

National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls



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

National Inquiry into Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women & Girls

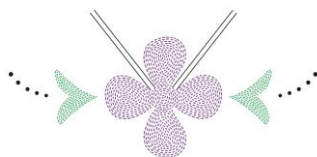
Truth-Gathering Process Part III

Expert & Knowledge-Keeper Panel:

“Indigenous Laws & Decolonizing Perspectives”

Canadian Human Rights Museum

Winnipeg, Manitoba



Part III Volume III

Thursday August 24, 2017

Day III: Indigenous Laws & Decolonizing Perspectives

Talking Circle

**Heard by Chief Commissioner Marion Buller
& Commissioners Michèle Audette, Brian Eyolfson & Qajaq Robinson**

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APPEARANCES / COMPARUTIONS

Aboriginal