from microphone]

8

9

FRANCES NEUMANN, affirmed.

10

11 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay. Thank you very much.

12

13

And, Tracy, you can remain seated, if you'd  
like, or -- or stand as you wish. Same question  
for you: Do you solemnly affirm that the  
evidence you will give today will be the truth,  
the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

14

15

16

17 TRACY CAMILLERI: I do.

18

18 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay. Thank you.

19

20

TRACY CAMILLERI, affirmed.

21

22 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Commissioners, the family has asked  
23 to introduce the first piece of evidence today,  
24 which is a six minute APTN video clip.

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

Perhaps while we're waiting for the  
technical -- the technical aspect of the video,  
the family -- commissioners, the family would  
also like to introduce into evidence three  
different photos. Frances, can you please  
describe who is in these -- in this particular  
photo?

32

32 FRANCES NEUMANN: This is my sister-in-law, Mary, and  
33 her son, Charlie Peter. This was taken when  
34 Charlie was about six months old. We come from a  
35 close-knit family. My son was one month younger  
36 than Charlie Peter. We were so close that the  
37 two boys, the two babies, shared a hospital room  
38 with just a window between them separating them.  
39 One was in for tonsillitis and the other one was  
40 in for chickenpox, but they spent their time  
41 together and how they communicated was pounding  
42 on the glass window. And this is a picture of  
43 Mary and Charlie.

44

44 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you, Frances. The family --  
45 commissioners, the family also has two other  
46 photos to submit. And the second photo, which is  
47 contained here, is actually provided in a larger

45

46

47

Frances Neumann, Tracy Camilleri, Darla-Jean Lindstrom

1 format here. So Frances, if you don't mind, I'll  
2 just hand this. And this will give a better  
3 visual of the second photo, which is at the top.  
4 Frances, can you please tell us about that photo?  
5 FRANCES NEUMANN: This is one weekend that my sisters,  
6 who, five girls spent the weekend with their  
7 parents and our children, we were all young  
8 mothers at the time. My brother, Peter, was a  
9 very stri-- strictest person and was always  
10 teasing and joking with us girls. All five of us  
11 were dressed in sweatshirts and blue jeans,  
12 spending the weekend with our parents, except my  
13 brother went to pick up our older sister and said  
14 to her, "For God's sakes, get dressed. The  
15 *Whitehorse Star* is going to be over there taking  
16 pictures." So needless to say, she came with her  
17 hair curled and all fixed up and makeup and she  
18 walks in and we say, "What are you doing all  
19 dressed up? We're -- we're just having family  
20 pictures." And she said, "Well, Peter told me  
21 that the *Whitehorse Star* was going to be here."  
22 And everybody had a big laugh about it.  
23 This is my sister-in-law, Mary. This is her  
24 son, Charlie Peter. This is my brother, Peter.  
25 And they were a family.  
26 KAREN SNOWSHOE: And, commissioners, the final photo  
27 that the family would like to submit is this  
28 photo here, which is the same photo as here.  
29 Frances, can you please tell the commissioners a  
30 little bit about that last photo?  
31 FRANCES NEUMANN: This picture was taken at the same  
32 time. And my son ... I -- please excuse me. My  
33 nephew, Charlie Peter, was a special gift for my  
34 brother because he was a father at a later age.  
35 And he was a special gift. Thank you.  
36 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you.  
37 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Ms. ... Ms. Snowshoe,  
38 we'll mark the first photograph of Mary and  
39 Charlie as Exhibit 1; the large family photo will  
40 be Exhibit 2, and the third photograph of Charlie  
41 will be Exhibit 3, please.  
42 KAREN SNOWSHOE: So, registrar, I'll -- I'll now pass  
43 these photos to you.  
44 Okay. Thank you.  
45 Frances, can you please identify again for  
46 the commissioners who this woman is?  
47 FRANCES NEUMANN: That's Mary Johns.

Frances Neumann, Tracy Camilleri, Darla-Jean Lindstrom

1 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Okay. And was that her birth name?

2 FRANCES NEUMANN: Her birth name was Mary Smith.

3 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Okay. And can you please tell us  
4 again who this baby is right here looking up --

5 FRANCES NEUMANN: That --

6 KAREN SNOWSHOE: -- at Mary?

7 FRANCES NEUMANN: So loving looking at his mom was  
8 Charlie Peter Johns.

9 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you.

10 Frances, can you please tell the  
11 commissioners when you first met Mary what were  
12 your impressions? Actually, first of all, can  
13 you please tell the commissioners what your  
14 relationship was to Mary?

15 FRANCES NEUMANN: Mary was my sister-in-law. I first  
16 met Mary in 1970. We both found out at the -- at  
17 a visit that we were both expecting our first  
18 child. My brother and I shared that bonding that  
19 we were going to have our children one month  
20 apart. My son was one -- one month younger than  
21 Charlie Peter. As they grew older, Charlie would  
22 always tell my son, Dale, "Remember, respect your  
23 elders," And I guess 30 days makes a big  
24 difference in age.

25 I was his aunt, but he was more like a son  
26 to me. I watched Charlie grow to a young man and  
27 he was in and out of our home many times.

28 Mary was a young mother full of life and  
29 full of promise. She loved to laugh. And when  
30 she'd laugh, her whole body would jiggle and  
31 everybody would laugh. She was so full of life  
32 and we were always teasing because she was  
33 younger than me. And we would spend time at the  
34 bingo halls and we had a rule that the youngest  
35 one would always go get the refreshments. So  
36 once in a while we would give her a break and  
37 we'd flip the coin to see who would get the  
38 refreshments, but somehow it always ended up Mary  
39 getting -- serving us. And she says, "I never  
40 get any breaks." But, you know, they had so many  
41 promises. Through [indiscernible] seeing that  
42 Mary and Peter had a -- lost a child to crib  
43 death in 1973 and that was the start of the  
44 downfall of their marriage. They never blamed  
45 each other but it was the unspoken words that  
46 hurt the most.

47 In 1975 Mary decided she was going to go to

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1 Vancouver to look for a better life. And we can  
2 watch the video and it'll explain everything.  
3 Thank you.

4 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Yes. So now in order to -- the  
5 family would like to offer a --  
6

7 [Video commences]  
8 >>Hey, mom, check this out.  
9 [Video stopped]

10  
11 KAREN SNOWSHOE: -- a six minute video clip, APTN  
12 video clip which will set up context for which  
13 they are speaking about.  
14 [December 18, 2015 APTN National News Video  
15 titled "Preparing for a MMIW inquiry opening  
16 old wounds for one family" commences]  
17 >>Frances Neumann: ... I believe.  
18 >> Narrator Shirley McLean: *The signs of*  
19 *time have taken over this old family*  
20 *portrait. It shows a very young Frances*  
21 *Neumann.*  
22 >> Frances Neumann: We all came out to  
23 spend the weekend with your grandparents.  
24 >> Shirley McLean: *It's also one of the*  
25 *last photographs that show Frances'*  
26 *sister-in-law, Mary Johns.*  
27 >> Frances Neumann: She was young there.  
28 And Charlie Peter looking up at his mom so  
29 loving. Mary was always so full of life and  
30 always laughing and joking around.  
31 >>> I have carried this hurt for many years.  
32 I have never talked about it.  
33 >> Shirley McLean: *Mary Johns was a young*  
34 *mother in 1975 when she ran away from the*  
35 *Yukon to seek better luck in Vancouver.*  
36 *Like so many others, Johns ended up on the*  
37 *Downtown Eastside, Canada's most notorious*  
38 *neighbourhood, looking for a new life,*  
39 *drowning out the old, her story similar to*  
40 *that of other Indigenous women who ran from*  
41 *their families and homes.*  
42 >> Frances Neumann: For many years we had  
43 no idea what happened to Mary.  
44 >> Shirley McLean: *In July of 1982 Mary's*  
45 *body was found lying face down on a foam*  
46 *mattress at this location on Kingsway*  
47 *Avenue, her blood alcohol level 0.71.*

1           *Before it was a place of grace, it was the*  
2           *Slocan Barber Shop, owned by Gilbert Paul*  
3           *Jordan, an alcoholic known as "The Boozing*  
4           *Barber". Not only did he have a thirst for*  
5           *booze but a deadly lust for women he would*  
6           *lure with alcohol from the Downtown*  
7           *Eastside.*

8           >> Larry Campbell, Liberal Senator, British  
9           Columbia [on phone]: I would describe him  
10           as a serial killer. We know that a number  
11           of women were found dead in his company,  
12           both at his barber shop on Slocan as well as  
13           hotels. And there is no doubt in my mind  
14           that he killed these -- these women with  
15           alcohol.

16           >> Shirley McLean: *Senator Larry Campbell*  
17           *was the coroner in the 1980s in Vancouver*  
18           *and during that time many women were showing*  
19           *up dead with three times the lethal amount*  
20           *of alcohol in their blood.*

21           >> Larry Campbell [on phone]: Then what he  
22           would do is he would pay them or we would  
23           cajole them into chugalugging alcohol, which  
24           would take their blood alcohol way up  
25           very -- rapidly, which would then cause the  
26           depression of -- of your breathing and  
27           ultimately death.

28           >> Shirley McLean: *Jordan was linked to at*  
29           *least eight deaths of women over the course*  
30           *of 20 years, all of them First Nation except*  
31           *for one, but somehow the barber avoided a*  
32           *criminal investigation - until he was*  
33           *finally convicted for manslaughter in 1988*  
34           *for the death of Vanessa Lee Buckner. It*  
35           *was the first time in Canada that alcohol*  
36           *was used as a method of killing.*

37           >> Larry Campbell [on phone]: I think he  
38           wanted to watch people die. I think that's  
39           what he wanted. He was evil. That's the  
40           only way I can really put it. He was just  
41           evil.

42           >> Shirley McLean: *Mary is buried in an*  
43           *unmarked grave just minutes away from where*  
44           *she died. Her plot lies in a section of the*  
45           *Mountain View Cemetery nicknamed "Potter's*  
46           *Field" by police for the deceased who died*  
47           *alone and were unclaimed. In 1987 Frances*

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1                   *was living in Vancouver and made it her*  
2                   *quest to find Mary to help mend the broken*  
3                   *heart of the child she left behind.*  
4                   >> Frances Neumann: I know that he was very  
5                   troubled not knowing why she left. He  
6                   always felt that his life wasn't complete.  
7                   >> Shirley McLean: *Mary laid here unknown*  
8                   *until Frances read about her death in a*  
9                   *newspaper article six years later.*  
10                  >> Frances Neumann: I was just blown away  
11                  because we looked so hard for Mary. I had  
12                  to go and tell my nephew that the search was  
13                  over and give him more pain.  
14                  >> Shirley McLean: *In a sad twist of fate,*  
15                  *Mary's son, Charlie Peter Johns, would also*  
16                  *end up on the streets of Vancouver.*  
17                  >> Frances Neumann: He was on Skid Row,  
18                  where his mother was taken from. Charlie  
19                  died of an overdose. That was the one time  
20                  that ...  
21                  >> Shirley McLean: *The past week has been*  
22                  *emotional for Frances. She has held onto*  
23                  *the pain of Mary's story for years and now*  
24                  *feels it's time to share.*  
25                  >> Frances Neumann: I don't understand how  
26                  he could go on for so many years and not  
27                  have to answer to anybody. These women were  
28                  not protected because they lived on the  
29                  streets. These women have loved ones that  
30                  care for them and we let them down.  
31                  >> Shirley McLean: Frances says she can be  
32                  at peace now knowing that Mary's story and  
33                  the legacy it left behind will be part of  
34                  the National Inquiry Into Murdered and  
35                  Missing Indigenous Women. She says she can  
36                  also be at peace knowing that Mary is safe  
37                  and nobody can hurt her anymore. As for  
38                  "The Boozing Barber", he died in 2006.  
39                  Shirley McLean, APTN National News,  
40                  Whitehorse.  
41                  [Video concludes]  
42                  KAREN SNOWSHOE: Frances, what are the -- can you tell  
43                  the commissioners what -- what is going through  
44                  your mind right now after seeing that video clip?  
45                  FRANCES NEUMANN: It's brought a lot of very  
46                  unresolved feelings. There can't be any justice  
47                  for Mary. She's -- she's at peace now, but I, a

1 grandmother, a mother, a great-grandmother, Mary  
2 and I should have shared that privilege. That --  
3 we'll never have that because Mary and her whole  
4 family is gone.

5 My brother left this world without making  
6 amends with Mary. He passed on in 1988 and he  
7 asked me to find out what happened to Mary. I  
8 had to contact my brother to let him know that  
9 Mary was finally found. We spent many hours  
10 looking on Vancouver Island, the Eastside. My  
11 brother come in from Carcross, Yukon, the  
12 population of maybe 250 if you counted the  
13 animals. He came to Vancouver looking for Mary  
14 also and spent many hours looking on the  
15 Eastside. He wasn't city knowledgeable for that.  
16 He parked his truck in one parking lot and  
17 because the time expired he had to move it, so  
18 needless to say he spent the whole day looking  
19 for his lost truck. He couldn't remember where  
20 he parked it. That night he came home and he  
21 could barely walk because he was looking on the  
22 streets for Mary. And it's pretty hard walking  
23 with Dayton cowboy boots on the pavement. We all  
24 had a good laugh about that and then when  
25 continued on the next day with our two aunts.

26 My aunt from my father's side and my aunt on  
27 my mother's side, we took to Vancouver Island  
28 looking different places that we thought maybe  
29 Mary was living on Vancouver Island. We did not  
30 find Mary, but in 1988 I happened to pick up a  
31 newspaper to read and there it was on the second  
32 page, it had "Mary Smith". And I thought to  
33 myself, "Could that be our Mary?" So, I called  
34 Port Moody Police Department and I said, "Maybe  
35 this Mary Smith that's in the paper might be my  
36 sister-in-law, I'm not sure." So they came out  
37 to my home and my husband was with me. And they  
38 asked me if I had any family photos of Mary. I  
39 brought out these pictures that sits before you.  
40 And we identified Mary through our family  
41 pictures with the morgue pictures. At least we  
42 knew where she ended up.

43 The next thing I did was I called my  
44 brother, read him the newspaper, and he asked me  
45 if I would send -- send the clippings to him. At  
46 that time he was very ill.

47 In 1989 my brother passed away. I had to go



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1 and meet my nephew, Charlie Peter Johns, who  
2 ended up in a juvenile detention in Vancouver. I  
3 told Charlie that we found his mom, I knew where  
4 she was, and where she was buried.

5 The sad part of this, in 1980, 1981 Mary had  
6 a son and his name was Billy. She brought Billy  
7 home before she passed on in 1982. So, Billy  
8 lives here in Whitehorse as an adult.

9 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you, Frances.

10 Frances, can you tell me, this photo here  
11 with Mary -- with Mary and her baby, Charlie  
12 Peter, looking up at her, where was this photo  
13 taken?

14 FRANCES NEUMANN: This photo was taken in my parents'  
15 living room in 1976.

16 KAREN SNOWSHOE: And in which town?

17 FRANCES NEUMANN: Or '7-- '72, sorry.

18 KAREN SNOWSHOE: 1972. And which town?

19 FRANCES NEUMANN: In Carcross.

20 KAREN SNOWSHOE: In Carcross, okay. And how old was  
21 Peter Charlie in that photo?

22 FRANCES NEUMANN: I believe Charlie was probably about  
23 five months old.

24 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Okay. And you mentioned in the --  
25 the video that Mary had ended up in the Downtown  
26 Eastside. Can you tell us how did she end up --  
27 she had been living in Carcross. How did she end  
28 up in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver?

29 FRANCES NEUMANN: Well, in 1975 she had a baby boy,  
30 Howard Clifford. 1973, sorry. Howard Clifford  
31 passed away to crib death at six months old.  
32 This was a great blow to the family and it was  
33 that that broke the marriage up. It was the  
34 unspoken blame that Mary couldn't handle, so in  
35 October of 1973 -- 1975, sorry, that Mary left  
36 for the city. She was only on the streets for  
37 seven years before Mary passed.

38 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you. And can you tell me a  
39 little bit -- sorry, can you tell the  
40 commissioners a little bit about Mary's life  
41 before she died? What was her life like on the  
42 streets? Do you have any idea?

43 FRANCES NEUMANN: I have no idea. I can only imagine  
44 what it was like because in my search I went to  
45 the Eastside of Vancouver, Granville. I did not  
46 drink, I did not smoke, and I did not take drugs,  
47 but it was important for me to look for Mary to

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1 try to find and help mend the family. I went to  
2 the Cecil Hotel, the Blackstone, the Balmoral,  
3 California Hotels, where no one should ever go.  
4 But I would meet friends from Carcross, male  
5 friends, that would -- I'd say, "I want to go to  
6 this hotel," and we would walk through and  
7 everybody would watch every move we made, but it  
8 was important for me to try to help get my  
9 brother, my nephew's family back together. It  
10 wasn't easy and I was so scared, but somebody had  
11 to do it. Somebody had to look for Mary. I  
12 always believed that I would run into her in one  
13 of these hotels or maybe on the street.

14 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you. Thank you, Frances. You  
15 mentioned that -- you also mentioned in the video  
16 clip that while you were on the search in the  
17 Downtown Eastside, the downtown of Vancouver, for  
18 Mary Johns, that you came across a news article  
19 about her. Can you tell us what was -- what that  
20 news article was about?

21 FRANCES NEUMANN: There was a fellow from Toronto that  
22 wrote an article about these missing women that  
23 was dying from alcohol. And after they would  
24 pass out from so much alcohol that he would  
25 encourage them to chugalug, "I'll give you \$20,  
26 I'll give you \$50, I'll give you \$75 to drink  
27 more." I believe this -- he found a way to get  
28 rid of these women. In the court case that I  
29 went to, one of the questions they asked him,  
30 "Why did you seek these women out?" And his  
31 answer was, "Because my own people shunned me."

32 These women were vulnerable, they had no  
33 protection, they were lost, but each one of those  
34 women had families that loved them. We let them  
35 down. We did not protect them because they were  
36 weak. And because they were weak, no justice  
37 came to their aid. This is what I am looking  
38 for -- not for my sister-in-law now because nobody  
39 can harm her, but that my daughter, my  
40 granddaughter, my great-granddaughters can walk  
41 the streets in safety, my nieces, that no harm  
42 can come to them. We must stand up for justice  
43 for these women that have walked before us. This  
44 has been coming many years and I thank Canada for  
45 supporting our families, our loved ones, to give  
46 voice that was taken away so unjustly. We need  
47 your help and we ask you for your help. Please

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1 stand with each and every one of women that have  
2 gone on. We are the spokesperson that will see  
3 this through.

4 I am not a brave woman, but I want justice  
5 done. My brother is gone, my nephew is gone, but  
6 I promised I would see it through. And every  
7 fibre in my body is shaken to my boots. Please -  
8 please see this through. We have come up and  
9 waited for many years to see the results. Don't  
10 sweep it under the carpet. There was no justice  
11 for my sister-in-law. He didn't even -- he  
12 wasn't even charged. She was the fourth one to  
13 die in this man's company. And they were all  
14 First Nation women except one, and that's how  
15 come he was charged was the last one wasn't from  
16 the streets, she wasn't a streetwalker. We  
17 prejudge why these women end up where they do.  
18 There is many stories like Mary's. She had a  
19 loving family. But because of her being raised  
20 away from her family in residential schools, she  
21 didn't have the tools of the streets.

22 I ask you to help other women, that they can  
23 walk safely and not have to worry. [Aboriginal  
24 language spoken]

25 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Okay. Now, Tracy, what would you  
26 like the commissioners to know about Mary's case?

27 TRACY CAMILLERI: Because I was only a couple of  
28 months old when my aunt left, my journey through  
29 all of this has been through my Uncle Peter, who  
30 is my favourite uncle - he's always on my  
31 screensaver on my cell phone - and my brother.  
32 Charlie Peter was like a brother to me. I was  
33 witness to his pain and his suffering, not having  
34 a mother, being raised by my grandmother. And  
35 losing her when he was 14, he always felt  
36 displaced and was always in search of that  
37 meaning in his life.

38 Because of the challenges that were  
39 presented to Charlie throughout his young life,  
40 he got into trouble. He put his energy into  
41 unproductive things. He, around -- not long  
42 after my grandma passed, ended up in the Burnaby  
43 Willingdon Detention Centre. And, jeez, I was  
44 10 years old and my mom filled out these  
45 applications for herself, me and my brother,  
46 my -- to visit him. I remember being so scared.  
47 It was a seriously scary place to be, just to

1 visit. And as heartbreaking as it was to go  
2 there for these visits, he needed us, he needed  
3 that connection, that he was always missing in  
4 his mom.

5 Charlie continued on his challenging  
6 journey, at the age of 18 ended up in the Matsqui  
7 Penitentiary, and again my mom filled out these  
8 applications. And I was 14 at that time. Going  
9 into a federal penitentiary and, man, I thought  
10 Willingdon was scary. But my mom ensured that we  
11 knew how important family was and connection was  
12 for Charlie Peter and we drove the hour out to  
13 Matsqui a couple of times a week. They so looked  
14 forward to. We had fun in this cafeteria at the  
15 federal penitentiary visiting with him and  
16 sharing stories and talking about, you know, what  
17 life would be like when he's out, back in  
18 Carcross, doing those things that we did as  
19 children. You know, we all had a lot of plans  
20 for when he got out.

21 And I was graduating in 1993. I was turning  
22 18 that summer and he was going to be out and he  
23 was going to be in the Yukon. And when my  
24 parents took us out of the Yukon in '81 when I  
25 was 6, my brother always said the second we're  
26 done school we're going back. And so when I  
27 graduated, I took a month and packed up my things  
28 and moved from suburbia Vancouver to Carcross,  
29 Yukon. And at that point when I returned,  
30 Charlie had breached one of his conditions and  
31 had gone back to the Whitehorse Correctional  
32 Centre. So again I missed him on the outside.  
33 The fall solstice he invited me up and yet again  
34 I visited him in jail but it was really  
35 comfortable here. We were in our homelands.  
36 They had ceremony. He was stronger of mind. He  
37 knew what alcohol and drugs were doing to his  
38 life and he wanted change, he wanted peace.

39 That Christmas I went home to Port Moody to  
40 visit my parents for Christmas and I was going to  
41 be there, I think I stayed until February. So, I  
42 missed him when he came out. And so we talked  
43 and I said, "Hey, I'm -- I'm coming back, I'm  
44 just a couple weeks." And then I got a phone  
45 call from Charlie Peter from the Whitehorse  
46 airport. He was, like, "Hey, can you pick me up  
47 at the Vancouver airport. I'm getting on a

1 plane." I was like, "What?" We were, like,  
2 after all this years finally going to be on the  
3 outside together and freedom, had mom's car.

4 And I -- I picked him up. He was bummed out  
5 - he was an amazing artist - that his carving  
6 tools got confiscated at the airport on that  
7 trip. I took him to meet our cousin, Nathan, who  
8 was given up for adoption. And after that he  
9 said, "I want to go to the -- the Eastside now."  
10 And I said, "How about tomorrow or in a couple of  
11 days?" Although he knew Aunty Mary was gone, he  
12 was searching for answers that he never got. He  
13 wouldn't come to Port Moody with me. He assured  
14 me, he's like, "Trix," I don't like that  
15 nickname, but, "Trix," he's, like, "look at where  
16 I have spent my time these past years. I'm going  
17 to be okay." And the way he explained it, I'm,  
18 like, "Oh, yeah, you're probably going to be  
19 okay." Really naive to really what the Vancouver  
20 Eastside really was. I knew it was scary, I knew  
21 we locked our doors. I knew she -- my mom always  
22 drove through, not around, just in case.

23 I went to -- you know, I think of my mom  
24 going to these hotels and, man, I was scared.  
25 Pre-social media, pre-cell phone days when you  
26 had to set a time and approximate Moody to  
27 Vancouver, and he said, "You pass the Balmoral in  
28 your left lane, turn left, there is a short  
29 street there." He's just, like, "You find a  
30 parking spot there. You keep the doors locked  
31 and you don't get out until I'm there." And he  
32 was there on the corner when I got there and  
33 honked and I pulled over and he -- he reassured  
34 me he was going to be okay. He gave me some  
35 rules. I was to stick with him. If I had to go  
36 to the bathroom, to let him know; he would find a  
37 girlfriend to take me to the washroom. I very  
38 oddly felt safe with him. He was a protector.  
39 He was a very loving older brother just searching  
40 for answers, and he wasn't going to leave until  
41 he had those answers.

42 I was getting ready to go back, come back  
43 home to the Yukon, so I told him, "I'm --" "I'm  
44 going to come visit you one more time." And a  
45 male friend from Vancouver came with me that time  
46 and the three of us hung out I think in The  
47 Regent. And when we were in the Balmoral, that

1 one was probably the scariest one for me. That  
2 was the one I had escorts if I wanted water, if I  
3 had to go to the bathroom. But I remember when  
4 it was time for me to leave, it was like -- it  
5 kind of -- it dragged on for over an hour. "One  
6 more pop." And I said, "Charlie, there's so much  
7 we have planned. All these years, all these  
8 visits, all these things we were going to do,  
9 please come home. Please finish your business  
10 and follow me home." And he promised he wasn't  
11 far behind. That night was the last time I saw  
12 him.

13 I was home in Whitehorse in March of '94  
14 when we got the news that he had overdosed on the  
15 Eastside in The Regent Hotel. This for me, my  
16 presence here is for him, for his closure. This  
17 day has been a long time coming, 35 years since  
18 my Aunt Mary's death.

19 Although being here is of such tremendous  
20 importance and I feel that my aunt and my uncle  
21 and Charlie Peter can rest with this closure,  
22 unfortunately it doesn't end there for our  
23 family. My grandparents had nine children, many  
24 grandchildren, great-grandchildren,  
25 great-great-grandchildren. There's not one  
26 person in our lineage that doesn't suffer  
27 tremendous trauma. And we have the whole mix in  
28 our family, the range of suffering. Even,  
29 you know, the -- the really successful cousins,  
30 resourceful cousins who got their education, to  
31 some -- some of them who are streetwalkers, and  
32 everything in between. There needs to be  
33 long-term support for this trauma.

34 Just last week when we were meeting with  
35 Karen, we met on a Monday and, you know, I think  
36 we caught her off-guard. She said we're very --  
37 we present well. Well, when we got home we were  
38 a mess. Neither one of us were able to work that  
39 week. The very next day I had a meltdown. We  
40 don't talk about this every day. This isn't a  
41 topic of conversation.

42 Thankfully I was able to connect with a  
43 support line, got connected with the residential  
44 schools survivor, IRS, I managed to push because  
45 my counselling maxes out at a thousand dollars  
46 a -- a year and I knew I was getting close. And  
47 I was realizing in that moment this is intense,

1           how huge all of this is and the responsibility in  
2           it and the importance of telling my family's  
3           story. My energy practitioner did a session over  
4           the phone, got me out of story, got me grounded,  
5           did a four-hour session with me. Two days later  
6           the supports here in Whitehorse got approval for  
7           15 sessions for my counselling. So, that just  
8           wasn't a worry. You know, I -- I'm a pretty  
9           resourceful woman. I loaded that smudge bowl for  
10          four hours. I cried for four hours straight. My  
11          poor husband wasn't quite sure what to do with me  
12          other than come in and drop tea, drop a smoothie,  
13          drop some vitamins, but ... I get addictions on  
14          a whole different level. I thought I got it. I  
15          thought I had it. It was in that moment that I  
16          have amazing supports, I have the resources in me  
17          to find the help. I wasn't going to allow myself  
18          to get to a place where the option was driving  
19          off a cliff, reaching for a bottle, or drugs.  
20          Not everyone has that in them, to reach for those  
21          healthy supports. And for the bottle to be  
22          there, to always be there and it may not be the  
23          healthiest choice, but it's -- it's a momentary  
24          relief from that intense pain. I didn't go to  
25          residential school, but my abuser went to a  
26          residential school. And I don't want that pain,  
27          all that anger, all that shame I hold -- I held  
28          within me to be passed on to my children and  
29          nieces and nephew.

30                 I really feel that a big part of what needs  
31                 to happen is institutionalising education across  
32                 this country. The Indigenous people of Canada  
33                 are emotionally exhausted by being the educators.  
34                 It needs to be at all levels - from early  
35                 childhood, right up through the ages, through the  
36                 school systems, government systems. I have fear  
37                 that our children will face those stereotypes,  
38                 the racism I faced as a child. As a grown woman,  
39                 I'm going to be 42 this summer, and I still deal  
40                 with it within the Yukon government. It's --  
41                 it's everywhere. It's not just the blatantly  
42                 overt racism you can see and touch and pinpoint,  
43                 it's that uneducated, ignorant, low lying,  
44                 cunning, sophisticated racism that is there. And  
45                 there are good people that -- that want to know,  
46                 they just don't and they haven't had the  
47                 opportunity, don't know a First Nation person,

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1 they haven't received the education. It's no  
2 wonder I have heard comments, "Well, I went out  
3 and got my education, paid for that education. I  
4 came back here and applied on a job on my own  
5 merit," insinuating that my education, that I --  
6 I didn't pay for my own education and my job was  
7 handed to me on a silver platter, those types of  
8 things. That needs to stop.

9 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you, Tracy. I just have a  
10 couple more questions for you and I'm wondering  
11 if you could speak to two things. One, can  
12 you -- the first question is can you -- do you  
13 have any comments or anything you can tell the  
14 commissioners about why Mary was vulnerable to  
15 violence? And the second question is do you have  
16 any recommendations to provide to the  
17 commissioners on how to keep our Indigenous women  
18 and girls safe? So the first question is about  
19 any particular vulnerabilities of Mary, any  
20 systemic issues beneath her being vulnerable to  
21 violence?

22 TRACY CAMILLERI: Well, the -- the big one is she  
23 is -- she was a residential school survivor. She  
24 was young when she lost her second son, Howard  
25 Clifford. The lack of tools to cope. The lack  
26 of the non-communication that was happening  
27 between herself and my uncle. My mom describes  
28 them as very happy, very content and whole in  
29 that family. And I know my uncle searched for  
30 her to apologize, to bring closure.

31 I ... I think her lack of street smarts. I  
32 can't imagine growing up in a small community  
33 here in the Yukon and landing on the Eastside of  
34 Vancouver, how overwhelming and scary and fearful  
35 and -- she must have been. My mom describes  
36 Aunt Mary as a non-drinker before Vancouver.  
37 Being down there with no supports, no family,  
38 running from so much pain, she must have found  
39 comfort in those people that were all there  
40 suffering some of the same things and more. She  
41 must have found a family there. I think what has  
42 been really unjust and unfair and, you know,  
43 where a lot of our anger is is we didn't know she  
44 passed. She was being searched for for six years  
45 and she was already dead. Our people have  
46 ceremony when our loved ones pass on. And for  
47 six years she was in an unmarked numbered grave



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1 in Vancouver, where she must have been receiving  
2 support somewhere, social assistance. Where was  
3 the cheque? When the cheque wasn't picked up,  
4 was someone called? Do -- like, where was the  
5 process to find out why it wasn't picked up?

6 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Tracy or Frances, do either of you or  
7 both of have you recommendations for the  
8 commissioners on how -- how we can keep our  
9 Indigenous women and girls safe, safe from  
10 violence?

11 TRACY CAMILLERI: Well, like I said, education is  
12 huge. I've had some very open, willing  
13 conversations with people who I have provided  
14 enough comfort for them to ask their dumb  
15 questions, and sometimes I think, wow, some of  
16 this should be so basic. The non-Indigenous  
17 people of Canada live in a country where they  
18 don't understand the true history of the First  
19 Peoples of the country they live in. They are  
20 taught from their parents, who were taught by  
21 their parents, who you have to recall what things  
22 were like a few decades ago, when we couldn't  
23 vote, when we, you know, had to go through a  
24 separate entrance or just seen as less than.

25 In Grade 7 Social Studies I was so excited,  
26 we were finally going to talk about, you know,  
27 Indigenous people of Canada. And there are the  
28 Tlingit, I was going to point out on the map.  
29 And we started the class and, oh, open the books  
30 and the boy said, "Well, all Indians are dumb and  
31 drunk," and it just deflated me and I didn't know  
32 what the statement meant, and the teacher never  
33 corrected him. Things like that. That  
34 7-year-old boy had -- that did not come from him.  
35 There is generations of non-Indigenous people  
36 that I don't know what it'll take. I think the  
37 answers are going to come from many different  
38 areas, Truth and Reconciliation, justice, all  
39 these things all coming together to make this  
40 change, but I believe that telling our stories,  
41 telling our true history, being open to sharing  
42 who we really are and sharing our culture is a  
43 part of, you know, we are humans, we're not less  
44 than, we're not heathens. We have a lot to  
45 offer. We have a rich history and culture to  
46 share and we want to share that with Canada.

47 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you. Final question. What can

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1           this inquiry do to honour the lives of Mary Johns  
2           and her son, Charlie Peter?  
3           Sorry, what is your name, please?  
4   DARLA-JEAN LINDSTROM: My First Nation name is Adax  
5           Ayamdagoot. And my English name is Darla-Jean  
6           Lindstrom. This is my aunt, Frances Neumann, and  
7           my cousins.  
8   KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you.  
9   DARLA-JEAN LINDSTROM: So --  
10   KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you and welcome.  
11   DARLA-JEAN LINDSTROM: Thank you.  
12   KAREN SNOWSHOE: Before you speak, if it's okay,  
13           we'll -- we'll just need to give you an  
14           affirmation or oath, if that's okay.  
15   DARLA-JEAN LINDSTROM: [indiscernible] white man.  
16   KAREN SNOWSHOE: Bryan.  
17   BRYAN ZANDBERG: There's actually a few options. I  
18           mean, we -- we have an eagle feather you could  
19           use for an affirmation. We've got a Bible.  
20   DARLA-JEAN LINDSTROM: I'll use the feather.  
21   BRYAN ZANDBERG: Great. What's -- what's your --  
22   DARLA-JEAN LINDSTROM: So --  
23   BRYAN ZANDBERG: -- first name? Could you tell me  
24           what your name is?  
25   DARLA-JEAN LINDSTROM: My name?  
26   BRYAN ZANDBERG: Yes.  
27   DARLA-JEAN LINDSTROM: My Indigenous name is Adax  
28           Ayamdagoot, and my First -- my non-Native name is  
29           Darla-Jean Lindstrom.  
30   BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay. Adax Ayamdagoot, do you  
31           solemnly affirm that the evidence you will give  
32           today will be the --  
33   DARLA-JEAN LINDSTROM: I do.  
34   BRYAN ZANDBERG: -- truth, the whole truth and nothing  
35           but the truth?  
36   DARLA-JEAN LINDSTROM: Nothing but.  
37   BRYAN ZANDBERG. Thank you.  
38  
39                           DARLA-JEAN LINDSTROM, affirmed.  
40  
41   KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you. And can you please tell  
42           the commissioners how -- how can this inquiry  
43           honour the -- the lives of Mary John and son,  
44           Charlie Peter?  
45   DARLA-JEAN LINDSTROM: I believe what you're doing  
46           right now is accompanying people through their  
47           pain. I believe that's a -- a good first step.

1 I think that we need to honour our people, who  
2 are dealing with trauma issues. We need to help  
3 and support them through our customs, our  
4 ceremonies, birth to death ceremonies that, you  
5 know Tracy alluded to earlier. This murdered and  
6 missing Aboriginal -- Indigenous women and  
7 children is a symptom of, you know, racism  
8 throughout the whole political arena, through the  
9 justice system, through the education system. We  
10 as Aboriginal people have almost become  
11 colonizers of our own people. The federal  
12 government made us wards of the state through the  
13 *Indian Act* and we learnt helplessness. We became  
14 ashamed of ourself. We became -- we believed  
15 what society was telling us.

16 And since the early '70s we have progressed  
17 slowly to, like, self-government here in the  
18 Yukon and we need more of that. We need more of  
19 our language. We need to focus on our -- the  
20 wheel of life, birth to death ceremonies, coming  
21 of age ceremonies, which my family has practiced,  
22 learning our songs and our legends. You know, we  
23 know -- we have all worked on our mental  
24 capacity, our emotional capacity, our physical  
25 capacity, but we need to focus on our spiritual  
26 capacity. And we say that's pending the strength  
27 of our spiritual condition is how we're able to  
28 handle the rest of ourself. And spirituality has  
29 a little or a lot to do with religion, depending  
30 on your point of view and what you practice. And  
31 spirituality could mean being on the land,  
32 learning your language. Anything created --  
33 anything creative comes from the Creator, whether  
34 it's playing guitar, singing or dancing, which  
35 our family tries to hold each other up and  
36 support each other in anything we do. I'm very  
37 lucky and fortunate to have a supportive family.

38 And I hope and pray that whatever this --  
39 the commissioners are doing, that it does not sit  
40 on the shelf getting dusty, like so many other  
41 reports and inquiries. Don't leave us on the  
42 shelf. Help us, accompanying us. I shouldn't  
43 say "help" because it always indicates somebody  
44 is lower than the other, so I change my word to  
45 "accompany us" through our pain and our sorrow.  
46 And help give us the resources to help us help  
47 ourselves because nobody is going to save us but

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1 us.

2 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you. And, Frances, would you  
3 like to close with a prayer?

4 DARLA-JEAN LINDSTROM: Yes, I will.

5 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Okay.

6 My apologies. I understand the  
7 commissioners have some questions.

8 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: First of all, thank you, thank  
9 you, thank you. We'll take a deep breath  
10 together because you have done something really  
11 difficult and I wanted to say thank you.

12 There are some questions that I have just to  
13 really understand the time and the people and  
14 what you went through. And one of my questions  
15 is did you ever call the police about Mary,  
16 either here or in Vancouver or in -- in Victoria?

17 FRANCES NEUMANN: I called maybe 1976. At that time  
18 my mother was very tired, and I would take my  
19 nephew, Charlie Peter, on my days off and  
20 weekends to give rest to my elderly mother. I  
21 called Vancouver detachment and I got nowhere.

22 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Did you speak to someone? Did  
23 you leave a message? Do you remember what you  
24 had to do?

25 FRANCES NEUMANN: I -- I spoke to I believe a  
26 constable that worked the Eastside.

27 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Thank you. Another question I  
28 have is where is Mary's family?

29 FRANCES NEUMANN: Mary has a son that lives here --

30 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Yes.

31 FRANCES NEUMANN: -- with the Yukon government. He's  
32 a ward of the government.

33 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Okay. And her parents?

34 FRANCES NEUMANN: Her parents are deceased.

35 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Okay.

36 I'm trying to imagine the times that you're  
37 looking and knocking on doors and going in the  
38 bars and asking people if they have seen her.  
39 What do you wish existed right then that you  
40 could have had access to?

41 FRANCES NEUMANN: Because I didn't have the  
42 information where she was living - I lived in  
43 Port Moody, I moved there in 1985 - and on my  
44 spare moments or in the evenings I would go do  
45 down to the Eastside and go into these bars. And  
46 if anybody knew me, would never believe the --  
47 the places that I went to. But I was never

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1           scared because I knew the people that lived there  
2           knew I didn't belong there and would watch out  
3           for me.

4           COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Okay. I think -- I think those  
5           are all my questions. Qajaq.

6           COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Thank -- thank you very much.  
7           I just have a bit of a follow-up question. Did  
8           you reach out to anyone at any other  
9           organizations or people to assist you in -- in  
10          locating Mary?

11          FRANCES NEUMANN: For many years we had a -- a group  
12          of First Nations women that would put on a  
13          Christmas dinner for the urban First Nation  
14          people that lived in the outside Vancouver area,  
15          and we did that for 10 years, Yukon First  
16          Nations. So, by that we would meet in different  
17          places on the Eastside. We'd have meetings, and  
18          this is where I would go and look, around  
19          Hastings, for Mary.

20          TRACY CAMILLERI: The group my mom is talking about  
21          is -- a lot of Yukoners end up on the Eastside,  
22          unfortunately, and my mom is very family  
23          oriented, community oriented, so her and some  
24          other Yukon women put together a society where  
25          they would go on the Eastside, they would put out  
26          flyers and at Christmas -- it started with, like,  
27          a Christmas, having a turkey, coming together  
28          with your fellow Yukon First Nations that are in  
29          and around, a mix of people on the Eastside to,  
30          you know, us in Port Moody. And we'd put  
31          together goody bags and -- and it was such a -- a  
32          mix of people, but our commonality was our  
33          homelands. And I'd help her write letters to the  
34          14 Yukon First Nations chiefs to contribute to  
35          their people who are on the Eastside, so they  
36          could have this connection, come together, have  
37          turkey dinner, Christmas dinner. And it was in  
38          that forum that my mom found -- could -- could  
39          talk about, you know, Aunty Mary and put feelers  
40          out through other Yukon First Nations that we're  
41          missing -- we're missing one of our women.

42          CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Thank you. Just so we can  
43          keep our paperwork straight here, the video clip  
44          will be Exhibit 4, please.

45                   Thank you. Thank you. Very moving. Thank  
46                   you very much.

47          FRANCES NEUMANN: I would like to thank -- thank my

Frances Neumann, Tracy Camilleri, Darla-Jean Lindstrom

1 daughter. I could not do this by myself. I'd  
2 like to thank my nieces and most of all my  
3 son-in-law to represent our male families that  
4 could not be here. I thank the Commission for  
5 allowing us to tell our stories.

6 And I would like to say a prayer for all the  
7 women - their families to carry on, to stand tall  
8 and strong. O compassionate God, thanks to be  
9 thee for thou has awakened me and made me  
10 conscious, that has given me a seeing eye and a  
11 favour in me. A hearing ear has led me to thy  
12 kingdom and guided me to thy path. Thou has  
13 shown me the right way and caused me to enter the  
14 ark of deliverance.

15 O God, keep me steadfast. Make me firm and  
16 staunch. Protect me from the violent tests and  
17 preserve thy shelter me in thy strong fortress of  
18 thy covenant and testament. Thou art powerful,  
19 thou art seeing, thou art hearing.

20 O thou passionate God, bestow upon me a  
21 heart which like unto a glass may illumine with  
22 the light of thy love and conquer upon my  
23 thoughts which may change this world into a rose  
24 garden through the outpouring of thy heavenly  
25 grace. Thou art compassionate, the merciful.  
26 Thou art a generous benefit God. [Aboriginal  
27 language spoken] Thank you.

28 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: On behalf of the  
29 Commission, we are going to extend a little  
30 packet of seeds to you from Commissioner Audette.  
31 It is our -- our hopes to follow the laws of  
32 reciprocity so that we're gifting something back  
33 to the families when they gift us their stories  
34 and their tears, so thank you very much.

35 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Just a quick announcement. We're  
36 going to take about a 10 minute break right now  
37 and then reconvene here. Ten minute break.

38  
39 **First Hearing Exhibits**

40 **Frances Neumann, Tracy Camilleri and Darla-Jean**  
41 **Lindstrom (Family of Mary Johns) with Christa Big Canoe**  
42 **(Commission Counsel)**

43  
44 Exhibit P1: 4 x 8" Black-and-white photo of women in  
45 glasses and white shirt holding young child

Frances Neumann, Tracy Camilleri, Darla-Jean Lindstrom

1 ("This is my sister-in-law Mary and her son  
2 Charlie Peter" - Francis Neumann)  
3 Exhibit P2. 4 x 8" Black-and-white photo of family  
4 gathering seated on couch in living room.  
5 Exhibit P3. 4 x 8" Black-and-white photo of baby in  
6 white jumpsuit with cowboy sitting on a man's  
7 knee.

8 Exhibit P4. APTN video :

9 [http://aptnnews.ca/2015/12/18/preparing-for-a-  
11 mmiw-inquiry-opening-old-wounds-for-one-family/](http://aptnnews.ca/2015/12/18/preparing-for-a-<br/>10 mmiw-inquiry-opening-old-wounds-for-one-family/)

12 (HEARING ADJOURNED AT 11:35 A.M.)

13 (HEARING RECONVENED AT 12:11 P.M.)

14  
15 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Well, good afternoon. I  
16 think it's afternoon.

17 Ms. Big Canoe, would you please introduce  
18 our next family.

19 Good afternoon, everyone. We'll reconvene.

20 Ms. Big Canoe, would you please introduce  
21 our next family.

22  
23  
24  
25 **Second Hearing**

26 **May Bolton, Dennis Shorty, Marilyn Shorty (Family of**  
27 **Elsie Shorty) with Christa Big Canoe (Commission**  
28 **Counsel)**

29  
30 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Yes. Thank you, Chief  
31 Commissioner, commissioners. I would like to  
32 introduce you to the family members of Elsie  
33 Shorty. Sitting right beside me is May Bolton  
34 and her husband is beside her, Ivan Bolton. Next  
35 we have Dennis Shorty, and then we have Marilyn  
36 Shorty. And then we have Yvonne Shorty and  
37 Crystal Shorty [sic]. I am going to allow them  
38 to introduce themselves once they have been given  
39 their oath, but prior to the oath Dennis will be  
40 doing a brief Kaska Dene prayer for the family.

41 DENNIS SHORTY: [Dene spoken]

42 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: The -- the family members can now  
43 be -- give their oath, Mr. Zandberg. And May  
44 will be affirming.

45 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay. Good morning, May.

May Bolton, Ivan Bolton, Dennis Shorty  
Marilyn Shorty, Crystal Bolton

1 MAY BOLTON: Good morning.

2 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Do you solemnly affirm that the  
3 evidence you will give today will be the truth,  
4 the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

5 MAY BOLTON: Yes.

6

7

MAY BOLTON, affirmed.

8

9 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay. Thank you.

10 Ivan?

11 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Ivan will be affirming on the  
12 feather.

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: [indiscernible]

14 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay.

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: [indiscernible]

16 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Sure.

17 Good morning, Ivan.

18 IVAN BOLTON: Good morning.

19 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Do you solemnly affirm that the  
20 evidence you will give today will be the truth,  
21 the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

22 IVAN BOLTON: I do.

23

24

IVAN BOLTON, affirmed.

25

26 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Thank you.

27 Good morning, Dennis.

28 DENNIS SHORTY: Good morning.

29 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Do you solemnly affirm that the  
30 evidence you will give today will be the truth,  
31 the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

32 DENNIS SHORTY: Yes.

33

34

DENNIS SHORTY, affirmed.

35

36 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Thank you.

37 Good morning, Marilyn.

38 MARILYN SHORTY: Good morning.

39 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Do you solemnly affirm that the  
40 evidence you will give today will be the truth,  
41 the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

42 MARILYN SHORTY: Yes.

43

44

MARILYN SHORTY, affirmed.

45

46 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay. Thank you.

47 Good morning, Yvonne.



May Bolton, Ivan Bolton, Dennis Shorty  
Marilyn Shorty, Crystal Bolton

1 YVONNE SHORTY: Good morning.

2 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Do you solemnly affirm that the  
3 evidence you will give today will be the truth,  
4 the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

5 YVONNE SHORTY: Yes.

6

7

YVONNE SHORTY, affirmed.

8

9 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Thank you.

10 Hi, Crystal.

11 CRYSTAL BOLTON: Hi.

12 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Good morning. Do you solemnly affirm  
13 that the evidence you will give today will be the  
14 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the  
15 truth?

16 CRYSTAL BOLTON: Yes.

17 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay. Thank you.

18

19

CRYSTAL BOLTON, affirmed.

20

21 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you.

22 May, may I ask who you're here to speak  
23 about today? Can you give us a little  
24 information about your loved one?

25 MAY BOLTON: I am -- I am here because to talk about  
26 the death of my mother, Elsie Shorty.

27 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Now, I understand you have a  
28 couple notes you made. Did you make these notes  
29 yourself?

30 MAY BOLTON: Yes, I did. I -- I wrote things down  
31 because I have a hard time talking in front of an  
32 audience. I have a hard time talking in front of  
33 an audience, that's why I have this, things  
34 written down. It's my own writing and my own  
35 thoughts. It comes from my heart.

36 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Can you please share those with  
37 us? Can you please share some of the strengths  
38 and contributions of Elsie with us?

39 MAY BOLTON: The strength of my mother, Elsie, is in  
40 all of her children, done something with their  
41 lives in spite of the residential school trauma  
42 and in spite of her death. And that paragraph  
43 alone shows a loving mother, a great mother's  
44 guidance.

45 I'm kind of nervous, hurt, and sad.

46 My mother ... The greatest thing my mother  
47 instilled -- instilled in me, in us as a family

May Bolton, Ivan Bolton, Dennis Shorty  
Marilyn Shorty, Crystal Bolton

1 is to forgive those who done us wrong or to harm  
2 us. And she always tell us never go to bed  
3 angry. And my grandparents and my parents always  
4 tell us [Dene spoken]. In our language it means  
5 people that are mean are not good or well. That  
6 is what she taught me. In spite of everything  
7 that happened, I'm here for myself and for my  
8 family. The things that she taught us, she  
9 taught me how to raise my -- my children. As a  
10 First Nation woman, she helped me raise my two  
11 oldest daughters and they're close with their  
12 grandpar-- grandmother. She taught us to respect  
13 everybody. It doesn't matter who -- who you see,  
14 to try to respect them. That's a legacy I have  
15 from my mom. She was never an angry person. She  
16 was a kind, gentle person, talked to all -- to  
17 all that she meets. And the greatest thing that  
18 she taught me today, that I'm going to carry  
19 through in her legacy is she taught me how to --  
20 she taught me how to do a traditional -- pick and  
21 prepare traditional medicine and to help people.  
22 And I'm using it today in honour and in memory of  
23 her, my mom.

24 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you for sharing those  
25 strengths. What I would like to do is I'm going  
26 to pass the microphone but I'm going to ask each  
27 family member just other than May, who is Elsie's  
28 daughter, to introduce themselves briefly to the  
29 commissioners. So, please tell the commissioners  
30 who you are and how you're related to Elsie.

31 IVAN BOLTON: My name is Ivan Bolton. Elsie was my  
32 mother-in-law. I call her "mother", so I'll use  
33 that term from hereon.

34 She was a good woman. She was teaching me  
35 their language, which I never learned after she  
36 died. She could never be replaced on this earth.  
37 There has never been another like her. I'm kind  
38 of at a loss for words, which is something new  
39 for me.

40 Now, what should I take from here? Should I  
41 pass the mic on or do you want to hear what  
42 actually happened in this?

43 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: It's okay, Ivan, you can just  
44 maybe let the rest of the family introduce  
45 themselves --

46 IVAN BOLTON: All right. I'll --

47 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: -- and I'll come back to that.

May Bolton, Ivan Bolton, Dennis Shorty  
Marilyn Shorty, Crystal Bolton

1 IVAN BOLTON: I think that's a good plan.

2 DENNIS SHORTY: Hi. My name is Dennis Shorty. I'm  
3 the son of Elsie Shorty and Alec. And we're here  
4 and I'm here to talk about mom, how did she  
5 impact us with skills and tradition and wisdom  
6 and spirituality.

7 MARILYN SHORTY: Good morning. My name is Marilyn  
8 Shorty. Elsie is my grandmother. And when I was  
9 small, she gave me the traditional name  
10 [indiscernible traditional name], which stands  
11 for "Skinny Fox".

12 I have a -- I grew up with my grandparents  
13 in my younger years, so all of my aunts and my  
14 uncles are like my sister and my brothers to me.  
15 So, I was always with them learning the  
16 traditional ways, learning culture, learning how  
17 to respect, how to love the land, the people, our  
18 family. I was also I guess you would call  
19 mischievous, you know, like, being the youngest  
20 and wanting to get involved in everything and  
21 wanting to touch and see. And -- and so,  
22 you know, with my grandmother being gone, it has  
23 a lot of impact on all of us. And like my dad  
24 said, there will never be another Elsie Shorty.  
25 She will always be the one and only. Thank you.

26 YVONNE SHORTY: Good morning. Elsie was my  
27 grandmother and my mother. I also was raised  
28 with my grandmother. One of the things that she  
29 taught me is love. If it wasn't for my  
30 grandmother, I wouldn't even know what love is  
31 because of the residential school impacts it had  
32 on my family. It's because of her that I can  
33 love everybody and myself. And -- and the  
34 strength of our family, we need to continue to  
35 build that because she taught us that as well.  
36 No matter what, your -- your family is family and  
37 we have to stick together. And respect yourself  
38 and everything around you, the land. She -- I  
39 was also taught the traditional lifestyle and I  
40 live that today. And I'm here in hopes to make a  
41 difference in the justice system that's done our  
42 Aboriginal people wrong for so many years,  
43 including my grandmother. I love her so much.  
44 [Dene spoken]

45 CRYSTAL BOLTON: Hi. I'm Crystal Bolton. Elsie was  
46 my grandma. (sobbing)

47 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: That's okay. Actually, Marilyn,

May Bolton, Ivan Bolton, Dennis Shorty  
Marilyn Shorty, Crystal Bolton

1 can you grab the microphone.  
2 Commissioners, if I could draw your  
3 attention to the screens. There happens to be  
4 three pictures that were sort of rotating  
5 through. I would like to ask Marilyn to identify  
6 the pictures for you because she provided them.  
7 So the one that's currently on the screen  
8 now -- oh, [indiscernible]. Can we pause one?  
9 The picture that's currently on the screen now,  
10 can you please identify the people in those  
11 pictures?  
12 MARILYN SHORTY: That is a picture of my grandmother,  
13 Elsie Shorty, and standing right behind her is my  
14 mother, May Bolton.  
15 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Okay. Can we see another picture,  
16 please? Can you please tell us who is in this  
17 picture?  
18 MARILYN SHORTY: This is another picture of our  
19 grandmother/mother, Elsie Shorty.  
20 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Do you -- do you know her  
21 approximate age in this picture or around when  
22 the picture was taken?  
23 MARILYN SHORTY: Um ...  
24 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And if you don't know, that's  
25 fine. Okay.  
26 MARILYN SHORTY: No, I -- I don't.  
27 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Sorry about that. And the next  
28 picture, please. Who is in this picture?  
29 MARILYN SHORTY: This is a picture of our  
30 grandfather/dad, Alec Shorty, and his wife, our  
31 grandmother/mother, Elsie Shorty.  
32 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Chief Commissioner and  
33 commissioners, I would like to make these three  
34 photos together be exhibited.  
35 CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER: The photographs  
36 collectively will be Exhibit 5, please.  
37 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So, the family has indicated that  
38 they would like to show a short clip, a video,  
39 but I'm going to ask if Crystal can just explain  
40 what the video is. Can you do that?  
41 CRYSTAL BOLTON: This video is of my -- my  
42 grandparents and all my aunts and uncles. They  
43 were -- my mom and the older kids had just gotten  
44 back from residential school and they were moving  
45 camp out to Beautiful Lake to do their  
46 traditional hunting and harvesting and stuff  
47 before the kids had to go back to -- before they

May Bolton, Ivan Bolton, Dennis Shorty  
Marilyn Shorty, Crystal Bolton

1           were taken back to residential school.  
2   CHRISTA BIG CANOE:  And if we could just play the  
3           video.  It's a short two minute clip.  
4

5                   [Video commences]

6           >> Male narrator:  ... Ross River where the  
7           road ended and we met this Indian family and  
8           all their pack dogs and all the kids.  
9           Everyone had a pack on.  [Background Western  
10          music (instrumental) commences]  The dogs  
11          were packing about 40 pounds.  Even that  
12          little boy there, about 4, he's got a stove  
13          pipe.  Everybody had a big load.  They were  
14          going to high country to spend their summer,  
15          fishing and hunting and dry the meat, stay  
16          in the fall and trap, come out before  
17          winter.  Everybody had a load.  Ma, she's  
18          packing the three-month-old baby.  The  
19          oldest girl had the little ole  
20          year-and-a-half old baby on her back.  Pa,  
21          he had quite a load.  He had about 12 pounds  
22          of tobacco in his pack and that was it.  
23          They all look happy.  Yeah, they don't have  
24          a care in the world.  They don't have any  
25          payments.  They don't have any mortgage.  
26          The 12-year-old boy, he had a .22 rifle and  
27          dad and looked at it and said, "What?  
28          That's an old, beat up gun."  I tried to get  
29          a little close-up of the little  
30          18-months-old baby on her back and her  
31          little sister, she started crying.  She knew  
32          that me and that camera didn't belong here.  
33          She didn't like us, I'm afraid.  Did you  
34          ever see a happier crew?  They don't have a  
35          worry in the world.  They don't have the  
36          pressures that we have today and the fast  
37          living.  And even the dogs, they're happy.  
38          The same thing, they're going to high  
39          country, spend their summer, live off the  
40          land.  Ah, what a way to live.  [Background  
41          music continues]

42  
43   CHRISTA BIG CANOE:  Thank you for showing that.  
44

45                   [Video concludes]

46  
47   CHRISTA BIG CANOE:  Dennis, can I ask you a couple of

May Bolton, Ivan Bolton, Dennis Shorty  
Marilyn Shorty, Crystal Bolton

1 questions about the video. Can you please tell  
2 the commissioners just a little bit about who was  
3 captured in that video?

4 DENNIS SHORTY: That was all our families. Like  
5 Crystal said, we just came back from mission  
6 school, I was taken away to at 5, and we were  
7 just -- we just came back. And we were going up  
8 to the high countries so they could teach us the  
9 traditional, spiritual values of the Dena people.  
10 And it was dad, mom. Mom was packing baby sister  
11 Brenda. And Theresa, she was packing our sister  
12 Linda. And when they said it was a little boy,  
13 it wasn't a boy, it was our sister Emily. She  
14 was packing a stove pipe. And Ian was using that  
15 tuque, our little brother. And I was packing  
16 that packsack with a cap. And my brother, Frank,  
17 was -- had a .22. And May, my sister May, was  
18 there too. And, you know, as a family we always  
19 travelled together like that. And whenever we  
20 see mom, she always say, "Mommy love," or, "Baby  
21 love." That's what she'd say because she speak  
22 limited English, and my dad didn't spoke any  
23 English at all. So, mom usually translate  
24 whatever she know. So, that's -- that's who we  
25 are as a family together, yeah.

26 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: I'm just going to ask you to pass  
27 the microphone to Marilyn.

28 Marilyn, can you please tell the  
29 commissioner -- commissioners some of the things  
30 that you believed were the strengths and  
31 contributions of living the traditional way or  
32 learning the traditional way from your  
33 grandmother and grandfather?

34 MARILYN SHORTY: Some of the strengths living the  
35 traditional Kaska Dene way with our grandmother  
36 is, like I mentioned earlier, our  
37 grandmother/mother was never one to not teach  
38 anyone about any -- like, the way our -- of  
39 living off the land, beading, teaching us  
40 cultural ways of arts and crafts and language.  
41 She was always with us and teaching us together  
42 as a whole group. Myself and my sister, Yvonne,  
43 being the younger ones with our aunty and uncles,  
44 grandmother and grandmother. They would never  
45 never include us. They were always included and  
46 learning off the land. She was a very great  
47 teacher. I love her about that. And as --

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Marilyn Shorty, Crystal Bolton

1           you know, today I -- I live that way of culture,  
2           I live that way of being respectful to everybody  
3           and teaching my son that way too. So, I think  
4           that's all. There's so many others that she  
5           taught us. And as well, you know, like, her  
6           teaching, we also -- was taught to us by our  
7           mother, May. May taught us a lot of things and  
8           reinstilled all of the values and all of that  
9           traditional into us children and her  
10          grandchildren and great-grandchildren. It goes  
11          right back to the way of our grandmother, Elsie.  
12          Thank you.

13       CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you.

14                 Yvonne, can you tell me a little bit  
15                 about -- Dennis had already said that your --  
16                 your grandmother helped translate, but she mostly  
17                 spoke -- spoke in language. Can you tell us a  
18                 little bit about the language in your family?

19       YVONNE SHORTY: I remember when we were younger, when  
20                 our grandmother would tell us stories, our  
21                 grandfather and grandma would be sitting down and  
22                 we -- grandfather would be speaking Kaska, and  
23                 grandmother would translate to us what -- what  
24                 she's -- he's saying. And it was always that  
25                 way. And that's what I remember is her  
26                 translating all the time and no matter what we  
27                 were doing, out on the land, teaching us. She  
28                 was always translating. And it's just awesome  
29                 the way they work, you know.

30       CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Dennis, can you tell us a little  
31                 bit -- can you tell the commissioners more about  
32                 your parents? Not just language but can you  
33                 share some stories about how they were and -- and  
34                 how they -- how they acted in the community and  
35                 with the family, please?

36       DENNIS SHORTY: You know, our parents, they loved each  
37                 other. They were great people. There is a lot  
38                 of people out there don't know that, you know,  
39                 that this -- there were dads, there were uncles,  
40                 there were mothers, there were aunties.  
41                 You know, when they have -- hold a dance, they're  
42                 always the first one out there, you know, to  
43                 encourage other people to dance, to go out there  
44                 and dance. And when, like, tell the stories,  
45                 they -- they always finished each other's  
46                 stories, you know. It's amazing the way they  
47                 worked.

May Bolton, Ivan Bolton, Dennis Shorty  
Marilyn Shorty, Crystal Bolton

1           And ... And when they first met, mom was  
2 coming down in a moose skin boat from Pelly Lakes  
3 with her adopted parents, McKay (phonetic) and  
4 Kitty (phonetic). And my dad was standing on the  
5 bank, the Pelly Banks. And mom said, "Oh, I  
6 looked up and I see this guy looking at me." And  
7 dad say, "I see a moose skin boat coming down and  
8 I see your mom sitting in there." At that time  
9 she was about 13, going to 14. While they're  
10 going past and mom said she turned around, "I  
11 still -- I still see [Dene spoken], your dad  
12 still standing on the bank watching us, eh."  
13 That's -- that's who they were. They were great  
14 people. And our -- our dad and our mom.

15           And mom was always there for us all the  
16 time. You know, even though go through tough  
17 times, she's always there. And when we tried to  
18 speak bad about other people, [Dene spoken]. Mom  
19 would say, "Don't talk bad about people. Things  
20 are going to be bad if you talk about people like  
21 that." And so that's how we were raised up, we  
22 don't -- we don't talk about bad people or  
23 anything. And she loved everybody. When we were  
24 growing up, she always have kids at our house,  
25 sleepovers, and they call her "grandma" or "mom".  
26 That's how she was. Other kids, kids came to her  
27 and they stayed with us and they call her mom  
28 "mom". And there was mom, "Mommy love," and,  
29 "Baby love," and she always say that.

30 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: I'm going to ask that the -- the  
31 second document be put up, please. And if I  
32 could get the Chief Commissioner and the  
33 commissioners to look at the screen when they do  
34 come up. This is just a visual. I'm not going  
35 to ask this first one to be marked as an exhibit.  
36 I just want to situate.

37           Dennis, is -- what do you see on the -- the  
38 screen? Can you -- can you see the screen?

39 DENNIS SHORTY: I can, yeah.

40 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And can you just tell us what you  
41 see on the screen?

42 DENNIS SHORTY: It's called Ross River.

43 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So -- sorry. What is it a map of?

44 DENNIS SHORTY: It's a map of the Yukon.

45 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Yes. Thank you.

46 DENNIS SHORTY: Yeah.

47 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And I just want to -- wanted to



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1           situate that for the next map. Can we put the  
2           next map up, please? And can you zoom in just  
3           once, please? Oh. There we go.  
4           And can you see that?  
5       DENNIS SHORTY: Yes, I can.  
6       CHRISTA BIG CANOE: I can hand you a paper copy. I --  
7           I am going to give you a paper copy just so you  
8           can see. And I may also give you a pen, please,  
9           so that you can mark. Maybe ... Here. I can  
10          take [indiscernible].  
11          Okay. And looking up at the screen -- or --  
12          or identifying, can you please identify Ross  
13          River on this? First, do you know what this is a  
14          map of?  
15       DENNIS SHORTY: It's a -- it's a map of Kaska  
16          traditional territory.  
17       CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And you have circled the -- Ross  
18          River?  
19       DENNIS SHORTY: Yes.  
20       CHRISTA BIG CANOE: May I have it for one moment?  
21          Thank you. I am just going to show the  
22          commissioners because I am going to have him  
23          identify something else. [indiscernible]  
24          Bryan.  
25          Thank you, Qajaq.  
26       CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: While we're doing that,  
27          just to keep our records straight, the video clip  
28          will be Exhibit 6.  
29       CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Yes.  
30       CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: The map will be Exhibit 7.  
31       CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you, Chief Commissioner.  
32          Dennis, I'm going to give this back to you.  
33          I'm also going to ask you to circle Lower Post.  
34          I'm just going to pass this to the  
35          commissioners again just to see where it's been  
36          circled.  
37          [Speaking to staff away from the microphone]  
38          Just for the purpose of the public record on  
39          this exhibit, Mr. Zandberg, can you please point  
40          to the first circle that Dennis made on Ross  
41          River? Thank you. And then can you just point  
42          to Lower -- Lower Post. Okay. Thank you.  
43          That's good.  
44          And so, Dennis, can you tell me just a  
45          little bit about the Kaska territory?  
46       DENNIS SHORTY: That's Kaska Nation traditional  
47          territory. That's where we travel all over,

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1 so ... Actually, that's our homeland. And  
2 telling stories, my mom, dad, grandparents, they  
3 travel all over that area and they lived that --  
4 that lifestyle way back when, even before rifles.  
5 They were harvesting with bows and arrows back  
6 then. That's the stories my grandfather and  
7 grandparents told me, dad and mom, yeah.

8 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you. Now, what would be the  
9 significance of Lower Post? So if you take it  
10 out of the context of Kaska territory, why would  
11 you probably be circling -- what -- what would be  
12 the reason most of your relations would know  
13 Lower Post?

14 DENNIS SHORTY: That's where the missionaries,  
15 Catholic missionaries, set up boarding schools.  
16 And they took me away when I was 5 years old.  
17 And I was there over seven -- seven years, and we  
18 don't get to go home until midsummer. And, well,  
19 I learned really quick how to -- how to survive  
20 in there and to speak English quickly. Because  
21 when I went there, all I spoke was Dene language.  
22 [Dene spoken] Every time I spoke they would  
23 punish me. And that's a long ways from home and  
24 people don't know that. You know, just I was  
25 there by myself sleeping and crying and,  
26 you know, many bad things happened to me in  
27 there. And my mom and my parents and my  
28 grandparents don't -- didn't know that. I never  
29 spoke about it. Until recently I started talking  
30 about it, yeah.

31 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: May, can I ask you if you also  
32 attended at Lower Post residential school, the  
33 mission school?

34 MAY BOLTON: Yes, I did, but I attended -- I started  
35 there when -- when I was 7 years old because I  
36 think I was one of the fortunate ones because my  
37 mother -- my parents hid -- hid me away because  
38 they were looking for kids at the age of 5/6, but  
39 I was hidden. And that's the strength of my  
40 parents to protect me. And many things, many bad  
41 things happened to me in residential school also.  
42 And the trauma that I had, I lost the traditional  
43 parenting that my parents taught me. It just  
44 blew right out, right out of the window. Not --  
45 I -- I became a supervisor to my children. And  
46 unbeknownst to me, I have created four -- four  
47 residential school, that's four of my children.

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1           And I thought I was teaching them how to love,  
2           but I wasn't. I was teaching them how to hate  
3           me. I have no more to say, it's too hard.

4           CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Yvonne, is there anything that you  
5           want to share with the commissioners in relation  
6           to your experience as well?

7           YVONNE SHORTY: Residential school has impacted  
8           everything in our family and it's because of that  
9           that there's a lot of violence, a lot of trauma  
10          within our family. I was -- my mother was right,  
11          I was taught -- what happened to her in  
12          residential she taught me and she taught it well,  
13          and I was traumatized over and over. But without  
14          knowing or understanding anything about  
15          residential school, I often wondered why she  
16          treated me like that. I never thought about my  
17          siblings or anything. I just, like -- because I  
18          was so young. And -- and I did, I did hate my  
19          mother.

20                 And -- and I did become an alcoholic because  
21          of all the trauma that I had to go through, but I  
22          quit drinking in November 1992? Or I forget  
23          anyway. I quit drinking. Anyway. I had a boy  
24          of my own and I hurt him too. And he's got so  
25          much anger to me right now because of that  
26          trauma. And, you know, I could sit here now  
27          today and say, yes, I did hurt my son because I  
28          didn't know any better.

29                 I went to a lot of counselling. I went to a  
30          lot of -- I'm still learning yet. And what  
31          stopped me from that childhood abuse, to stop  
32          that abuse: My son was 3 years old and I was  
33          hitting him the way my mom used to beat me. And  
34          he was cowered in the corner and he was looking  
35          at me with that scared look on his face. And I  
36          just -- I stopped and I looked at him and I fell  
37          to the floor and I started crying. I thought,  
38          "What am I doing?" I told myself I would never  
39          treat my kid this way, the way I was raised. I  
40          picked up that phone and I phoned Child Abuse  
41          Treatment Services here in Whitehorse. And I  
42          begged them not to take my child away from me and  
43          that I needed help. And that's where I started  
44          to force myself to understand more about  
45          residential school and the -- the way my mom  
46          raised us and my aunties and my uncles. And once  
47          you start understanding what they went through,

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1           you'll learn to love your parents again like I  
2           do. I love my mom so much now and my aunties and  
3           my uncles because I took that time to understand  
4           and I wanted to stop that abuse to my children.  
5           I have two boys. And they're just like night and  
6           day. My oldest boy is traumatized. My youngest  
7           boy is -- is when I learned who I was in here.

8           Thank you.

9           CHRISTA BIG CANOE: May, I'm not going to ask you more  
10          questions about your experience, but I was  
11          wondering if you could tell the commissioners  
12          what you believe the impact was when you and your  
13          brother and sister were taken away from Elsie and  
14          Alec.

15         MAY BOLTON: Can you say that again?

16         CHRISTA BIG CANOE: How -- can you please explain to  
17          the commissioners how you and your brothers and  
18          sisters being taken to school impacted your  
19          parents?

20         MAY BOLTON: When -- before we left for residential  
21          school our parents were loving parents and were  
22          always there for us. But when they took us away  
23          to school, they had nothing, they had nothing  
24          there. So because of that, they started  
25          drinking. And they started drinking and abusing  
26          alcohol because they have no reason, they have  
27          nobody to look after. And they couldn't go out  
28          on the land because who would they take because  
29          all of their grandch-- all of their children were  
30          gone. I am the middle child. There was nine of  
31          us. There was -- there was 12 but three deceased  
32          and there's nine of us living.

33          Just looking at my mom's face, it just -- it  
34          hurts so much. Because the loneliness, and  
35          probably because of the loneliness that they --  
36          that they sh-- can't stand. The laughter of  
37          their children were gone. Because my fa-- my --  
38          my mother was a lovable mother. She -- she used  
39          to tell us stories around campfires. She even  
40          played with us. And that was lost. That impact  
41          of residential school was so bad that they  
42          started abusing alcohol and all the violence that  
43          goes with it. [Dene spoken]

44         CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Do any of the other members of the  
45          family want to speak to how they believe Indian  
46          Residential School had impacted the family? No?  
47          Good. Okay.

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1           The family was originally anticipated for  
2           approximately two hours. Rather than go into  
3           questions on the details of the death, I would  
4           suggest now is a good time to break for -- yes,  
5           certainly.

6           COMMISSIONER POITRAS: I want to understand the video.  
7           What -- what were you told they were doing? What  
8           was the video for? When they came to see you,  
9           what were they telling you they were making a  
10          video for?

11          CHRISTA BIG CANOE: If I may, I am going to provide  
12          Crystal the video so that she can better describe  
13          to you where its context or time context is.

14                 Thank you for -- commissioner, for asking  
15          that. And if I could -- Crystal, where did you  
16          get this video?

17          CRYSTAL BOLTON: I first saw this video when I was a  
18          kid. My dad had it on a VHS. And I thought it  
19          was amazing that I could see my grandparents when  
20          they were -- and my mom and all my aunts and  
21          uncles when they were tiny. And then I found it  
22          an Amazon. So, I ordered it and ... Yeah. But  
23          when we watched it as a kid, it was just this guy  
24          who wanted to challenge the Northwest  
25          Territories. That's what the video is called.  
26          And it was just a documentary. And they got to  
27          capture a little bit of my family's history on  
28          there, so it's neat.

29          CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So -- so, Crystal, maybe -- is it  
30          fair to say the -- the video -- the video is  
31          fairly dated and so --

32          CRYSTAL BOLTON: Oh, yes, definitely.

33          CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And you -- you don't have the  
34          knowledge of when the filmmakers went there to --  
35          to meet with the family? You don't have the  
36          context for that other than --

37          CRYSTAL BOLTON: No. I think they were just -- they  
38          were travelling down -- like, this video starts  
39          at the beginning of the South Canal Road and  
40          they're travelling down there and they just came  
41          upon -- there's another clip on here that has  
42          my -- my grand-- my grandfather's sister and her  
43          family fishing on the Lapie River. That's  
44          just -- that's probably where they were heading.

45          COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Thank you, Crystal.

46                 So, Dennis or May, do you -- do you remember  
47          that day? Do you remember the video? Do you --

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1           did they show it to you ever? Did the guy ever  
2           see it -- so how old were you when you saw it?  
3 DENNIS SHORTY: I was about 8, I think about 8 years  
4           old at the time.  
5 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: And did the person that was  
6           shooting the video know that you were home from  
7           residential school?  
8 DENNIS SHORTY: No, they didn't know.  
9 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Just out camping on the land in  
10          your carefree lifestyle --  
11 DENNIS SHORTY: This is all camping.  
12 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: -- according to him, yeah.  
13 DENNIS SHORTY: It's carefree, yeah.  
14 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Yeah. Okay.  
15 DENNIS SHORTY: And I remember they gave dad \$5 for  
16          that. I remember that.  
17 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: You remember he got --  
18 DENNIS SHORTY: Yeah.  
19 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: -- \$5 for that. Okay. Okay.  
20          And was it just one guy or was it a crew or?  
21 DENNIS SHORTY: There was four people there.  
22 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: There was four people there.  
23 DENNIS SHORTY: Yeah, four, yeah.  
24 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Okay. May, do you remember  
25          anything about that day?  
26 MAY BOLTON: Yes. As a family we were just happily  
27          going up. Yeah, as you can tell, I'm -- I'm the  
28          10 year old one and I'm the curious one. I  
29          always want to up front and -- and a busybody.  
30          And I remember that day very well. As a family  
31          we were happy because we just finished coming  
32          back from residential school and we were so happy  
33          going out on the land. It's just the land where  
34          we do our healing. That's our traditional  
35          hospital. And all the trauma and all the hurts  
36          that we got from residential school, we left it  
37          out, we left it there. And it was a happy moment  
38          for me that day because I was with my parents and  
39          my brothers and sisters. And these guys were  
40          coming down the road and they were doing a  
41          documentary on "Challenging [of] the Northwest  
42          [Territories]", Gordon Eastman. And he asked my  
43          dad permission before he shot the film. And my  
44          dad said why not, you know, go ahead. And then  
45          that guy offered him 5 -- \$5. And he -- he told  
46          dad, "Here, you get \$5. You could -- you could  
47          buy more tobacco."

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1 [Audience laughter]

2 MAY BOLTON: And dad happily took it and that's all I  
3 remember about that film. It was a happy moment  
4 for me.

5 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Thank you very much. I just  
6 want to remind you that Commissioner Eyolfson and  
7 I have to leave after lunch, but it's in no way  
8 to be disrespectful that we're not wanting to  
9 hear the rest of your story. We will definitely  
10 speak with our colleagues to hear the rest of  
11 your story. We just have some in camera meetings  
12 that we have to go to. Thank you so much.

13 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So, Chief Commissioner and  
14 commissioners, if I may suggest we take our lunch  
15 recess now and resume following lunch with the  
16 Shorty family members. Thank you.

17 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay. So we'll be back, reconvening  
18 here at 2 o'clock this afternoon. 2 o'clock.

19  
20 (HEARING ADJOURNED FOR NOON RECESS)  
21 (HEARING RECONVENED AT 1416)  
22

23 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Good afternoon. Let's  
24 continue. And, Ms. Big Canoe, is the family  
25 ready to continue?

26 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Yes, the family is ready to  
27 continue, Chief Commissioner.

28 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Thank you.

29 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So, I would just like to mention  
30 and explain that the chair beside me has been set  
31 with a blanket and drums that belong to the  
32 family. And it's sitting here for the purpose to  
33 recognize and honour the -- the loss of Elsie  
34 Shorty, so that she's here with them in spirit.

35 And I'm going to ask, Ivan, can you please  
36 look at the monitors, and I'll ask the  
37 commissioners too as well, and tell us what  
38 you're seeing on that picture.

39 IVAN BOLTON: In -- in front of the cabin, it doesn't  
40 show in the picture, but pointed straight out,  
41 straight up in front of the cabin there's a row  
42 of willow about two-and-a-half feet high.  
43 This -- I'm saying this now because it's relevant  
44 when my story comes out. So that you've got a  
45 picture of [indiscernible].

46 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: May, can you tell me what's in  
47 this picture and where it's taken?

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1 MAY BOLTON: This picture is a cabin of my mother's  
2 place out at our home place. It's called  
3 Beautiful Lake, where the beautiful people comes  
4 from.

5 [Audience laughter]

6 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: You would say that.

7 MAY BOLTON: Yes. It's where -- it's where they lived  
8 on their land. And it's a really beautiful  
9 cabin.

10 IVAN BOLTON: Beautiful location [indiscernible]

11 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Chief Commissioner and  
12 commissioners, may I please ask that this picture  
13 be made an exhibit.

14 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Yes.

15 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you.

16 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Number 8, please.

17 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So, May, can you please explain to  
18 the commissioners why we're looking at this  
19 picture of a cabin and -- and why it's  
20 significant to the story of Elsie?

21 MAY BOLTON: This is the cabin where I found my  
22 mother's body.

23 I will ... I will never, never forget on  
24 that day, July 16th, 1992, when my beautiful,  
25 lovable, beloved mom was taken from me from  
26 persons unknown. That was -- that day changed my  
27 life forever because I was the one that phoned --  
28 that phoned our mother, along with my  
29 sister-in-law, Margaret, to be -- it was a  
30 beautiful sunny day after I finished work. And  
31 early on we seen our parents in town. And  
32 Margaret, my sister-in-law, was concerned about  
33 her horses and she let my parents look after it.  
34 There was a coral not -- to your -- to your  
35 right, where they kept the horses. And my  
36 parents really loved animals and they -- they  
37 agreed to look -- care for the horses for my  
38 brother, Frank, and my sister-in-law, Margaret.

39 Anyway, Margaret asked me to drive her out  
40 to Beautiful Lake because my brother was still  
41 working and she was worried about her horse. So  
42 we went out, thinking that my parents were still  
43 in town. When we got there, we drove, we were  
44 laughing and talking, you know. Laughing and  
45 talking and thinking about things that we used to  
46 do. And then we drove up to the house, to the  
47 cabin. The door was slightly open. I called out



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1 to them, letting them know, if they were there,  
2 that we were coming, but all was quiet. All was  
3 quiet. I went in. I saw that my mother was  
4 sleeping on the bed. And I thought -- which I  
5 thought she was sleeping, but as I got closer I  
6 knew something was wrong. I got a little bit  
7 closer, I bent down and I said, "Mom," and I saw  
8 blood on her neck. There was a wound to her  
9 neck. I seen all the blood.

10 My sister-in-law came in after me. When she  
11 saw my mom - and she calls my mom her grandma,  
12 her mother-in-law; she just loved her grandma -  
13 she went out of control for a few minutes. She  
14 was yelling for my mom to wake up, wake up, wake  
15 up, and was trying to climb on the bed. And I  
16 was -- I was standing there totally in shock. I  
17 was just numb to the core, standing there sad,  
18 hurt, all the trauma coming back to me, but I had  
19 to do something. I just had to do something,  
20 something to take control of the situation.  
21 That's when -- that's when I put my residential  
22 school survival -- survival mode skills in  
23 motion, using it in motion, shut everything down.  
24 I shut everything down so I could be a support  
25 for her, for my sister-in-law, and also support  
26 for my older and younger siblings. As I said  
27 before, I was the middle child. And that was  
28 really, really difficult for me to see. I could  
29 still picture her yet in that cabin. I just  
30 don't know why something like that could happen  
31 to my beautiful mother. I just lost everything  
32 when she died. My life is ruined. My teacher,  
33 my mother, a grandmother to our children, and the  
34 worst part is to this day I just wonder if she  
35 could -- if she felt any pain when she was shot.  
36 It still bothers me yet to this day.

37 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Ivan, can you please tell the  
38 commissioners what happened next after May had  
39 discovered this in the cabin?

40 IVAN BOLTON: May neglected to tell you one thing.  
41 When she got things under control, she went down  
42 to the neighbour's place about five miles away  
43 and made a phone call to the RCMP. And the man  
44 that owned the -- the property phoned me in Ross  
45 River and told me that there had been an  
46 accident, a serious one, at Beautiful Lake.  
47 Whereupon I jumped in the truck and headed out to

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1 Beautiful Lake, passing the RCMP about six miles  
2 from the -- where the cabin is. And I led them  
3 to the lake because the cop that was driving the  
4 vehicle did not know where Beautiful Lake was  
5 because it's in off the highway.

6 So, I was there a few minutes ahead of the  
7 cops, like, three, four. And then -- and then  
8 they -- I could see through the door, which was  
9 partly open, I could see mom laying on the bed  
10 and there was blood all over the place.  
11 Whereupon I told the cop, I said, "I'm going to  
12 go back and see if May is all right." So I went  
13 down to the neighbour's place and picked up May  
14 and we went back to Beautiful Lake. And we  
15 talked with the police for a few minutes, and  
16 then they said it was all right to go back to  
17 town.

18 Then the following morning I went back out  
19 to the lake and they had the forensic crew out of  
20 Whitehorse there at that time. I don't know, it  
21 was probably 9:00, 9:30 before I got out there.  
22 And I -- they wouldn't let me into the cabin,  
23 naturally, because they were doing their  
24 investigation, but I heard one of the police  
25 officers say, "Oh, it's just another Native  
26 woman." Well, actually, his exact words were,  
27 "Aw, it's just another Native woman," and you  
28 could see him waving his hand. And then they --  
29 I was asked to tell what I knew of it, which I  
30 didn't know very much at that time. So, I'm  
31 going to leave it at that point now.

32 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Dennis, where were you at this  
33 time?

34 DENNIS SHORTY: At that time I was just coming back  
35 from work and I was ready to gas up so I could go  
36 out on the land. And I came around the corner.  
37 I could see that -- mom and them had another  
38 cabin down in Ross. I was looking at it, I was  
39 wondering if they're home. And Jack and Millie  
40 (phonetic) come around and stopped. They told me  
41 what happened, that, "Your mother has been  
42 killed, shot." From thereon everything just shut  
43 down. Because at that time I was dealing with  
44 the mission school and what happened to me. And  
45 to this day my parents don't know what happened  
46 to me at that mission school. But now I could  
47 talk about it. They didn't know that I was

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1 sexually molested at 5 years old. I guess now  
2 they know.

3 And I was shut down for a long time. I -- I  
4 was working for Highways and I couldn't work  
5 anymore. I came in, I told my boss, "I can't  
6 work. I might kill somebody. I might run over  
7 somebody." And he sat down with me, he said,  
8 "Take two years off with pay." So, I done that.  
9 After two years I went back, I still couldn't.  
10 During this time I was doing artwork. That's  
11 what kept me -- kept me above ground, my artwork,  
12 and my music. And that's all I could remember.

13 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Marilyn, can you please tell the  
14 commissioners what -- what you -- what you recall  
15 from that time period? What your memory was and  
16 where you were during the death?

17 MARILYN SHORTY: I was actually -- had just jumped in  
18 with Uncle Dennis. We were going to gas up and  
19 we were just going to go out on the -- go for a  
20 little ride and just -- I don't know what we were  
21 going to do, but we were going to go -- go  
22 somewhere. And that's when Millie had flagged us  
23 down. And -- and I remember Uncle Dennis was  
24 saying, "Well, how come Millie is driving,  
25 You know, like, so fast behind us," so we pulled  
26 over and see what was happening. And she told  
27 us. And at that time for myself, I was in  
28 complete disbelief. I was, like, you know, being  
29 young too and I'm, like, "How could -- how could  
30 somebody do that? How could somebody hurt her?  
31 Is this real?" I wasn't -- you know, like, I  
32 think I went into a different type of shutdown.  
33 I went into -- didn't want to believe it. I  
34 didn't want to believe anybody could hurt our  
35 grandmother. And then ... I don't really  
36 remember too much after that because it was such  
37 a haze and everybody was hurting and ...  
38 You know, one, we just lost our grandmother too,  
39 she was murdered. And feeling the pain and the  
40 hurt, the grief from everybody. And then myself  
41 too, I just shut down. I don't even remember  
42 going to the -- to the service. I don't remember  
43 who even had -- did the plans for all of the --  
44 the burial part. Now I know. Now I know it was  
45 our mother, May, but back then I didn't know how  
46 any of it had come together, let alone even being  
47 at the service or even at the grave site. And

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1 even, like, to this day, like, I -- I have a hard  
2 time remembering the day that she passed away. I  
3 think I still have a big part of me that's, like,  
4 blocked right off. I don't want to deal with it.  
5 I don't want to come to terms somebody could hurt  
6 such a beautiful soul.

7 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Yvonne, can you please share with  
8 the commissioners what you recall or where you  
9 were at the time?

10 YVONNE SHORTY: Well, like I said before, I'm an  
11 alcoholic and at the time I was drinking, and I  
12 did drink with them earlier that day. And  
13 because that I was drinking, I wasn't -- I wasn't  
14 allowed to be with the family because of my  
15 alcoholism, so I had to deal with this on my own.  
16 I wasn't even allowed in the house, so I took  
17 off. I phoned a friend and I took off and I  
18 didn't go back. I wasn't even allowed at the  
19 funeral, so I -- I don't remember anything. I  
20 don't -- nothing. I did my own shutdown and I  
21 did what I did best, drink. But now that we're  
22 all dealing with this, it's good to grieve with  
23 my family. The first time in 25 years that I  
24 could be with them and grieve with them without  
25 them telling me, "Get away." That's all I have  
26 to say.

27 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Crystal, I know -- yeah, you can  
28 [indiscernible]. I know you -- you were quite  
29 young, but can you please share with the  
30 commissioners what you recall from that time and  
31 where you were and any stories that are related  
32 to that.

33 CRYSTAL BOLTON: On that day we were -- I was down at  
34 my aunt's and I was doing laundry at my Aunt --  
35 my Aunt Linda's house because the following day  
36 we were -- our family, no one mentioned it, we  
37 were getting to go out to Quiet Lake to camp and  
38 get ready to hunt and pick berries and ... And I  
39 was doing my laundry, so -- you know, to go --  
40 get ready to go camping, and then my two cousins,  
41 my -- my Aunt Margaret's children -- she was with  
42 my mom when they found my -- my grandma -- and  
43 they came to the -- came to my Aunt Linda's  
44 house. And I was on the floor and I was folding  
45 my laundry. And Aunt Linda came in the room and  
46 so did my cousins, Rose and Alex, and they --  
47 they told us. They said, "Grandma -- grandma's

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1           been -- grandma's been shot." And my aunt just  
2           dropped. She just dropped to the ground and then  
3           got up and she ran out, and she ran to her  
4           husband and was just screaming. And I wasn't --  
5           I wasn't crying or anything then because I -- I  
6           didn't believe it, so.

7           My cousins lived right -- like, we lived  
8           right next door to each other, so we walked up --  
9           we walked up to our house. When I got there,  
10          there was vehicles all over, people coming to pay  
11          their condolences to mom. And when I walked in  
12          the house, my mom was just crying. And that's  
13          when I finally broke down and I started crying.  
14          And after that, it was just a whirlwind. I don't  
15          remember. I don't remember anything after that  
16          either. We just shut down and went into robot  
17          mode. We just had to do what needed to be done.

18       CHRISTA BIG CANOE: May or Dennis, can one of you  
19          please tell the commissioners how -- what -- how  
20          your father, Alex, reacted and what happened  
21          after May -- after Elsie was found dead?

22       DENNIS SHORTY: He just shut down. When that  
23          happened, that's when we lost dad too, our dear  
24          mom. He keep telling me [Dene spoken], "I never  
25          killed mom, my son," you know. [Dene spoken]  
26          when he's speaking to my language. [Dene spoken]  
27          "Why should I kill mom," in -- in our language.

28       CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Why -- why would Alex have to say  
29          that? What happened to Alex as the RCMP were  
30          investigating the death?

31       DENNIS SHORTY: Well, my -- my dad only spoke Dene.  
32          [Dene spoken] He only spoke Dene to us. [Dene  
33          spoken] Mom, the little English she knows, she  
34          translate for us. And dad always said, "Yes,  
35          sir. Yes, sir," and that's his downfall.

36       CHRISTA BIG CANOE: It's his downfall, so -- it's his  
37          downfall and why it be his downfall? What --  
38          what happened when the RCMP came and spoke to  
39          your father?

40       DENNIS SHORTY: Because they asked him, "Alec, did you  
41          shot your wife?" "Yes, sir." "Do you know what  
42          you're saying?" "Yes, sir." He always says  
43          that. And that's what happened.

44       CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Can one of the other family  
45          members share a little more details with the  
46          commissioners in relation to the RCMP's  
47          investigation and what happened with Alex?

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1 MAY BOLTON: There was -- before I started telling you  
2 about my dad and when my husband, Ivan, was  
3 saying that the officers were saying that, "Oh,  
4 it's just another Native woman," she was not just  
5 another Native woman. She was my mother. She  
6 was a wife. She was also a grandmother and a  
7 sister. And she was also an aunt and a friend to  
8 many who -- who met her. I just wanted to  
9 express that she was my mother, not another  
10 Native woman.

11 My dad, like my brother Dennis was saying,  
12 he doesn't understand English. Because of that  
13 he was blamed because he said, "Yes, sir," and he  
14 didn't understand. And quickly the RCMP, they --  
15 they closed the case down because they got a  
16 confession. They never did any investigation  
17 whatsoever of any -- any fingerprints, any, how  
18 can I say that word, forensic tests on the -- on  
19 the gun. Nothing. It was just an open and  
20 closed case.

21 Through this my dad is gone now. He's up  
22 with my mother. He always tell us that he didn't  
23 do it. "How could I do that?" Of course they  
24 were drinking that day, but my dad remembers he  
25 wasn't -- when they usually get in an argument,  
26 my -- my brother, Dennis, has a house I don't  
27 know how many feet down the road, that's  
28 where my dad goes and sleep and let my mother  
29 sleep. And during that time something happened  
30 and everything, my dad said, was blamed on him  
31 because of lack of English. And when they came  
32 up here -- up there to arrest him, there was a --  
33 they got a guard, a police guard there. Even  
34 him, he told the RCMP, "Alec needs an  
35 interpreter," but they never listened to him. He  
36 confessed, he said, "Yes." And they wouldn't  
37 listen the guard. He tried over and over to  
38 explain, "Alec needs an interpreter. Alec, don't  
39 talk. Please don't talk to them," but he doesn't  
40 understand. He figured he could -- he figured  
41 that anybody asks him a question he has to -- and  
42 say, "Yes," "Yes." That is why my mother is the  
43 one that always translates for him.

44 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Can a family member tell the  
45 commissioners how long did Alec stay in custody  
46 or in jail? How long was Alec in jail?

47 MAY BOLTON: He was there I think for two weeks. Like

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1 I said before, I shut everything down so I could  
2 be support for my family. I shut everything  
3 down. I was numb. I went into my -- into my  
4 residential school survival mode. And I was the  
5 one that met with his lawyer. I went up to the  
6 jail to see him. Walk around in the store,  
7 trying to find a good outfit for my mother. My  
8 sisters promised to be with me, but they never  
9 showed up, so I was the one that did everything.  
10 They don't know how I -- I -- they don't know how  
11 I felt, but I kept everything down. Now they  
12 know, I want them to know how I felt. I was just  
13 numb. I done that because I love my -- my  
14 brothers and sisters and my -- my children, never  
15 thinking about myself. And that really took a  
16 toll out of my life. I was sick all the time. I  
17 developed -- I developed diabetes. I was  
18 overweight. I just put myself into my work and  
19 trying to think I could fix everybody.

20 He was in jail for two weeks, two or three  
21 weeks, I don't -- I don't remember. It was a  
22 really hard -- really hard thing to go through  
23 because I don't know if they convicted him or  
24 not, I don't remember, but he was with me because  
25 he had -- they -- because of his confession,  
26 nobody never listened to us. The investi--  
27 the -- the investigation was quick. So, my dad  
28 lived with me for 10 years. For those 10 years  
29 he had to check with the RCMP every -- every  
30 evening. After work I had to go down. That took  
31 a toll out of me. My brothers and sisters never  
32 knew that. If I have to take him to Whitehorse  
33 with me, I have to go down to the RCMP station  
34 to -- to get the permission. And I believe my  
35 dad, he said wholeheartedly he did not. "I never  
36 killed your mom." He say if I -- if I shot my  
37 mom, I could have -- he said I could have heard  
38 that gun. I never did. I never heard nothing.  
39 I don't know what else to say. It's too --  
40 it's -- it's too hard.

41 IVAN BOLTON: What May has just said is the absolute  
42 truth. She did, we did look after the children  
43 and done all the work involved in making sure all  
44 went well. And we did look after dad for several  
45 years, I can't remember how many, but for the  
46 first year he had to go to the police station  
47 every day. After that it was twice a week. And

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1 that was nine or ten years.

2 But when they were doing the investigation,  
3 myself and the lawyer found the location from  
4 where the shot had been fired. It was not in the  
5 cabin, as the police said. And we showed it to  
6 the lawyer and that is why dad did not go to jail  
7 because the police -- one police officer believed  
8 us. And the lawyer -- because we showed him the  
9 evidence too, but the Crown had already made its  
10 case and didn't want to change it. And I'm going  
11 to stop there.

12 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And so is it fair though -- just  
13 to clarify, is it fair to say that no one in the  
14 family is aware or not whether there was a full  
15 trial or conviction?

16 CRYSTAL BOLTON: None of us know anything. We've  
17 never even seen her -- the police report. We  
18 have never seen anything, of anything. Our whole  
19 family, the only thing we know is my grandma was  
20 shot and that's -- that's it. We haven't had a  
21 chance to grieve or heal because there's no  
22 closure in -- because we know nothing. We have  
23 no knowledge of anything. That thing regarding  
24 the police and the lawyers and -- no one came and  
25 talked to us. I was only 11, but I remem-- like,  
26 my family would talk to me and -- you know. We  
27 don't know what happened.

28 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Crystal, can you tell the  
29 commissioners has anyone in the family ever tried  
30 to get any more information or ask for more  
31 information?

32 CRYSTAL BOLTON: When this first started with -- when  
33 you guys came here last -- last year, my sister  
34 Marilyn and I asked - what was her name? -  
35 Calista MacLeod?

36 MARILYN SHORTY: Yeah.

37 CRYSTAL BOLTON: I think that was her name. We asked  
38 her if we could get the police report. And she  
39 got back to my sister Marilyn. Maybe I should  
40 let Marilyn talk on this now.

41 MARILYN SHORTY: Yeah, Calista did get back to us and  
42 said in regards to the file being so long ago, it  
43 was archived and it was -- I guess it's a bigger  
44 process to -- to get those files and to see where  
45 they're located and how long it will take. And  
46 that she said another RCMP will be in contact  
47 with us, and we're still waiting. And that's



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1           been a year ago, so ... Maybe a little over a  
2           year now, but, yeah, it's just -- it's hard to  
3           get things going and trying to get answers, let  
4           alone trying to get documents that were archived.  
5   CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Crystal, can you tell me what the  
6           impact of having -- living in the community as a  
7           child, having everyone believe that your  
8           grandfather killed your grandmother, what that  
9           was like for you?

10   CRYSTAL BOLTON: I remember the secretary at school, I  
11           was walking by and she was talking to someone,  
12           and she was, like, "Oh, it's just one of them.  
13           They're just a couple of dumb Indians and Alec  
14           should be spending the rest of his life in jail.  
15           He shouldn't be out free." That was very hard.  
16           I was a 12 year old hearing a secretary at school  
17           say that about my grandparents was very hard.  
18           They had no right to talk about them like that,  
19           especially my grandma.

20   CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Did any of the other family  
21           members want to talk about and share with the  
22           commissioners the impact of having your father be  
23           accused of your mother's or your grandmother's  
24           death? Well, how -- what was the impact of  
25           people believing that your father killed your  
26           mother?

27   DENNIS SHORTY: It was really hard. It's that not  
28           knowing what happened. I keep telling myself my  
29           dad didn't -- couldn't do that, deep inside, but  
30           I keep hearing that, "Your dad killed your mom,"  
31           and it's really hard to deal with that. And I  
32           can't remember much because I shut down already.  
33           And this is the first time I cry for mom.  
34           Because I was so shocked that I couldn't cry.  
35           And the impact is still with me, with us right  
36           now. That's why we're sitting here telling our  
37           story, so it won't happen again, ever.

38   CHRISTA BIG CANOE: The family has talked about  
39           recommendations and ideas. Are there  
40           recommendations and ideas that you would like to  
41           share with the commissioners based on your  
42           experiences about what would help families or any  
43           recommendations you have whatsoever?

44           Before you get to the recommendations, May  
45           would just like to add a couple comments on the  
46           last question.

47   MAY BOLTON: But this is -- it's going to be hard for

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1 people to hear, but the impact on my father's  
2 conviction and my mother's death, I hate -- I  
3 hate doing this but it has to come out, there's  
4 some racism in those comments that really hurt,  
5 that impact me. The First Nation -- Kaska First  
6 Nation of Ross River and also some in Watson  
7 Lake, they believe my dad didn't do it, but the  
8 non-Aboriginal people think my dad should go to  
9 jail forever because they're just Indians.

10 That's all I have to say.

11 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you. Would any of the  
12 family members like to explain to the  
13 commissioners ideas and recommendations you have?

14 MAY BOLTON: The first recommendation is, because of  
15 my dad's conviction, interpreters. RCMP need to  
16 have language interpreters in every case or  
17 investigation that they have. They should have  
18 knowledge of the First Nations laws and also  
19 their protocols. And also [indiscernible] elders  
20 as interpretation or any elders should get their  
21 paid position, like teachers. Training and  
22 cultural protocols for everyone who upholds the  
23 law or rules. Culture camps. That's, like I  
24 said before, it's our hospital. Little thing  
25 goes a long way. And I think we should have for  
26 our healing because that's where as First Nation  
27 they find their identity, it's on the land.  
28 Maybe have after-school programs with pick up and  
29 drop offs so no risk of people or young people  
30 are gone missing. Community safety officers. I  
31 don't know what ... I'm sure we have more, but  
32 it's really difficult to say what's a  
33 recommendation that's for sure. Maybe you guys  
34 pick -- pick some up while we're talking and  
35 speaking and maybe that you guys could get -- get  
36 information from what we said and from what you  
37 heard would be a great recommendation coming out  
38 of our words, our testimony.

39 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: I want to reassure you  
40 that at any time you or members of your family  
41 can make recommendations to us. Anytime. Thank  
42 you.

43 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Chief Commissioner and  
44 commissioners, did you have any questions that  
45 you wanted to ask of the family?

46 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Thank you. I just wanted to  
47 confirm what I heard and what I think might be a

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1 recommendation and hear what you thought about  
2 it. I think -- what I heard, especially from  
3 you, Crystal, was the lack of information has  
4 been one of the hardest parts and that more  
5 transparency and communication with -- with you,  
6 with family from the justice system is something  
7 that you haven't received and that perhaps it's  
8 something that you want to receive for yourselves  
9 but other families as well.

10 CRYSTAL BOLTON: Yes.

11 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Is that fair? I just wanted  
12 to clarify. Thank you. [Aboriginal language  
13 spoken]

14 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Sure.

15 MARILYN BOLTON: I just wanted ... I just wanted to  
16 say as well, you know, like, families that go  
17 through situations like this, you know, like,  
18 having the respect from the RCMP or anybody  
19 working in the justice field, you know, have that  
20 sensitivity that, yes, families are going through  
21 trauma and traumatic events, and, you know, to  
22 have that respect for that. You know, like --  
23 like, we all talk about every one of us  
24 doesn't -- or don't remember certain situations  
25 after the murder. And just to have that respect.  
26 To talk to somebody in the family, maybe one or  
27 two, you know, with the RCMP and then being able  
28 to relay that again and again so that there is  
29 that open communication. So that one and -- and  
30 another can relay messages on where things are at  
31 in the investigation and not just being  
32 stonewalled and saying, "No. Your grandfather's  
33 guilty," and that's it. You know, just having  
34 respect for the families. Open communication.

35 COMMISSIONER AUDETTE: [French spoken] Thank you.  
36 Thank you. Thank you for the -- for your  
37 courage, for your truth, and I heard a lot of  
38 recommendations. And we have amazing people,  
39 professional people working with us and for us -  
40 for us - that took note prior to this gathering  
41 and also today. So, yes, it's still open, you  
42 can e-mail us, call us, find us. We're here.  
43 And this is the beginning of a relationship.  
44 *Merci.*

45 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Thank you all very much  
46 for sharing your stories with us today. It's  
47 been very moving. We're grateful. And we're

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1           sorry for your loss. Thank you.

2   COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: I have one more question.  
3           Part of what we have been tasked to do is to look  
4           at ways that we can honour lost loved ones. How  
5           can we, how can your mom, your mother-in-law,  
6           your grandma, your mom, how can -- how can she be  
7           honoured? Would you guys be comfortable talking  
8           about that with us now?

9   CHRISTA BIG CANOE: If -- if I may, Commissioner, the  
10          family actually will be doing something to honour  
11          Elsie today, but it's probably -- please free to  
12          answer the commissioner's question if there is  
13          anything in addition to how you'll be honouring  
14          Elsie today.

15                 And, commissioners, Ivan would just like to  
16                 add a couple more words. It's not specifically  
17                 related to your question.

18   IVAN BOLTON: We ... There is much to say in this  
19          area of changing things so that this kind of  
20          situation never ever happens again, but this is  
21          not the place or the time to say it because it's  
22          too long and too complicated. So, I'm -- but it  
23          does have to be brought out. So, sometime  
24          somewheres, it doesn't matter where it is in  
25          Canada, we have to get the leaders together and  
26          talk the situation over so that our laws, both --  
27          both the Territorial and the Federal and the  
28          local Native ways can find a way to work together  
29          instead of fighting each other. I'm going to  
30          leave it there.

31   YVONNE SHORTY: As the family to honour my grandmother  
32          and for all the wrong that was done through the  
33          justice system to my family, we would like to  
34          have a memorial for my grandmother put up  
35          someplace for us and probably other families that  
36          are going to tell their story as well. And this  
37          cannot happen. It can't continue to happen. The  
38          justice system fails us every time and it's still  
39          happening today. That needs to stop. We are  
40          people as well. We have the same blood running  
41          through our bodies.

42   MARILYN SHORTY: It'd be great to see something placed  
43          in the -- the school, you know, honouring our  
44          grandmother for all the teachings. Something to  
45          honour our women.

46   DENNIS SHORTY: And as fathers, uncles, grandfathers,  
47          young men, we have to stand up for our women. We

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1 have to stop what's happening to our women, our  
2 wives, our mothers. We have to do that. Us  
3 mens, we have to step forward as warriors of the  
4 land, our culture, and take over as leaders and  
5 as men. To honour our mom we have to do that.  
6 To honour sisters we have to do that. Enough is  
7 enough. Let's stand up as men and protect our  
8 women.

9 CRYSTAL BOLTON: Maybe like a mentorship too. For,  
10 like, myself I was young when my grandma passed  
11 away and my family was shut down, grieving,  
12 right? So at the age of 12 I turned to alcohol  
13 and drugs myself, but, yeah, maybe, like, a  
14 mentorship for the younger people while their  
15 families are grieving, something, people that  
16 could talk with them. I ... Yeah, I started  
17 drinking when I was about 12, a year after my  
18 grandma died, and I kept drinking until I found  
19 out I was pregnant with my first child at the age  
20 of 25, but I quit in honour of my grandma because  
21 my grandma taught us that family, you take care  
22 of your children, you love them, family is  
23 everything, so. Yeah, my babies are my little  
24 saviors.

25 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: At this time the -- the family  
26 would like to do something to honour Elsie and  
27 what they would like to do is sing a song and I'm  
28 going to ask Dennis to -- to briefly explain it.

29 DENNIS SHORTY: As a musician I write songs in the  
30 Dene language, and this song we're going to share  
31 with all of you across the nation, a song I wrote  
32 about our sisters that's missing. And I'll  
33 explain it.

34  
35 Where is our sisters? They're out there.  
36 They're still out there. Let's sing for  
37 them. Let's sing for them.  
38 Where is our older sisters? They're out  
39 there. They're out there too. Let's drum  
40 for them. Let's drum for them.  
41 Where is our sisters? Where is our older  
42 sisters? Let's drum -- let's sing for them,  
43 let's drum for them.  
44 They're with the Great Spirit.

45  
46 So, we'll do that for you as a family.

47 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: We may need the assistance. Thank

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1 you.

2 DENNIS SHORTY: Ready? Ready?

3 (Strumming guitar) [Dene spoken] We'll  
4 sing this song for our sisters, our mothers, our  
5 fathers, our brothers, our uncles.

6

7 [Song written by Dennis Shorty sung by the  
8 Shorty family in Dene in honour of Elsie  
9 Shorty]

10

11 DENNIS SHORTY: [Dene spoken]

12

[Audience applause]

13

COMMISSIONER AUDETTE: *Oui. Oui.* Thank -- thank you  
14 so much. *Merci.*

15

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: I want to -- we ... To  
16 respect the laws of -- of gifting and of  
17 reciprocity, we have packets of seeds that we  
18 want to give to you as gifts to express our  
19 appreciation for -- for sharing with us. Seeds  
20 represent growth and new life. And so with --  
21 with that we're going to be giving you some  
22 little seed packets.

23

CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: We'll stop for about 15  
24 minutes. Thank you.

25

26 **Second Hearing Exhibits**

27

28 **May Bolton, Dennis Shorty, Marilyn Shorty (Family of**  
29 **Elsie Shorty)**

30

Exhibit P1: Three-slide PowerPoint entitled "Shorty  
31 pictures" depicting a) a woman in shawl and  
32 glasses (said to be Elsie Shorty) with a rose  
33 motif on margins b) a man and women in Sunday  
34 best standing outside with a wooden door in the  
35 background c) a woman and a young girls out-of-  
36 doors.

37

Exhibit P2: Vintage colour video of the family on the  
38 land in the summer, shot by George Eastman.

39

Exhibit P3: Map of Traditional Kaska Dena Territory  
40 with two circles made in blue ink, one around  
41 Ross River and the other around Lower Post.

42

Exhibit P4: One-slide colour Powerpoint entitled "3  
43 Shorty Cabin" depicting a snowbound cabin.

44

Exhibit 6: Video segment of the Shorty family from  
45 Gordon Eastman's film *Challenging the Northwest*  
46 *Territory*

47

Exhibit 7: Map of Kaska Dena Traditional Territory,

Terri Szabo, Ann Szabo and Annette Eikland

1 with Ross River and Lower Post both circled in  
2 blue ink  
3 Exhibit 8: Photo of a snowbound cabin  
4  
5

6 (HEARING ADJOURNED)

7 (HEARING RECONVENED)

8  
9 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Ms. Big Canoe, is the next  
10 family ready?  
11

12 **Third Hearing**

13 **Terri Szabo, Ann Szabo and Annette Eikland (Family of**  
14 **May Stewart) with Christa Big Canoe (Commission**  
15 **Counsel)**  
16

17 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Yes, Chief Commissioner.

18 Hello. Hello. Yeah. Thank you, Chief  
19 Commissioner. The next family is ready and I  
20 would like to introduce you to the family of May  
21 Stewart. So, right beside me is Terri Szabo, the  
22 granddaughter of May Stewart. Beside her is her  
23 mother, Ann Szabo, the daughter of May Stewart.  
24 And beside her is Annette Ekland -- Eikland, the  
25 great-granddaughter of May Stewart.

26 Before the family is actually sworn in for  
27 testimony, Ann has asked to make a small prayer.

28 ANN SZABO: I'd like to thank everyone that's in  
29 listening to our story about my mother and the  
30 support that we have to tell our story. Before  
31 that I'd like to -- to say a prayer to the great  
32 Lord above.

33 Lord God, Jesus, look down upon my daughter,  
34 who is about to tell a story how my mother was  
35 murdered and how she was found. And plus my  
36 granddaughter, Annette. I love her dearly.  
37 Bless her and her family. Thank you for her  
38 support. And my cousins in the back, May and her  
39 daughters. And the support from Vera and her  
40 friend. Thank you for them. And bless all the  
41 people that are in the audience that have loss in  
42 their family, for their father and their mothers,  
43 and bless our family at home. Thank you, Lord  
44 Jesus. I pray in the name of our Lord Jesus'  
45 name. Amen.

46 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay. Good afternoon, Terri. Do you

Terri Szabo, Ann Szabo, Annette Eikland

1 swear that the evidence you will give today will  
2 be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but  
3 the truth, so help you God?

4 TERRI SZABO: Yes, I do.

5

6

TERRI SZABO, sworn.

7

8 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay. Thank you. Pass that on.

9 And I believe -- your name card is covered.

10 I believe your -- is your name Ann?

11 ANN SZABO: Yes.

12 BRYAN ZANDBERG: It is? Okay. Good afternoon, Ann.

13 Do you swear that the evidence you will give  
14 today will be the truth, the whole truth, and  
15 nothing but the truth, so help you God?

16 ANN SZABO: I do.

17

18

ANN SZABO, sworn.

19

20 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay. Thank you.

21 Annette, okay. Did you want to swear on the

22 Bible or did you want to make an affirmation?

23 It's fine? Okay. So, Annette, do you swear that

24 the evidence you will give today will be the

25 truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the

26 truth, so help you God?

27 ANNETTE EIKLAND: [indiscernible]

28

29

ANNETTE EIKLAND, sworn.

30

31 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay. Thank you.

32 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Ann, I just have a couple

33 questions about your mother. So, first of all,

34 can you tell the commissioners who we're here to

35 talk about today?

36 ANN SZABO: We're -- we're here about my mother, May

37 Stewart, who was taken away from us in '72 in the

38 most harshful way. Thank you.

39 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Ann, can you tell me about your

40 family members? So, who are your sisters and

41 brothers? Who -- who were May's children?

42 ANN SZABO: I have quite a bit of members of the

43 family that I can think of right now. I just

44 lost a sister about three weeks ago. She

45 suffered an illness before we lost her. Her name

46 was Mary. And then I had -- we have Lucy

47 Stewart. She is not with us. And we have



Terri Szabo, Ann Szabo, Annette Eikland

1 Rachel, who is not with us. And right now we  
2 have -- we have Cecelia. She's with us. And  
3 Roy. My brother Robert, he's the oldest in the  
4 family. And Roger and he's with us. Donovan is  
5 deceased. So, there was quite a bit of us, and  
6 there was me. Thank you.

7 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Is there anything else you wanted  
8 to add about your mom to start?

9 ANN SZABO: We lived in Frances Lake and I -- it's  
10 about a hundred miles out of Watson Lake. And we  
11 had to move into Liard, to Watson Lake area,  
12 because of the residential school. I went there  
13 when I was 7 years old.

14 They just picked us up wherever we were  
15 playing. We had no jacket on. Some of us had no  
16 moccasins on because we were playing in the mud  
17 puddle. I remember so well. And we trying to --  
18 I -- I trying to hide away behind my mother. And  
19 they trying to usher -- usher me into the tent.  
20 And tell the priest and the brother not to take  
21 us, but we hid, but they -- they threatened our  
22 parents and said they're going to go to jail  
23 if -- if they don't let us come. So they -- they  
24 picked me up and they put me in the back of a --  
25 a big army truck with big cans in the back, and  
26 there was already other little children in there  
27 before me. They were all crying. And -- and  
28 they told us we're just going to go for a short  
29 ride, and that short ride never -- never came to  
30 an end. We were on our way to Lower Post. We  
31 didn't know where we were. And to this day I  
32 always see the beginning of the poplar trees  
33 going down there. And whenever I see it, it just  
34 breaks my heart to go see and see them, and the  
35 cruelty I suffered.

36 And because of the residential school, when  
37 I came out, I was old enough to have my own  
38 children - I had my own children, I had four of  
39 them - and I wasn't such a good mother. To this  
40 day people would think, "Oh, she's such a nice  
41 lady." But I taught my kids like the way I was  
42 taught. I was just one angry person. And to  
43 this day when I look at my kids -- I had four and  
44 I lost one. He was just going to be 21. We lost  
45 him in an accident. He was my baby. When I look  
46 at my kids today, I think how could I be so  
47 cruel, how could I be so mean? But that's how I

Terri Szabo, Ann Szabo, Annette Eikland

1 was treated in school. We were punished if we  
2 don't eat our food. Our -- our faces are pushed  
3 into our plates for unfinished food. We have to  
4 eat it. Even if we threw them up, our face are  
5 pushed in there and -- or the food is dumped on  
6 our heads. I don't know how the government could  
7 do something like that to kids.

8 We were raised up in the wilderness. We  
9 live off the land, like my cousin Dennis was  
10 saying. The Shortys are my cousins, my first  
11 cousins. Their mothers were sisters. They look  
12 identical. They're a loving people. But when it  
13 came to residential school, I wasn't such a good  
14 mother. And to this day when I look at my  
15 great-grandkids, my granddaughter, I always  
16 thought I had beautiful kids and I had beautiful  
17 grandchildren. And I thank God for them, that  
18 they're loving to their own children. My  
19 granddaughter has got two lovely kids, which is  
20 my daughter's grandkids. And she treats her kids  
21 beautifully and treats them with -- with love. I  
22 got older and I know what love is. Sometimes my  
23 anger boils up, comes up once in a while, but I  
24 also changed my faith and I know about myself  
25 more better, that I'm a good person. You have to  
26 listen to all the people that went to residential  
27 school, what kind of people we really were. And  
28 when we first went there we were good kids and  
29 then they turned us into people that we weren't  
30 supposed to be. I feel sad for that. My heart  
31 breaks sometimes. We were angry people, all  
32 because of how we were treated. It's a  
33 heartbreaking story but I have to say it. That's  
34 all I have to say. Thank you for listening.

35 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Terri, can you please tell the  
36 commissioners about what you remember of May or  
37 of the events and times around May.

38 TERRI SZABO: I just want to say something before I  
39 start. I see some people here on their phones,  
40 especially when my mom is crying and talking  
41 about things that have, you know, really  
42 traumatized us and it's systemic. I find that  
43 really disrespectful. And if you can't sit here  
44 and listen and learn so that society changes with  
45 the way we treat each other, you should leave the  
46 tent. So, thank you.

47 [Audience applause]

Terri Szabo, Ann Szabo, Annette Eikland

1       TERRI SZABO: I was only 8 years old when my  
2       grandmother, May Stewart, died, and she was  
3       actually found on an embankment near the  
4       graveyard in Upper Liard. I am not sure if  
5       everyone is familiar with Upper Liard. So when  
6       you're facing the graveyard, to the far left down  
7       an embankment there my -- my -- I heard this from  
8       my dad. And the First Nation people in the  
9       community used to make a fire down there and they  
10      would drink around the fire, and I am assuming  
11      that's where my grandmother was. And anyway, my  
12      Aunty Cecilia Stewart, she was about 14, I think  
13      she was in the care of Social Services, but,  
14      anyway, they were looking for her and they chased  
15      her. And she ran towards where my grandma was  
16      and she found my grandmother deceased basically,  
17      with no clothes on from the waist down. And like  
18      I say, I was only 8. I remember my mom crying.  
19      I remember my Aunty Rachel being there. We're  
20      the same age. And I remember the ambulance being  
21      there. And I remember I wanted to see what was  
22      going on because I wasn't sure, so I stood on a  
23      stump and tried to peer into the ambulance, but I  
24      didn't see anything. And my mom and dad -- I  
25      know my mom says she wasn't a good mom, but I --  
26      I think she was because I have listened to some  
27      other stories and I have had a pretty good life.  
28      But I'm just -- I've got all these things in my  
29      head that I'm trying to think about at the same  
30      time so, my brain is kind of overwhelmed with  
31      information that I want to speak about.

32             But mom and dad never - there was four of  
33      us - told us their problems. You know, they  
34      didn't tell us -- at least I don't remember my  
35      mom saying that my grandma was raped and  
36      murdered. I don't remember that. I just  
37      remember something was wrong because my mom was  
38      crying and my dad was trying to support her, and  
39      I remember going to the funeral.

40             And, yeah, years later my mom would always  
41      talk about my grandmother and so I thought, well,  
42      you know, I'm -- I'm going to find out what  
43      happened here. So, I went to the police station  
44      in Watson Lake and I explained to them about  
45      my -- what had happened to my grandmother based  
46      on what my mom had told me and my dad, that she,  
47      you know, had been raped and basically murdered.

Terri Szabo, Ann Szabo, Annette Eikland

1 And so they investigated. They came to the house  
2 and asked me where my grandma's grave was and  
3 they went and they took a picture. And then  
4 Major Crimes from Whitehorse called me and,  
5 you know, they asked me to tell them what I --  
6 what I knew. And I can't remember if they talked  
7 to my mom or not, but they told me to phone the  
8 coroner for -- to see if there was an autopsy,  
9 and -- and there was. And I -- I shared that  
10 with -- with Christa, who has been really great.  
11 And in the coroner's report it says that my  
12 grandmother was found without clothes on from the  
13 waist down and her shoes, her clothes, whatever  
14 she had from the waist down was strewn  
15 everywhere. And, you know, what I know of  
16 elderly First Nation women is -- and from my mom,  
17 they're very old-fashioned, so they don't take  
18 their clothes off. And I was only 8 years old  
19 when my mother -- my grandmother was murdered and  
20 I can remember it was very warm. And they said  
21 she died of exposure and I don't believe that,  
22 but that's what they ruled. So, I'll just keep  
23 talking.

24 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And I will let you keep talking,  
25 but I would like to provide the commissioners a  
26 copy of the -- the letter that Terri is speaking  
27 about. If Bryan can do that, kindly. And I am  
28 just going to ask a couple quick questions so  
29 that I can make this a formal document. So, you  
30 have told us that you called and asked for this  
31 and you received this from the Coroner's Office?

32 TERRI SZABO: Yes, that's correct.

33 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And are all of the documents in  
34 there what you received?

35 TERRI SZABO: Yes. Yes.

36 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Chief Commissioner, may I have  
37 this made an exhibit?

38 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Yes, please.

39 TERRI SZABO: And there was no pictures. I asked for  
40 pictures. There was no pictures. I requested  
41 pictures.

42 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And I'm just going to give this  
43 back to you.

44 TERRI SZABO: Okay.

45 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Can you please carry on telling  
46 your story about what you learned from  
47 [indiscernible].

Terri Szabo, Ann Szabo, Annette Eikland

1 TERRI SZABO: Okay. So if you read -- did you want me  
2 to read what you told me to read?

3 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So just -- maybe if you can just  
4 first explain to the commissioners, once you read  
5 it, you've already told us what you thought, but  
6 what else did you think about it?

7 TERRI SZABO: Okay. So once I read the coroner's  
8 inquest, I mean, back in '72 they didn't have a  
9 lot of forensic science, so I thought the police  
10 did, I guess, a half-assed job, I'm not sure what  
11 else to say, but they -- just -- just a second.

12 Okay, so this is what the inquest ruled. It  
13 says, "Mrs. May Stewart came to her death, due  
14 upon their oath say, that she said May Stewart  
15 did on or about June 1st to June 7th, A.D. 1972  
16 came to her death by natural causes from  
17 exposure, contributed to [my excessive -- or  
18 sorry] her excessive alcohol in her blood and  
19 being left in a seminude condition by a person or  
20 persons unknown." [as read] I just don't buy  
21 that because like what I said before, I was only  
22 8 years old when this happened and I remember it  
23 being really warm. And what I know of my mom's  
24 culture, my grandma would never take off her  
25 clothes, never. So I really believe that she was  
26 raped. And, you know, that was a grandmother  
27 that I never knew because someone decided or  
28 maybe more than one person took it upon  
29 themselves that -- you know, that -- that it was  
30 okay to rape and kill this person, which,  
31 you know, was my grandmother and meant a lot to  
32 my mom. I remember my mom crying a lot for my  
33 grandmother, for days and days. And, you know,  
34 she's -- I'm in my 50s, my mom is in her 70s, she  
35 still talks about my grandmother. And I really  
36 believe there's a murderer or murderers walking  
37 around maybe even in our community of Upper  
38 Liard, who knows. I'd just like to see some  
39 justice because it's not okay.

40 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: I just wanted to ask a couple more  
41 questions for clarification on -- on this  
42 particular document. So if we just go -- I'm  
43 going to give it -- if we just go to the first  
44 page, that's the letter that the -- the Yukon  
45 government sent you after you requested the  
46 report.

47 TERRI SZABO: Mm-hmm. Yes.

Terri Szabo, Ann Szabo, Annette Eikland

1 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And in the next -- at the next  
2 page we actually see the autopsy report. We  
3 actually see an autopsy report.  
4 TERRI SZABO: Yes.  
5 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Can you please say -- tell me when  
6 it's dated?  
7 TERRI SZABO: It is dated June 9th, 1972.  
8 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And do you know who actually wrote  
9 the autopsy or?  
10 TERRI SZABO: Dr. Albertini.  
11 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Okay. And -- so what was  
12 Dr. Albertini's -- so the first thing you read  
13 in, that was the inquest or inquisition, is that  
14 correct?  
15 TERRI SZABO: Yes.  
16 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Okay. And that was different than  
17 the autopsy. If you -- is that your  
18 understanding?  
19 TERRI SZABO: Yes.  
20 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And so what did Dr. Albertini,  
21 what was his opinion?  
22 TERRI SZABO: His impression was, "None of the  
23 findings at autopsy could possibly be classified  
24 as a cause of death unless the laboratory could  
25 supplement one. Possible causes of death are as  
26 follows: extreme intoxication and exposure,  
27 pneumonia process, GI bleeding, a combination of  
28 the three." [as read]  
29 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Now, you have read this because --  
30 because you actually sought this document. Did  
31 you --  
32 TERRI SZABO: Yes.  
33 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Did you find anything striking  
34 about when they were doing the autopsy some of  
35 the tests they may or may not have done?  
36 TERRI SZABO: Well, when someone gets raped, they can  
37 check the DNA, the -- the sperm for, I guess --  
38 for -- from the man, but they didn't have the  
39 technology back then.  
40 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Okay.  
41 TERRI SZABO: Or the expertise, I guess.  
42 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: And when you say the expertise, I  
43 just want to draw your attention to the third  
44 paragraph from the bottom. And the doctor --  
45 where the -- where the doctor is describing, you  
46 don't have to read the whole thing in, but can  
47 you touch on the expertise issue?

Terri Szabo, Ann Szabo, Annette Eikland

1 TERRI SZABO: Do you want me to read it? Okay.  
2 "Genital organs were examined with the  
3 possibility of sexual assault in mind. There  
4 were absolutely no external signs of injury that  
5 could be detected. The vagina contained a normal  
6 amount of whitish mucous, a sample of which was  
7 taken and put on a slide to be examined under the  
8 microscope. [Micro--] Microscopic examination of  
9 the slide did not reveal any evidence of  
10 spermatozoa, but I have no training or prior  
11 experience to know what old spermatozoa  
12 [looked --] looks like." [as read] There's some  
13 grammatical errors in there.  
14 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So does that also lead you to  
15 believe though that they just didn't have the  
16 expertise --  
17 TERRI SZABO: Yes, that's correct.  
18 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: -- to make that determination?  
19 TERRI SZABO: Yes.  
20 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Okay. But having that said, you  
21 are not a coroner yourself, right?  
22 TERRI SZABO: No, but common sense tells me there's  
23 something wrong here.  
24 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Yes. Yes. Is there anything else  
25 you wanted to share with the commissioners in  
26 relation to, you know, looking for this  
27 information or having to find this information?  
28 TERRI SZABO: Regarding the autopsy?  
29 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Just in general. Like, the fact  
30 that you had to seek this information.  
31 TERRI SZABO: I'll have to think about that question a  
32 little bit. I have too much on my mind right  
33 now.  
34 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Are there any other details that  
35 you recall from the death or from your -- your  
36 life experience with your family that -- that you  
37 want to share with the commissioners?  
38 TERRI SZABO: My personal life?  
39 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Not -- not just your personal life  
40 but how the -- how May's death or your family's  
41 tragedy has been impacted.  
42 TERRI SZABO: Well, before I came I wrote about six  
43 pages, which didn't do me any good because my  
44 brain is just overloaded with stuff. So, my  
45 grandma - I'll probably speak for my mom because  
46 she's too upset and nervous - she was only 48  
47 when she died in 1972 and that was 45 years ago.

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1 She would have been 93. And what I remember of  
2 my grandmother, she was very traditional. I  
3 remember walking with her. I know they lived in  
4 a tent up in a place called Cowboy Hill.  
5 Everybody would go woodcutting there. And I  
6 remember my grandma cooking fish over the fire in  
7 tinfoil, and I don't think I saw anyone doing  
8 that before. And she used to tell us stories,  
9 really scary stories. At night we'd sit around  
10 her and she'd tell us all these stories. And I  
11 remember she did not have a toilet, so we -- I  
12 had to go on a 5 gallon bucket. And she had a  
13 piece of plyboard over it. And I never forgot  
14 that because I remember I had to use it in the  
15 middle of the night and I fell asleep on it.

16 [Audience laughter]

17 TERRI SZABO: So, that's something I remember. And my  
18 grandma also had this old -- it was like a ringer  
19 that you sit on a -- I don't know, I can't  
20 explain it, but you attach it to a -- yeah, like  
21 a -- like a stand and then you -- you manually  
22 turn it. Anyway, my Auntie Rachel and I were  
23 somehow fascinated with this thing and we used to  
24 collect all of the clothes from my grandma's  
25 house and we'd get this great, big wash tub. And  
26 behind my grandma's house there's a creek that  
27 flows by, Albert Creek, and we'd pack water up  
28 there and we'd put all the clothes in there. And  
29 I don't think we even washed them. We just put  
30 it -- made it wet and put it through the ringer  
31 and hung it on her line. So, to this day I  
32 still -- I don't know what grandma did with those  
33 wet clothes. So, that's just something that I  
34 remember there.

35 Things that I've heard from my mom, I guess  
36 my grandparents never drank alcohol. They were  
37 nomadic. They lived around Frances Lake,  
38 Simpson Lake. And my -- my grandma had two  
39 husbands, my grandpa Norman Stewart and then she  
40 left him because I guess he was quite mean, and  
41 married his brother, my grandpa Timmy Stewart.  
42 But my mom said that they were taken away to  
43 residential school and because of that my -- they  
44 had to move to Upper Liard. And at the same time  
45 other families came from Ross River and lived in  
46 tents beside the Liard River because they wanted  
47 to be closer to their -- to their kids. And my



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1 dad's Caucasian and I just -- I guess I'm going  
2 to talk a little bit about humanity, just what I  
3 see being mixed.

4 You know, when we were kids, my youngest  
5 brother, Mickey (phonetic), died many years ago.  
6 We were very close. And, you know, my mom and  
7 dad were two different coloured people and they  
8 never talked about colour. We never looked at  
9 our parents with colour. Never. They were  
10 our -- that was our mom and that was our dad.  
11 Never. And I heard about being different from  
12 society. And you get it from both sides. And --  
13 and it doesn't matter if people don't agree with  
14 what I say, it's just my personal experience and  
15 what I see and -- and what I felt. But, you  
16 know, as a child you'd go into the First Nation  
17 community and even with that word, I'm not sure  
18 what word to use to identify First Nation people  
19 because in -- I've heard that it comes from  
20 academia but I'm not sure. First I heard Indian,  
21 then I heard Native, then I heard -- what else  
22 did I hear? First Nation, Indigenous. There's  
23 one more word I'm missing. But we've had so many  
24 different names. And I always knew myself as a  
25 half-breed when I was a child. And it didn't  
26 bother me. And, anyway, the First Nation people  
27 would call me white lady, and then I'd go to the  
28 Caucasian community and I'd be called an Indian.  
29 So, where do you fit in? Nowhere, you know,  
30 but ... And sometimes even my own mother has  
31 difficult -- difficulties with me because I'm not  
32 like her. I'm my own self. And, you know, she  
33 tries to force her culture on me a lot, but I am  
34 who I am and that's how it is, but, you know, I  
35 respect people's differences. And I think that's  
36 what's wrong with humanity, people don't accept  
37 people's differences. We're all the same no  
38 matter what colour we are. You know, no one's  
39 better than the next person.

40 My mom has told me stories too where -- and  
41 I can't get over this and thank God I wasn't  
42 alive back then, but, you know, my dad would go  
43 in the bar and this is what my mom would have to  
44 do because Indians weren't allowed in the bar  
45 back then - could you imagine that? Just because  
46 you're an Indian you're not allowed to go in the  
47 bar. That's bullshit. Anyway, my mom would look

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1 through the window like this at my dad. Just  
2 because she was Indian. And also when my dad --  
3 when my mom and dad got married, my mom was no  
4 longer Indian, according to the Canadian  
5 government. She was a white lady. What's up  
6 with that? You know, I just -- I was never  
7 oppressed but my mom was and I can see it. I  
8 mean, sometimes when I take the microphone or I  
9 start talking, my mom will literally run away  
10 because, you know, I will speak my truth whether  
11 people like it or not, and what I say, it's my  
12 truth. I don't say anything to hurt anybody, but  
13 I speak my truth and what I see as a person.  
14 And, you know, I -- when I was a kid, I played  
15 with everyone. I had Caucasian friends, Native  
16 friends, and I'm still not sure what the proper  
17 word is for my mom's people, I don't know, and  
18 even where I fit in, but, you know what, I don't  
19 care.

20 But, anyway, I think for my -- going back to  
21 my grandmother, I really think she would be alive  
22 today if the government or the Queen of England  
23 did not colonize Canada. The colonizers caused a  
24 lot of problems. A lot of problems. You know,  
25 they came here with the word "ethnocentrism" in  
26 their mind. And if people don't know what it  
27 means, look it up in the dictionary, or, better  
28 yet, Google it. It means that the colonizers  
29 thought that -- in their mind that they were  
30 better than. Wow, look at all these savages  
31 running around here. You know, we're going to  
32 fix them, we're going to teach them English,  
33 we're going to teach them how to whatever they  
34 wanted us to do. But, you know, there was never  
35 anything wrong with my mom. You know, I have  
36 known my mom for 50-some years now. She's a  
37 First Nation woman. She's been a really good mom  
38 and I'm -- I'm sure she's learnt a lot from her  
39 mother. And, you know, she's been oppressed so  
40 much, told that she's heathen and all these bad  
41 things in residential school. And my mom is not  
42 like that. My mom is a person. Her skin is a  
43 different colour, but she's -- she's a human  
44 being. And, you know, in society if we don't  
45 accept our differences, it's -- we're never going  
46 to go anywhere. You know, everybody is the same  
47 and no one is better than the next person. And I

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1 think with the colonizers doing that and along  
2 with residential school, and this really bothered  
3 me when I learnt this, and I'll just say now this  
4 is one of the reasons I brought my daughter,  
5 Annette, because the things that I'm talking  
6 about she doesn't know about because I never told  
7 her. And the same thing with my mom, she never  
8 told me all these things when I was a kid. I  
9 just learnt by -- by sitting and listening and,  
10 you know, practicing what you learn when you  
11 leave here with other people, including your  
12 children. You know, racism and indifferences,  
13 it's learnt in the home around the dinner table.  
14 Parents telling their children, "Oh, I saw this  
15 dirty Indian downtown drunk." You know, if you  
16 are telling your children this, you are a part of  
17 the problem in society with hatred and  
18 indifference. And I want people to really think  
19 about this because no one is better than the next  
20 person because my dad is Caucasian, my mom is  
21 First Nation, I love my parents, both of them.  
22 They're good people. They could have been green,  
23 orange, yellow, blue, it don't matter. Love is  
24 love. We as people, one person at a time have to  
25 make changes for the better, by accepting other  
26 people for their differences. And all these  
27 drunk Indians you see staggering around, they  
28 have a story to tell and I learnt that. I never  
29 went to residential school, but the kids that  
30 were taken away, I remember that day, I think I  
31 was about 6, because I cried. The kids that I  
32 played with were going to Lower Post. I thought  
33 they were going to a big city. And I -- they  
34 were getting something that I wasn't getting.  
35 But little did I know where they were going and  
36 what would happen to them. And I played with  
37 these kids that were sexually abused, beaten and  
38 I don't know what happened to them, and that --  
39 that bothers me. So, there's an  
40 intergenerational affect here with my mom going  
41 and the kids that I played with and that's not  
42 okay. That's not acceptable. Why do we treat  
43 other people like that? Just because they're  
44 different? So what.  
45 I just could go on and on, but those are  
46 some of the mitigating -- I mean, contributing  
47 factors to some of the issues that, you know,

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1           caused my grandmother's death and all these other  
2           issues that we have in society today.

3       CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Ann, can I ask you a couple more  
4           questions about your mother, in particular some  
5           of the things she taught you as a child. What  
6           were some of her strengths?

7       ANN SZABO: [indiscernible] When we trap out in the  
8           bush, my dad and my mom would be left in a tent  
9           with us. And she'd get me to keep the fire  
10          going, to put wood in the stove. And then she'd  
11          say, "You come over here to sit beside me. You  
12          guys, you -- you're growing up. I'm going to  
13          teach you how to sew your own -- your own  
14          dresses." Back then my dad gets big materials  
15          and stuff for -- from the Hudson's Bay in Frances  
16          Lake. And big -- big rolls of -- bundles of --  
17          yards of material. So my mom would cut out our  
18          dresses for us without no measurement or  
19          anything. She just look at us and she knows what  
20          size we use. And then she said, "Now," she said,  
21          "I'm going to teach you how to sew. And there's  
22          your needle and there's yours." And my sister  
23          Mary and I would sit down and the rest of the  
24          little kids would be in bed. And Mary would be  
25          so busy sewing. She got to the -- to the front  
26          and we're supposed to sew our buttons on the side  
27          or the side and put -- put holes in there for the  
28          buttons and stitch it up. And she had her  
29          buttons inside. And then I had my skirt. I made  
30          the top. My other arm was -- my sleeve was  
31          inside-out and sticking out this way. And the  
32          seam was up here and it was supposed to be done  
33          here. And then this side was right. And then my  
34          skirt was the right -- was the right way but  
35          my -- my top was inside-out. And my buttons was  
36          on the right way but the wrong side. But we both  
37          cried over our dresses and she told us, "This is  
38          not the right way. This is -- this is the way it  
39          is. You guys supposed -- you're going to take it  
40          apart." So, we sat there. She felt sorry for  
41          us, so she gave us a little lunch and then we  
42          went to bed. We had to put away our dress until  
43          the next morning. So, that's the kind of mom I  
44          had.

45                 She taught us how to sew our moccasins when  
46                 we grew older. Mary was much later. I had a  
47                 problem with my moccasin. It was always lopsided

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1 this way. And I got so that I learn how to sew  
2 my moccasin and put it together the right way.

3 And then I also know how to do beadwork.  
4 And I did beautiful beadwork for my girl. She  
5 was the only girl I had. So, I made her -- she  
6 wanted a pair of mukluks, so I made her mukluks.

7 And I got older and I used to -- I used to  
8 be sick a lot. And I guess all that residential  
9 school trauma, I used to be sick a lot and later  
10 on in life I had -- I had seizures. That  
11 gradually went away and it didn't bother to come  
12 back, thank God. And then quite recently I  
13 suffered lymphoma. And then I thank God also for  
14 that, that I came back and I got out of it and I  
15 got better. And she was my escort. My girl was  
16 my escort. And ...

17 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: [indiscernible]

18 ANN SZABO: I forgot my doctor's name.

19 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Savage.

20 ANN SZABO: My doctor's name was -- she was telling  
21 me, she said, "You know what, mom," she said,  
22 "You know what your doctor's name was?  
23 Dr. Savage." I said, "Well, that's good."

24 [Audience laughter]

25 ANN SZABO: Well, that's good to hear. I said -- I  
26 was so sick I didn't remember because they had to  
27 drill a hole in my hip for to get some marrow  
28 bone, marrow out of my hip. She was with me.  
29 She was brave through that.

30 And I went through a lot of illness, but I'm  
31 here today and I'm proud to be here. And I'm --  
32 to talk about my mom. My mom was a wonderful  
33 lady and she loves her kids and see loves her  
34 grandkids, which she didn't get to know -- to  
35 know well. I love my mom.

36 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Annette --

37 ANNETTE EIKLAND: Yes.

38 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: -- I -- I know you, just based on  
39 the year of death, you weren't alive during the  
40 same time that your grandmother passed,  
41 great-grandmother passed. Is that true? You  
42 weren't alive when [indiscernible]

43 ANNETTE EIKLAND: No, I was not, no.

44 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Okay. But can you share with the  
45 commissioners what you want to share about the  
46 impact it's had on the generations from -- from  
47 your perspective, for you?

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1 ANNETTE EIKLAND: Well, I think -- my heart's just  
2 with my mom because I have such a great  
3 relationship with my grandmother and that was  
4 taken away from her and that just breaks my  
5 heart. You know, the things that my grandma --  
6 grandma has taught me and the time that I spend  
7 with her, it's -- I wouldn't trade it for  
8 anything and my mom's never going to have that or  
9 didn't have that, so. Yeah.

10 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Is there anything else that you  
11 wanted to share?

12 ANNETTE EIKLAND: No.

13 TERRI SZABO: I just want to add when -- like, it's  
14 really important to listen to what people say.  
15 This is how you learn. Because I didn't go to  
16 residential school, I didn't suffer a lot of the,  
17 I guess, contributing factors from residential  
18 school. I mean, I did and I didn't. I've heard  
19 worst stories, so I consider myself lucky and,  
20 you know, really honour people that have  
21 suffered. That, you know, you're stronger than  
22 you think. People have gone through a lot and  
23 you're still here.

24 Anyway, I learnt about this just by  
25 listening, going to events like this. I learnt a  
26 lot from going to university. And when I went to  
27 university, I did my genealogy. And on my dad's  
28 side, my dad's a -- a Hungarian Jew actually,  
29 would you believe colonization and the holocaust,  
30 can't find anything better than that, but,  
31 anyway, on my dad side they're European settlers,  
32 immigrants, farmers, nothing out of the ordinary,  
33 and on my mom's side is all devastation, death,  
34 murder, alcohol. And, you know, when my grandma  
35 died, she left a lot of children. And my  
36 youngest Aunt Rachel was the same age as I and we  
37 were like sisters, we played together and,  
38 you know, I didn't talk about her. I brought her  
39 up a little bit the last time when you guys were  
40 here, that she was also murdered by her common  
41 law, you know. And my younger's brother,  
42 Donovan, froze to death. My Aunty Lucy drank  
43 herself to death. And my Aunty Mary recently  
44 died and she just lived a life of alcohol. And,  
45 you know, I contribute all those problems to  
46 colonization and residential school. You know,  
47 the colonizers, the Queen there of England

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1 thought she knew right, but she didn't. No.  
2 They got it wrong big time. And, you know, I'd  
3 like to see changes, some of the changes that I  
4 spoke about because I'm tired of going to  
5 funerals. In the past month in Watson Lake I  
6 probably went to maybe four or five. Lots of  
7 suicides. You know, I -- I watch the news a lot  
8 just to stay tuned with what's happening in the  
9 world and I watched Justin Trudeau last night, I  
10 just about puked. He asked the Pope for  
11 forgiveness for, you know, what happened to the  
12 Aboriginal people. And, you know, I was thinking  
13 why the hell is he asking the Pope for  
14 forgiveness when we didn't do anything. They --  
15 they're the ones that did something wrong. We  
16 don't need to ask for anything. We knew what we  
17 were doing. But the other people thought  
18 otherwise, so ... Unless we start getting along  
19 and treating each other equally, I don't think  
20 we're going to go anywhere. You know, I -- my  
21 mom and dad have been married over 50 years, two  
22 different cultures, two different colours, and  
23 it's been -- there's been a couple wars there,  
24 but they're still going, so you know it's  
25 possible for people to get along. And I say that  
26 with humour and you have to really know my mom  
27 and dad, our relationship to -- to understand, so  
28 it's -- being mixed has been a blessing and a  
29 curse in some ways, but I wouldn't trade it for  
30 anything, so. Yeah, I have -- I have good  
31 parents. It's been quite colourful, so. But --  
32 but unfortunately my grandma missed all this  
33 stuff. Just some of the family members in the  
34 background here want to talk.

35 [indiscernible]

36 LEDA JULES: My name is Leda Jules. I am married to  
37 Ann's oldest brother. And May, they're talking  
38 about, is my mother-in-law. You know, and I just  
39 listened to the reports they were talking about.  
40 It doesn't sound right for me, you know. Because  
41 I knew the night that she disappeared she was  
42 sober. And the reason why I know that is she  
43 came over to the house in 1972, there was a flood  
44 down in Liard, the highway flood and washed away.  
45 And -- and that one time they thought the bridge  
46 was going to go, so she came over to the house  
47 and she tell us, "Let's go down to the river and

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Remarks by Leda Jules

1 have a look," you know, and she tell me that I  
2 had to be prepared. And she tell me I had to  
3 pack up things for the kids, so, you know, we'd  
4 be ready if anything should happen. And she was  
5 sober. She wasn't drinking. So, it's kind of a  
6 surprise to -- for me to hear that she was drunk.  
7 It really bothered me because I knew my  
8 mother-in-law. She was a kind-hearted woman.  
9 She loved kids. She loved all my kids, you know,  
10 and she babysat for us and whenever we're in  
11 town. So, you know, just listening today,  
12 you know, his aunt's death was pretty hard on  
13 him, but she died later, that's May's mom.  
14 That's my husband's aunt. Now I'm talking about  
15 my mother-in-law too. That's May's sister. And  
16 May's sister Elsie, they're both gone and they  
17 both died violently. And it's been pretty hard  
18 on the kids. Because my -- my -- my children  
19 really loved their grandmother, you know. Never  
20 once did she say anything mean or bad to the  
21 kids. She loved them. She cooked for them. She  
22 did everything for the kids. You never would  
23 hear her swear at the kids or anything because --  
24 I hear that in some other homes, but never her  
25 home. And my kids were always safe with her.

26 You know, at that -- at that time they found  
27 her body, my -- my husband was out working, he  
28 didn't know his mother was gone because we didn't  
29 know. We didn't know. Nobody told us that she  
30 had died. People were looking for her. They  
31 said she was in Ross River visiting her sister,  
32 Elsie. And we thought it was true because we  
33 knew she always talked about Elsie all the time.  
34 And then later on we hear she was found in  
35 Carmacks, I don't know for what reason, because  
36 she really didn't know very much people at  
37 Carmacks. So it was stories after stories and  
38 she's been -- she was missing for about two,  
39 three weeks before we found out what happened to  
40 her. We didn't find out, but my youngest -- my  
41 younger sister-in-law, Cecelia, she -- she must  
42 have been about -- I don't know how old, 9, 10,  
43 I'm not really sure how old she was at that time,  
44 but she ran away from that probation officer  
45 because she is supposed to be in school and there  
46 were -- we had a probation officer that was  
47 always checking around on kids. So, she was one



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Remarks by Leda Jules

1 of the kids that missed school a lot since -- and  
2 her mother wasn't around. So, she ran away from  
3 the probation officer and running down that hill  
4 by that graveyard. That's when she found her  
5 mom. And, like, when Terri was talking,  
6 you know, and First Nations women, ever since  
7 we're small kids we're taught to be respectful  
8 for our bodies and our -- everything has got to  
9 be covered up. And students, how long dresses we  
10 used to wear, believe it or not, since the --  
11 it's just recently women started wearing jeans  
12 was in 1950s. Before then all women, children,  
13 young girls, they always had dresses. I remember  
14 that when we were growing up. Even wintertime we  
15 had dresses. They made dresses for us because  
16 that was part of our culture. So when they found  
17 my mother-in-law in that -- in that -- behind  
18 that -- down the hill from her place, she was --  
19 from what I hear, she -- she had been raped and  
20 she had no clothes from her waist down. And my  
21 husband just got off work from the mill down  
22 there, sawmills. He worked for Desrochers  
23 (phonetic). And he ran home and I -- I tell him,  
24 "Don't go down there," but he had to see, he had  
25 to check. And he loved his mother. So to find  
26 her in that condition, you know, it's been really  
27 hard on him. And the only reason too is that,  
28 you know, I knew she was sober is because she  
29 came to our house very late and we walked down to  
30 the bridge and, you know, just to see the high  
31 water. There was three of us, me and my husband  
32 Robert, and his mom. And, you know, if anybody  
33 should tell us that she was drunk, she wasn't  
34 drunk at all. And, you know, and something --  
35 something has to come out of this, you know.  
36 We -- we need answers. We really need closure to  
37 this. We never had that. You know, and just  
38 listening to grandma Elsie's family just before  
39 this, you know, it's really troubling because  
40 it's just Native women being raped and murdered,  
41 you know. We -- we need -- we need something.  
42 I'll be speaking on behalf of my sister later on  
43 this week, on Thursday. So, you know, the kids  
44 really need to know that their grandmother loved  
45 them. We -- I was -- I was one of the children  
46 that went to Lower Post. I had a lot of regrets  
47 on how I raised up my children. Just listening

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Remarks by Leda Jules

1 to May talking about her being the supervisor to  
2 her kids and not their mother, we all went  
3 through that. I was like that too. I never -- I  
4 never told my kids that I loved them. And it was  
5 hard, you know. I forced my kids to go to church  
6 every Sunday. I'm -- still today I'm a Catholic  
7 yet, but it's not the religion, it's not the  
8 church, it's -- it's the people that run,  
9 you know. So, you have to know there is a  
10 difference too. And I loved my mother-in-law.  
11 And a lot of people don't love their  
12 mother-in-law. You hear horror stories about  
13 their mother-in-laws.

14 [Audience laughter]

15 LEDA JULES: And yet -- like *Monster-in-law*, that's  
16 what I hear too, but, you know, she was more than  
17 a mother, mother-in-law to me, you know. So, I  
18 just wanted to share that with the -- with my  
19 sister. I'm really close with her, with Ann.  
20 She's been married to Andy for 58 years. And I  
21 have been married to her brother for 56 years, so  
22 we are more than family.

23 TERRI SZABO: I just want to quickly say something so  
24 that the general public understands this. The  
25 family that went before us, the Shorty family,  
26 they're our cousins. And their -- their mom,  
27 Elsie Shorty, was my mom's sister. So, my  
28 great-aunt, Elsie Shorty, someone killed her, and  
29 someone killed my grandma's mom, my grandma May.  
30 And the Queen did a good job with -- with alcohol  
31 and suicide and all the other problems, so ...  
32 Haven't killed me yet though, so watch out.

33 [Audience laughter]

34 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Do the commissioners have any  
35 questions for the family?

36 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: I -- I have a couple of  
37 questions and I'll ... That's okay. I -- thank  
38 you for bringing these documents and sharing them  
39 with us. I was hoping you could tell us a little  
40 bit more about what brought you to -- to seek  
41 this information, what steps that you have taken  
42 to try and get more information. And this is all  
43 you have received?

44 TERRI SZABO: So, the first question was what made me  
45 seek that information?

46 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Like, more so how, like, the  
47 steps that you have taken and what you have

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1 received. I -- I understand why.

2 [indiscernible]

3 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Yeah, yeah, of course.

4 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So, why did you want to look for  
5 the -- the documents in the first place? And --  
6 and then what steps have you taken to get  
7 information?

8 TERRI SZABO: Okay.

9 [indiscernible]

10 TERRI SZABO: Okay. Well, the reason I looked for the  
11 documents and started this process was my mom  
12 would always speak about her mother being raped  
13 and murdered. And I'd hear it, you know, maybe  
14 every other year, every couple months, so I  
15 thought, well, you know, my mom is getting older,  
16 so I told, mom, well, you know, I am going to do  
17 something about this and we're going to find the  
18 rapist, murderer or murderers that did this to  
19 your mom, my grandmother, maybe before you die  
20 hopefully. So I just went to the police station  
21 and I told them what my mom had told me and it  
22 just kind of started from there.

23 So like I said earlier, the police came to  
24 my house and, you know, they asked where my  
25 grandmother was buried in the cemetery in Upper  
26 Liard, so they went there. And then Major Crimes  
27 phoned me from Whitehorse and just asked me to  
28 talk about what I had known about my grandmother,  
29 so I just explained what I knew. And I'm not  
30 sure if they spoke to my mom, I didn't ask her.  
31 And I phoned the coroner to see if they had  
32 anything and that's how I got the documents. I  
33 asked for pictures, but there was no pictures.  
34 And Major Crimes did do some legwork. They spoke  
35 to the investigating officers, who are still  
36 alive, and they, I guess, gave a statement and  
37 just said basically the same thing that is in the  
38 document.

39 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: The -- the only other question  
40 that I have and any of the three of you can  
41 answer this is we've heard about some of May's  
42 strengths, but what would -- is there anything  
43 that you would want to -- to help honour her, her  
44 legacy, her memory, anything, type of  
45 recommendation you think would be important to do  
46 that?

47 TERRI SZABO: Well, I guess priority for me would be

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1 to find out who did that, that it's not okay to  
2 rape a woman and kill her. You know, that she  
3 was important to -- to us. That was my  
4 grandmother and I was denied a grandmother. My  
5 mom was denied a mother. And, you know, no  
6 knowledge of how to be a parent, so it was  
7 basically just I guess what she knew best. It's  
8 a violent crime, I mean, and, you know, I believe  
9 that that person or persons could still be  
10 walking around out there and maybe they did it  
11 again. Protect society. And I know in  
12 residential school a lot of children were raped  
13 and they came back to the community and,  
14 you know, they kept raping other kids, and it  
15 just went on and on, and it's still going on  
16 today. And there's a lot of talk about rape also  
17 in the news, that it -- it's not being reported.  
18 And I know laws is doing a lot of work and -- and  
19 Ann can come up here and talk about what they're  
20 doing if she wants because I don't know as much  
21 as she does, but I know a lot of women are  
22 getting raped and not reporting it, and we're  
23 talking about really young girls, girls that are  
24 passed out, and that's not okay, that's not  
25 acceptable, and that has to stop. And also a  
26 judge, I saw on the news, that he told one  
27 complainant that she should keep her legs closed.  
28 And I think he was fired, I'm not sure, but  
29 that's not okay. And like I say, it always goes  
30 back to the dinner table. You know, raise your  
31 children right. Tell them that, you know, it's  
32 not okay.

33 And another thing is we have all these  
34 problems and there's no mental health services  
35 for people. It's huge. And that's not only for  
36 the First Nation community, that's, you know,  
37 general public in -- in Canada we need mental  
38 health services. It's okay to have a problem in  
39 your mind. You're not crazy. It's -- you know  
40 that taboo, it has to go. We have to talk about  
41 it because people do have problems. Just like a  
42 broken leg, you get a cast, well, maybe you need  
43 medication, maybe you need to talk to a  
44 counsellor. Just ... It's -- it's just  
45 something that's -- you can't put a Band-Aid on.  
46 It's -- it's a process that is going to go on for  
47 a while. It took 500 years to cause all these

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1 problems, so maybe take another 500 to undo it, I  
2 don't know, but mental health is huge. It's  
3 huge. And, you know, respect for women. It's  
4 not okay to -- to touch someone, rape someone,  
5 make rude comments. You know, educate the  
6 judicial system, the judges. I was surprised  
7 actually when I went into the wrong door here,  
8 they're having a Justice Conference. Well, they  
9 could have came here and learnt probably more  
10 because, you know, all these colonial ideologies  
11 that they have in the judicial system, social  
12 services, it's not working, and they just keep  
13 using the same system. They put people in jail,  
14 I mean, they're not monkeys, and they come out  
15 with the same problem. Social Services, they  
16 take the child. They need to repair the family  
17 as a whole. Oh, just -- okay, thank you.

18 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Is there anything else anyone  
19 wanted to say, the final -- anything final to  
20 the -- the commissioners?

21 TERRI SZABO: I could go on forever, but since I  
22 always watch the news, I have been hearing bad  
23 press about the commissioners. And I think my  
24 only issue is -- is it's -- it feels like you're  
25 on trial here. For me anyway personally it's --  
26 and because First Nations people have been  
27 oppressed, I mean, my mom wouldn't do this if it  
28 wasn't for me. And I just think we have to find  
29 a different way other than these colonial  
30 ideologies to -- to repair the harm that's been  
31 done. It's -- it's -- I know you guys have a  
32 tough job and it -- it would be draining to  
33 listen to all these problems across Canada and  
34 you've been getting bad press and -- that's my  
35 only issue this -- this -- it feels like you're  
36 on trial. And it's probably intimidating for a  
37 lot of people, but I -- I talk a lot and,  
38 you know, I will speak my mind and my mom always  
39 gives me that look, but that's okay, that's been  
40 going on for years. But I just really would like  
41 to tell all the First Nation people in Canada  
42 to -- you know, we all have our issues, our  
43 complaints, but do it in a respectful way and get  
44 behind this process of murdered and missing women  
45 and girls, and we have to find solutions to these  
46 problems. It has to stop. And just try and work  
47 together instead of conquer and divide.

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1           You know, just try to respect one -- one another,  
2           support each other. Just help each other in some  
3           way so that we can stop this -- I guess all these  
4           problems, so thank you.

5           ANN SZABO: Can I say something?

6           UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Mm-hmm.

7           ANN SZABO: I'd just like to say something that I -- I  
8           wouldn't want to walk out of -- out the door  
9           without saying it. The Shorty family is my first  
10          cousins. And their mother, Elsie Shorty, who was  
11          murdered, her and my mother and they also had a  
12          brother. Their brother's name was Tom. And when  
13          my Uncle Tom, their -- my mother and Aunty Elsie  
14          Shorty's were small and I don't think not too big  
15          and they were living out in the -- in the  
16          wilderness, in the bush, and my mother -- my  
17          grandmother -- my grandfather's wife was carrying  
18          my Uncle Tom and she went into labour and there  
19          was only these two little girls. This is what I  
20          hear from my mother when she was telling me the  
21          story. It's just like it was yesterday that  
22          she'd tell a story. We used to sit around. But  
23          when she was telling us that story about how they  
24          got separated, at that time my Aunty Elsie was --  
25          we found out she was living in Ross River. We  
26          hadn't been to Ross River and we were teenagers  
27          by then. And then we found out that she had a  
28          brother named Tom. And there was three of them.  
29          And after my grandfather lost his wife to  
30          childbirth, the little guy was born and health,  
31          but my grandfather was left without his wife  
32          because his wife passed away. And he bundled up  
33          all his little -- little -- little ki-- little  
34          children and he loaded them on a toboggan and he  
35          went to the nearest place where he know there was  
36          people that he knew. He went to Ross. And he  
37          handed out his kids to whoever he thought would  
38          look after them well. That's how come I have an  
39          Uncle Tom Smith. The Smith family took my -- my  
40          Uncle Tom. He passed away quite a while back  
41          ago. And then I've got the Shortys. They're --  
42          I love May. She's named after my mom. She's my  
43          first cousin. She's an aunt in my walkie-talkie.

44          [Audience laughter]

45          ANN SZABO: Yeah. And -- and ... So and then my --  
46          my mom was the oldest, eh. Was the oldest. And  
47          my grandpa walked away. Well, she -- he gave her

Terri Szabo, Ann Szabo, Annette Eikland

1 away too. So, she always said she had this  
2 mandolin, you know, an instrument that you play.  
3 My grandfather used to play that. And she said,  
4 "I don't know why," she said, "my dad left me  
5 this mandolin." He said, "It's so heavy," and  
6 plus she had a -- a pet beaver that was really  
7 heavy. She had to take it out of the packsack,  
8 she said, and she had to take little willows out  
9 and -- so the beaver would eat them. And then  
10 she had to find a cup of water or a bowl of a pot  
11 of water to soak its tail because that's how she  
12 was told by her parents. And then she said that  
13 beaver was so heavy and she said she didn't like  
14 the people that her dad left her with, so she  
15 snuck out when those two adults wasn't looking,  
16 she followed my grandfather. She grew up with my  
17 grandfather over here in Watson Lake, in Liard  
18 area. So that's how come she came -- she became  
19 my mother and the grandmother of my children, and  
20 my aunt and my cousins grew up in Ross. My uncle  
21 was in Ross. So, I got to know them when I was  
22 older. That's my story about my -- my  
23 grandparents. Thank you.

24 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: I believe that will conclude with  
25 what the family has to share, but I understand  
26 Commissioner Audette has something to say.

27 COMMISSIONER AUDETTE: *Oui*. Yes, I want to say  
28 something because an important comment or message  
29 also of - my English - I think it's important  
30 what you just said about how we should do things.  
31 And one of the mandates that we have or we're  
32 provoking is that we don't want to wait until the  
33 end to propose new ways. And today a young woman  
34 who works with us, very young, said debriefing is  
35 important with staff but what about with the  
36 families. So I hope you'll be there this week,  
37 where commissioners and the staff will debrief  
38 with the family about the setup, about how things  
39 happen, how can we improve for the next one. So,  
40 you're giving us a gift. *Merci*.

41 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Because you have given us  
42 so much this afternoon, we have a small gift for  
43 you as a recognition of our -- our gratitude.  
44 They're seeds that we hope that you'll plant and  
45 tell us that they grow. Thank you.

46 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you. The family has just  
47 requested to close with a prayer. Is it Ann that

1 will be saying the prayer again?

2 ANN SZABO: Dear God Jesus, bless this whole area  
3 where they're having this most important event  
4 for Murdered Indigenous women and girls. Lord  
5 Jesus, bless the people that are working with us,  
6 all their hard work. And bless the people that  
7 came to attend. Bless their family and keep them  
8 safe. And Lord God Jesus, I pray that you give  
9 them knowledge, the people that are working  
10 with -- with the people that are attending here.  
11 Give them knowledge to make the change for  
12 everyone that is here, and bless their family  
13 that they left behind at their home, their  
14 children, their grandchildren, whoever they love.  
15 And bless our homes and -- and our children,  
16 our -- our husbands. And Lord God, I pray have  
17 mercy on -- on each and every one of us here and  
18 give us courage to speak up. Give courage and  
19 strength for the people that -- that have to come  
20 up here to tell their story. Give them strength  
21 and courage, dear Lord God. I pray in the name  
22 of Our Lord Jesus' name. Amen.

23 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: We'll take about a ten  
24 minute break, please.  
25

26 **Third Hearing Exhibit**

27 **Terri Szabo, Ann Szabo and Annette Eikland (Family of**  
28 **May Stewart)**

29  
30 Exhibit P1: Three-page double-sided copy of  
31 correspondence and report of Yukon Coroners  
32 Service  
33

34 (HEARING ADJOURNED)

35 (HEARING RECONVENED)  
36

37 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Ms. Snowshoe, are we ready  
38 to start?  
39 [indiscernible]  
40

41 **Fourth Hearing**

42 **Catherine Doctor and Cindy Allen (Family of Mary Adele**  
43 **Doctor) with Karen Snowshoe (Commission Counsel)**  
44

45 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Catherine, I understand that you  
46 wanted to start with The Lord's Prayer.



Catherine Doctor and Cindy Allen

1 CATHERINE DOCTOR: Yes.

2 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Would you please lead us in that  
3 prayer.

4 CATHERINE DOCTOR: [indiscernible] stand up.

5 In the name of the Father and the son and  
6 the holy spirit, amen. Our Father, who art in  
7 heaven, hallowed by thy name. Thy kingdom come,  
8 thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.  
9 Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us  
10 our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass  
11 against us. And lead us not into temptation but  
12 deliver us from evil. Amen. For thine is the  
13 kingdom, the power and the glory is yours now and  
14 forever and ever. Amen. In the name of the  
15 Father, the son, and the holy spirit.

16 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE SPEAKER: Thank you. Thank you.

17 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Chief Commissioner, commissioners, it  
18 is my complete honour to introduce to you today  
19 in the matter of Marie Adele Doctor I present to  
20 you Mary Adele Doctor's daughter, Catherine  
21 Doctor; the granddaughter of Mary Adele Doctor,  
22 Cindy Allen, and the great-granddaughter of Marie  
23 Adele Doctor, Sunfire Jack (phonetic).

24 Bryan, would you please provide an oath to  
25 Ms. Catherine Doctor. She'll be swearing on the  
26 Bible today. Thank you.

27 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Good afternoon, Cathy. Hi. Do you  
28 swear that the evidence you will give this  
29 afternoon will be the truth, the whole truth, and  
30 nothing but the truth, so help you God?

31 CATHERINE DOCTOR: I will

32

33

CATHERINE DOCTOR, sworn.

34

35 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay. Thank you.

36 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you.

37 And, Bryan, Cindy Allen would like to affirm  
38 today.

39 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Cindy, do you solemnly affirm that  
40 the evidence you will give will be the truth, the  
41 whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

42 CINDY ALLEN: The words that I speak today are the  
43 truth as I know it, yes.

44 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay.

45 CINDY ALLEN: [Aboriginal language spoken]

46 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Thank you.

47

Catherine Doctor and Cindy Allen

1 CINDY ALLEN, affirmed.

2  
3 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Catherine, I understand that you have  
4 a written statement prepared today that you would  
5 like to read to the commissioners. Please  
6 proceed when you're ready.

7 CATHERINE DOCTOR: My name is Catherine Doctor and I  
8 am from Yellowknife, Ndilo, in the Northwest  
9 Territories. I am here to speak to you about my  
10 mother, Mary Adele Doctor.

11 Mary Adele Doctor was born in Behchoko, Fort  
12 Rae, on October 1st, 1924. She was the  
13 granddaughter of Chief Monfwi, the signator of  
14 Treaty 11 of the Tlicho Nation in 1921.

15 Monfwi's lands from Fort Providence along  
16 the Mackenzie River to Great Bear Lake and across  
17 Behchoko (phonetic) Lake and to the present day  
18 Lutseke (phonetic) and along the northern shores  
19 of Great Slave Lake to Fort Providence were used  
20 as the base of the Tlicho Land Claims Agreement.

21 My mother was a powerful woman that raised  
22 11 children, three daughters and eight sons, in  
23 the bush. Mary survived residential school in  
24 Fort Providence and had to relearn the Tlicho  
25 language on her return to Behchoko. She was a  
26 strong, tough Dene woman. She and my father,  
27 Gabriel Doctor, spent much of their time out on  
28 the land and the camp site [indiscernible], at  
29 the family cabin at Mile 16 on Highway 2 and in  
30 the Bear Lands.

31 My parents were known for their culture  
32 teachings and led a culture camp in Ndilo and in  
33 Yellowknife in the 1990s, where they taught  
34 others how to tan caribou, moose hides, prepare  
35 muskrats, make sinew, build drums. Mary Adele  
36 Doctor was a very respected elder from Ndilo that  
37 knew a lot about Dene traditional laws, spiritual  
38 cultural practice and bush skills.

39 On January 15, 2009 my mother, Mary Adele  
40 Doctor, who was 81, was violently assaulted in  
41 her own home in Ndilo by a woman. This woman was  
42 not invited to my mom's -- mother's home. She  
43 did not know my mother. She broke into my  
44 mother's home, and when she was asked to leave  
45 she became violent and seriously injured my mom.  
46 That tragic result was that my -- my mom died  
47 three weeks later from the violent assault.

1           The woman who was charged by the police for  
2 the assault got only 14 months. But because of  
3 time served, she was out three months after,  
4 which to me was like a slap on the wrist. The  
5 woman that assaulted my mom still lives the  
6 negative life. She is a street woman. I feel  
7 justice was not served.

8           My mother was well-respected, a beloved  
9 mother, grandmother and great-grandmother. She  
10 lived a traditional way of life. Because she  
11 died a violent death, I feel the courts should  
12 have given the woman a much stiffer sentence.

13           It was in the newspaper. The headline was  
14 "The police usually get their man but in this  
15 case it was a woman". To me it was like an  
16 insult, an insult to the memory of who my mom  
17 was, a strong Dene woman with many traditional  
18 skills and knowledge.

19           In Yellowknife there are issues regarding  
20 alcohol and drugs which affects everybody. I  
21 live in Ndilo and I do not feel safe in my own  
22 home because of the alcohol and drug abuse. I  
23 live in the same community that my mom lived in  
24 until she died from the violent -- at the hands  
25 of someone who was not from Ndilo but from  
26 another small community in NWT.

27           There is a lot of homelessness in  
28 Yellowknife. And the court system does not send  
29 people home when they should, and these people  
30 continue to stay in Yellowknife and end up in  
31 Yellowknife. There are a lot ... A lot of small  
32 communities have prohibition, so they go instead  
33 of Yellowknife for alcohol and drugs. The  
34 violence in Yellowknife has gone from bad to  
35 worse as a result of homelessness, alcohol and  
36 drug abuse. Down in Ndilo where I live, I feel  
37 that the Yellowknife's Dene First Nation Band  
38 Council should have more resource and do more  
39 itself as an Aboriginal government to help deal  
40 with these issues happening in Ndilo and in  
41 Yellowknife.

42           In the community of Ndilo everybody knows  
43 that there are drug dealers and bootleggers.  
44 There have been a lot of deaths -- deaths and  
45 increased violence as a result of these issues  
46 and in Ndilo and in Detta. It is not safe to  
47 live in Yellowknife or in Ndilo. I do not feel

Catherine Doctor and Cindy Allen

1 safe walking around Yellowknife or Ndilo. I do  
2 not feel safe in my own home in Ndilo. I do it  
3 not spend that much time there because I feel  
4 unsafe there and it should not be like that.

5 There is no treatment centre in NWT. Why is  
6 that? I think the government of NWT should have  
7 a treatment centre where people should go get  
8 help with their alcohol and drug addictions.  
9 This has been going on for many years. I do not  
10 understand why the government of NWT doesn't fund  
11 a treatment centre in the North that provides  
12 Dene teaching and culture programs to  
13 Northerners. People seeking treatment for  
14 addiction must go south to get help. A treatment  
15 centre would not solve all the different issues.  
16 The government allows the liquor store to sell  
17 alcohol and make profits. Where is all the money  
18 from alcohol sales going? Some of the money  
19 received by the NWT government from alcohol sales  
20 should go towards funding a treatment centre.  
21 The NWT should have a treatment centre that  
22 Northerners can go for help, to help them to  
23 overcome their addictions. The government of NWT  
24 permits the sale of booze which results in these  
25 issues. The government of NWT should help the  
26 people deal with their issues. It is not only  
27 the government of NWT but also our chief and  
28 councillors and community leaders that need to  
29 help our people. My mother, Mary Adele Doctor,  
30 should not have died a painful death from  
31 violence at the hands of another woman in her own  
32 home in Ndilo. Our chiefs and councillors need  
33 to do more to ensure the safety and protections  
34 of our Indigenous women and girls in our  
35 communities.

36 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you. Thank you, Catherine. I  
37 just have one question for you. You speak of  
38 alcohol and drug issues in Yellowknife that  
39 affect Ndilo, the community where you mentioned  
40 your mother lived and where you also live, and  
41 you have made some recommendations in terms of  
42 addictions treatment. Was your mother's death  
43 alcohol related at all?

44 CATHERINE DOCTOR: Yes, it was.

45 KAREN SNOWSHOE: And can you tell me about -- can you  
46 tell the commissioners about how alcohol was  
47 related?

Catherine Doctor and Cindy Allen

1 CATHERINE DOCTOR: My mom is a traditional woman. She  
2 never drank, smoke, or use alcohol in her life.  
3 And for her to have died a violent death from a  
4 woman that have used alcohol and result of that  
5 my mom died. So for me it's very important that  
6 our people and not just our people, the whole NWT  
7 should get -- have a treatment centre to help  
8 deal with all the different issues as a result of  
9 people using alcohol.

10 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you, Catherine.

11 Commissioners, the family has provided to  
12 our registrar a number of items in support of  
13 Catherine Doctor's statement today. These items  
14 include four newspaper articles regarding the  
15 death of Marie Adele Doctor. This is in addition  
16 to the statement provided by Catherine Doctor  
17 today. And she has also provided the Commission  
18 with a memorial -- how would you call it, a  
19 memorial pamphlet? The pamphlet that was  
20 provided at the memorial of Mary Adele's death.  
21 Thank you.

22 If it's possible now to -- to view the  
23 PowerPoint presentation. There are -- how many  
24 photos?

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Six.

26 KAREN SNOWSHOE: The family would like to offer in  
27 support of their presentation a series of six  
28 photographs. And when the photographs begin, I  
29 will ask Cindy Allen to just give a brief  
30 description of each photo. Thank you.

31 CINDY ALLEN: [Aboriginal language spoken] Thank you.  
32 So the pictures that we have here are about my  
33 grandmother, Mary Adele Doctor. As my Aunty  
34 Cathy, Catherine, has said, my grandmother lived  
35 a traditional lifestyle. She's seen the changes  
36 from -- she lived out in the bush and she lived  
37 through the changes and moving into the  
38 community, but she still lived a very traditional  
39 lifestyle. So this first picture that you see is  
40 of Mary Adele Doctor at the original Hudson Bay  
41 Post in Yellowknife from the -- the picture is  
42 from the 1950s. And you see granny packing  
43 Catherine. And then you see my mother standing  
44 there with her little striped top. And then  
45 Uncle Jimmy Doctor there as well.

46 Next one. This one is -- the next one is  
47 granny with Catherine taken as well at the Hudson

Catherine Doctor and Cindy Allen

1 Bay Post from the 1950s.

2 Next one. So here you can see granny,  
3 Mary Adel Doctor, doing the things that she loves  
4 doing, tanning hides, scraping hides. So this is  
5 from the 1980s at our family camp on the highway  
6 to Mile 16 just outside of Yellowknife.

7 Next one. So here you see her in another  
8 picture, her scraping the hide, and right next to  
9 it is a finished a tanned hide that she did. So,  
10 this was the things that she loved doing.

11 Next one. So here she is as well with -- at  
12 the family camp and there is a finished product  
13 of her tanned, smoked moose hide glove with  
14 beaded -- beading and beaver fur.

15 Next one. So this is the last picture that  
16 I have right now, but this is inside our  
17 granny's -- in -- in the cabin on -- on the  
18 highway. And you can see her with her -- her  
19 beading and her crafts. So, this is the thing  
20 that she liked to do to keep herself busy, but  
21 she also shared these skills and gifts with  
22 others, with the family. And like Catherine  
23 said, her and grandpa had their own culture camp  
24 and they provided these teachings not only to the  
25 family but to others in the community and to  
26 Yellowknife, people living in Yellowknife. So  
27 they were very sharing and giving, not only to  
28 the family but to others.

29 So, those are the pictures that I have to  
30 present here to you and now you can put them on  
31 the loop. [Aboriginal language spoken]

32 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Cindy ... Cindy, I understand that  
33 you have also prepared a written statement today,  
34 which has been provided, 10 copies. And I now --  
35 whenever you're ready, I now invite you to  
36 present your statement to the Commission.

37 CINDY ALLEN: [Aboriginal language spoken]

38 My name is Cindy Allen. I am Weledeh,  
39 Yellowknife's Dene Tlicho person originally from  
40 Yellowknife, Northwest Territories. I am here to  
41 speak to you about my grandmother, Mary Adele  
42 Doctor. My daughter, [indiscernible name] Jack,  
43 Sunfire Jack, is also here to support the family  
44 as the great-granddaughter of Mary Adele Doctor.  
45 I am very honoured that she had the courage to be  
46 here today.

47 My grandmother's traditional [indiscernible]

1 name was Madah (phonetic). Madah. So, I invite  
2 her to be here to witness and listen.

3 My submission to the Murdered and Missing  
4 Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry is my way of  
5 honouring my grandmother. Madah was a beautiful  
6 strong Dene woman and I want to share that with  
7 you.

8 Myself, I grew up in Winnipeg, in Winnipeg,  
9 Manitoba, with my father, Richard Allen, my  
10 brother, Richard, and my two uncles, Doug and  
11 David. My mother, Christine Doctor, also lived  
12 in the city but not with us. I saw her  
13 unfrequently -- infrequently when I was growing  
14 up.

15 In 1994 I came home. I -- I travelled North  
16 for the first time to reconnect with my Dene  
17 family in Ndilo and to be closer to my mother,  
18 Christine Allen, who by that time was living in  
19 the North again.

20 My mother was a very gifted seamstress and a  
21 designer that attended Red River College in  
22 Winnipeg and LaSalle College in Montreal for  
23 fashion design. My mother passed away on  
24 June 19th, 2004 from complications from what was  
25 supposed to be a routine day surgery in Edmonton.  
26 With her passing I was left with a great feeling  
27 of loss, but at least I had some comfort in  
28 knowing that I still had my grandmother, Mary  
29 Adele Doctor, to learn more about my Dene  
30 heritage.

31 Mary Adele Doctor was a very respected elder  
32 from Ndilo that knew a lot about traditional  
33 laws, spirituality, cultural practices, and bush  
34 skills. She raised 11 children, three daughters  
35 and eight sons, in the bush. She and my  
36 grandfather, Gabriel Doctor, spent much of their  
37 time out on the land at their camps at  
38 [indiscernible place name], at the family cabin  
39 at Mile 16 on Highway 2, and in the Barron  
40 (phonetic) grounds. They were known for their  
41 cultural teachings and led a culture camp in  
42 Ndilo and Yellowknife in the 1990s, where they  
43 taught others how to tan caribou and moose hides,  
44 prepare muskrats, make sinews, and build drums.

45 When my grandmother passed in 2009, I was  
46 devastated, since it -- it made it so much harder  
47 for myself and my two kids, [indiscernible name]

1 and my son, [indiscernible name of son], it made  
2 it so much harder for them to learn about being  
3 Weledeh, Yellowknife's Dene Tlicho, and learning  
4 those traditional skills and knowledge.

5 Her death resulting from a violent assault  
6 from another woman in her home in Ndilo is hard  
7 to speak about, but I'm here to honour her story.  
8 I am still grieving for her. I am still grieving  
9 her death and from her being taken away from --  
10 from the family in such a violent way, such a  
11 tragic way. My grief is not only for her but for  
12 the loss of the traditional knowledge and stories  
13 and skills that I will not hear from her at the  
14 kitchen table over a cup of tea with some caribou  
15 meat or fish soup. I will not hear those stories  
16 from her. She is no longer here to teach me how  
17 to tan moose hide, make sinew, or sew beaded  
18 moccasins. (sobbing)

19 I remember going to my grandpa --  
20 grandparents' cultural camp in Ndilo and at Folk  
21 On The Rocks Music Festival in the 1990s and  
22 seeing them teach others traditional Dene skills.  
23 I was so proud of them and to be their grand--  
24 granddaughter. I was so proud. They welcomed me  
25 into their lives and made me feel at home, even  
26 though I did not grow up North and they did  
27 not -- they did not really know who I was, knew  
28 who I -- but they still welcomed me. Even though  
29 they did not have much, they had big hearts.  
30 Whenever I went to their home or visited my  
31 grandmother in Ndilo, there was always tea on and  
32 some food to eat.

33 My favourite memory of my grandfather [sic]  
34 was actually the last time I saw her at her home  
35 in Ndilo in January 2007. I came North to attend  
36 the funeral service of my Uncle Albert Doctor,  
37 who died tragically in a plane crash flying to  
38 Blachford Lake Lodge. I came -- I came to spend  
39 some time with my grandmother. And I remember  
40 her smile and the warm and loving hug that I got  
41 from her when I said goodbye. I did not know at  
42 that time that it would be the last time that I  
43 would ever see her alive (sobbing) or the last  
44 smile or hug I would ever receive from her.

45 It is my hope and request that my submission  
46 to the Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and  
47 Girls Inquiry about my grandmother, Mary Adele



1 Doctor, results in positive changes for  
2 Indigenous women and girls living in Ndilo and  
3 Detta and in the North. The normalization of  
4 violence in Northern communities and in Ndilo and  
5 Detta is not normal. It is not normal and should  
6 not be tolerated. Indigenous women and girls  
7 should not live in fear in their own homes and  
8 communities. The social issues resulting from  
9 alcohol and drugs need to be addressed, not only  
10 by the federal and territorial governments but  
11 also by Dene chiefs and leaders in the  
12 communities. Dene women and girls need to be  
13 protected and feel safe in their homes and these  
14 issues needed -- need to be acted on now. We  
15 should not be waiting any longer.

16 I would like to see photos of my grandmother  
17 and grandfather put up in the Yellowknife's Dene  
18 First Nation offices and the community hall. My  
19 people and others should know of and be reminded  
20 of -- of how amazing my grandmother and  
21 grandparents were. They should be reminded of  
22 our amazing elders. I would love it if there was  
23 a cultural award or scholarship in honour of my  
24 grandmother and grandparents, Mary Adele and  
25 Gabriel Doctor. I think that would be a  
26 wonderful legacy.

27 I would also like to see the traditional  
28 Dene laws of respect, sharing, love, and caring  
29 be more widely taught to Dene and others. The  
30 Dene law of respect is one that teaches respect  
31 to everything around you, the land, the water,  
32 the animals, the bird, and nature. The law of  
33 respect starts with respecting yourself and  
34 respecting others and respecting your elders and  
35 your community. If you live a respectful life,  
36 you will live a life that honours and respects  
37 everything around you. Through respect for self  
38 and others and everything around you there is no  
39 place for violence and negativity. If the woman  
40 who killed my grandmother had lived a respectful  
41 life for herself and if she had treated others  
42 with respect, my grandmother, Mary Adele Doctor,  
43 may not have died the sad and tragic death that  
44 she did.

45 Other recommendations that I suggest to the  
46 inquiry for them to consider when they are making  
47 their final report come from the Truth and

Catherine Doctor and Cindy Allen

1 Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action report.  
2 My recommendations relate to child welfare,  
3 health, and justice, and they are: I'm not sure  
4 if I want to read all of them, but ... I can?  
5 So, under "CHILD WELFARE", recommendation  
6 number 5:

7  
8 We call upon the federal, provincial,  
9 territorial, and Aboriginal governments  
10 to develop culturally appropriate  
11 parenting programs for Aboriginal  
12 families.

13  
14 Under "HEALTH" I -- I recommend 18, 19, 21 and  
15 22. Under 18 :

16  
17 We call upon the federal, provincial,  
18 territorial, and Aboriginal governments  
19 to acknowledge that the current state  
20 of Aboriginal health in Canada is a  
21 direct result of previous Canadian  
22 government policies, including  
23 residential schools, and to recognize  
24 and implement the health-care rights of  
25 Aboriginal people as identified in  
26 international law, constitutional law,  
27 and under the Treaties.

28  
29 And I would add Dene law.  
30 Number 19:

31  
32 We call upon the federal government, in  
33 consultation with Aboriginal peoples,  
34 to establish measurable goals to  
35 identify and close the gaps in health  
36 outcomes between Aboriginal and  
37 non-Aboriginal communities, and to  
38 publish annual progress reports and  
39 assess long-term trends. Such efforts  
40 would focus on indicators such as:  
41 infant mortality, maternal health,  
42 suicide, mental health, addictions,  
43 life expectancy, birth rates, infant  
44 and child health issues, chronic  
45 diseases, illness and injury incidence,  
46 and the availability of appropriate  
47 health services.

1  
2 Number 21:  
3

4 We call upon the federal government to  
5 provide sustainable funding for  
6 existing and new Aboriginal healing  
7 centres to address the physical,  
8 mental, emotional, and spiritual harms  
9 caused by residential schools, and to  
10 [address] that the funding of healing  
11 centres in Nunavut and the Northwest  
12 Territories is a priority.  
13

14 Number 22:  
15

16 We call upon those who can effect  
17 change within the Canadian health-care  
18 system to recognize the value of  
19 Aboriginal healing practices and use  
20 them in the treatment of Aboriginal  
21 patients in collaboration with  
22 Aboriginal healers and Elders where  
23 requested by Aboriginal patients.  
24

25 Under "JUSTICE":  
26

27 We call upon the federal government to  
28 eliminate barriers to the creation of  
29 additional Aboriginal healing lodges  
30 within the federal correctional system.  
31

32 Number 36:  
33

34 We call upon the federal, provincial,  
35 and territorial governments to work  
36 with Aboriginal communities to provide  
37 culturally relevant services to inmates  
38 on issues such as substance abuse,  
39 family and domestic violence, and  
40 overcoming the experience of having  
41 been sexually abused.  
42

43 Number 37:  
44

45 We call upon the federal government to  
46 provide more supports for Aboriginal  
47 programming in halfway houses and

1 parole services.

2  
3 38. We call upon the federal,  
4 provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal  
5 governments to commit to eliminating  
6 the overrepresentation of Aboriginal  
7 youth in custody over the next decade.

8  
9 And number 39:

10  
11 We call upon the federal government to  
12 develop a national plan to collect and  
13 publish data on the criminal  
14 victimization of Aboriginal people,  
15 including data related to homicide and  
16 family violence victimization.

17  
18 I would actually like this information to be  
19 provided as well to the Aboriginal governments so  
20 they can actually see the statistics that are in  
21 their communities and maybe that will help affect  
22 some change as well. Not talking about this and  
23 normalization of violence is not acceptable  
24 anymore. This needs to change. I want to know  
25 that in the future, the near future, that my  
26 daughter, Mary Adele Doctor's  
27 great-granddaughter, will be safe in her own  
28 community in the North. I want -- I want to -- I  
29 want that -- to know that in my heart. I would  
30 like to see those changes happen.

31 And I feel very honoured to speak here today  
32 about my grandmother, Mary Adel, Doctor, Madah,  
33 and for you to hear my family's story.  
34 [Aboriginal language spoken] Thank you.  
35 *Miigwech.*

36 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you, Cindy. Before I invite  
37 questions from the commissioners, is there  
38 anything else that's maybe come to mind that,  
39 either Cindy or Catherine or Sunfire, that you'd  
40 like to let the commissioners know? No? Okay.

41 Commissioners, if you don't mind, Catherine  
42 Doctor has requested that any questions be please  
43 directed to Cindy and she'll respond on behalf of  
44 the family, thank you.

45 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Testing. There We go. Sorry.

46 Thank -- thank you for coming and sharing  
47 with us and -- and for your thoughtful words. I

Catherine Doctor and Cindy Allen

1 was hoping we could talk a little bit about the  
2 newspaper articles that we received. I'll read  
3 them. I didn't want to read them while you were  
4 talking, but is there something that you want us  
5 to take from it or understand from those  
6 articles? Or do they speak for themselves? I  
7 just wanted to make sure we gave you that  
8 opportunity to -- to share your thoughts on those  
9 and express your views on their significance  
10 before we were done. So, that's really my only  
11 question.

12 CINDY ALLEN: The -- the newspaper articles ... Maybe  
13 I'll just say a little bit more about what  
14 happened to granny. So, a woman high on alcohol  
15 and drugs broke into granny's house. And when  
16 granny asked her to leave, she got violent,  
17 pushed granny around, assaulted her, and granny  
18 fell and hurt herself very seriously, broke her  
19 hip and there was some other injuries. But  
20 granny, she never spoke English that much, and so  
21 the family found her injured in the home. And no  
22 one knew what happened, but then they kind of  
23 pieced it together, but this person had left.  
24 There was a -- I don't want to upset you any, but  
25 there was a manhunt across the Northwest  
26 Territories to find this person because we did  
27 not know who it was, and it was a woman. So  
28 shocking.

29 So, we had hoped that this person would have  
30 a stiffer sentence. We had hoped that she would  
31 be charged with -- well, in my mind I was  
32 thinking murder, but she wasn't charged with  
33 murder. She was charged with manslaughter and  
34 then it was downgraded to aggravated assault.  
35 And then the coroner's report, well, after they  
36 did -- they did an autopsy because granny died a  
37 few weeks after the assault. So from what I  
38 understand, the coroner's report said there  
39 wasn't enough evidence to have a higher charge, a  
40 murder charge. That's very upsetting to the  
41 family, especially when they downgraded it and  
42 then this lady is only -- she's out after four  
43 months. She's out of jail after granny dies.  
44 She was only in jail for four months. That's  
45 wrong. Sorry. And I -- I wish that woman a  
46 healing journey, she obviously needs some help,  
47 that other lady, but that's -- I hope some

Catherine Doctor and Cindy Allen

1 changes happen. So the ... I have yet to see  
2 the coroner's report and I have the -- I have  
3 made that request. I -- I am -- I hope that  
4 there wasn't any systemic racism that arise from  
5 the downgrading of the charges against this  
6 woman. I know that's an issue in many  
7 communities and there is a recent court case here  
8 in the Yukon about that happening. So, I  
9 requested a copy of the coroner's report. It --  
10 I wasn't strong enough until now to -- to face  
11 this because it's such a tragic loss. I have  
12 lost my grandmother and I have lost the  
13 traditional teachings with her death.

14 So the -- these stories here tell about  
15 that, about this journey of what happened to  
16 grandmother over the months, months, and it was  
17 more than a year, I think, and a half before all  
18 this stuff was settled out. And so I hope that  
19 answers your question. [Aboriginal language  
20 spoken]

21 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: When you receive the  
22 coroner's report, would you be willing to share  
23 it with us?

24 CINDY ALLEN: Yes, I'd be happy to share the coroner's  
25 report with you.

26 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Thank you. Karen would be  
27 the person to send it to. Thank you very much.

28 KAREN SNOWSHOE: I will now -- actually before I -- I  
29 call upon Catherine, I understand you wanted to  
30 say a few last words, a thank you to the  
31 commissioners. Before you do that, I would like  
32 to apologize to your family. I -- I made an  
33 error and I forgot to introduce to the  
34 commissioners some very important people who are  
35 seated behind you and those are your -- people  
36 who have come here in support of you today. So,  
37 commissioners, I'd like to introduce you to Hazel  
38 Buffalo Robe, who has been a very important and  
39 integral support for this family. And we have  
40 staff members, Alana Boileau and Barbara Sevigny.  
41 Sevigny, yes. Thank you.

42 CATHERINE DOCTOR: Okay. Thank you very much for  
43 hearing my story. It's been eight years that  
44 myself, my family, and we have extended family  
45 all over NWT that are affected from this violent  
46 death. And I hope there will be changes, so that  
47 needless death of our mother. For me, myself, I

Catherine Doctor and Cindy Allen

1           feel very unsafe living in Yellowknife in Ndilo.  
2           I want changes so I can live a safe life. I am a  
3           mother, a grandmother, and I do not want my  
4           grandchildren to have -- to live in fear. I live  
5           in fear everyday in Yellowknife and that  
6           shouldn't be happening because in our culture the  
7           traditional way of life, I never experienced  
8           that. So, I'm hoping and praying that there will  
9           be changes done very soon. And I'd like to say  
10          some words in my language. [Aboriginal language  
11          spoken]

12        CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Because we want to thank  
13          you for coming today and sharing your stories, we  
14          have some packages of seeds to give you. We hope  
15          you plant them and tell us what grows.

16        [Silence]

17        BRYAN ZANDBERG: So, commissioners, the -- Catherine  
18          Doctor has just made a request to -- to say a  
19          closing prayer.

20        CATHERINE DOCTOR: Can we stand, please. I'm going to  
21          say The Lord's Prayer. In the name of the  
22          Father, the son, and the holy spirit. Amen. Our  
23          Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by thy name.  
24          Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as  
25          it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily  
26          bread and forgive us our trespasses, as we  
27          forgive those who trespass against us. And lead  
28          us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.  
29          Amen. For thine is the kingdom, the power and  
30          the glory is yours now and forever and ever.  
31          Amen. Father, son, and holy spirit. Amen.

32        CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: We're finished our work  
33          for the day with our wonderful families. So,  
34          could I ask our elder to come and close us for  
35          the day.

36        UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE ELDER: Great spirit,  
37          grandfathers, grandmothers from the four sacred  
38          directions, hear our prayers, as we are small and  
39          humble, Creator.

40                There has been many things said today. We  
41                are feeling your hurt. That's why we are here  
42                today. We will open our eyes to see what is  
43                happening today. The truth will come out. It  
44                will never be hidden anymore.

45                Guide us, Creator, as we move forward. Help  
46                our families, our loved ones, our children, and  
47                all the babies that are yet to come. Creator,

Catherine Doctor and Cindy Allen

1 our baby girls, they are the gift of life and the  
2 givers of life of our people.

3 I pray that we will stand for the woman in  
4 our communities across this country, across North  
5 America and South America and around the world,  
6 that we will help our women, that we will be  
7 there for the aunties and the grandmas and the  
8 great-grandmas.

9 Creator, I pray that you will keep these  
10 families safe tonight. And if they need any  
11 help, I pray, Creator, they will come back to the  
12 sacred fire. Pray with your tobacco. And you  
13 put your tobacco in that fire. Don't carry it on  
14 you anymore, let it go. We have to move on for  
15 our children to make this place a better place  
16 for the children. With your guidance, with our  
17 elders' knowledge we will do this.

18 We thank you for what you have given to us  
19 today. We thank you for what you have provided  
20 to us. We pray for the people that are here, all  
21 the workers, all the supporters, the fire  
22 keepers. And we pray for all the community that  
23 has been affected. Great spirit, guide them in  
24 the right direction. I pray that our people will  
25 take ownership of what's going on and we are here  
26 to do something to help our people with. And we  
27 will stand beside our families and our loved  
28 ones.

29 We will take the time to rest tonight, get a  
30 good sleep, enjoy a good meal. Sit with your  
31 family, express how much you love each other.  
32 This is what will carry us through. Creator, we  
33 give thanks for this day. [Aboriginal language  
34 spoken]

35 [Silence]

36  
37 **Fourth Hearing Exhibits**

38 **Catherine Doctor and Cindy Allen (Family of Mary Adele**  
39 **Doctor)**

40  
41 Exhibit P1: Print-out of slideshow presentation shown  
42 May 30, 2017; first image in slideshow bears  
43 caption "Marie-Adele Doctor with beadwork at  
44 family cabin in 1990s; six slides in total,  
45 including images of Marie-Adele Doctor scraping  
46 and tanning hides.

47 Exhibit P2: "Submission by Cindy Allen about Marie-



Catherine Doctor and Cindy Allen

- 1 Adele Doctor to the MMIWG Inquiry in Whitehorse,  
2 Yukon," signed by Cindy Allen and prepared on May  
3 30, 2017; four pages, stapled top left corner.  
4 Exhibit P3: "Submission by Catherine Doctor about  
5 Marie-Adele Doctor to the MMIWG Inquiry in  
6 Whitehorse, Yukon," signed by Catherine Doctor  
7 and prepared on May 30, 2017; one page double-  
8 sided.  
9 Exhibit P4: Yellowknifer news article "Ndilo elder  
10 dies following attack," by Cara Loverock  
11 published Wednesday, February 11, 2009.  
12 Exhibit P5: Yellowknifer news article " Woman accused  
13 of beating elder won't face manslaughter charge"  
14 by Cara Loverock, Friday May 1, 2009.  
15 Exhibit P6: Yellowknifer news article "Accused in  
16 elder beating to stand trial" by Lauren McKeon  
17 published Wednesday, August 12, 2009.  
18 Exhibit P7: Yellowknifer news article "Fourteen month  
19 sentence for assaulting elder" by Lauren McKeon,  
20 published Wednesday September 30, 2009.  
21 Exhibit P8: Funeral mass program for Mary Adele  
22 Doctor, "In Loving Memory of Mary Adele Doctor,  
23 October 1, 1924 - February 8, 2009; one page two-  
24 sided with colour images  
25

26 (HEARING ADJOURNED TO MAY 31, 2017)  
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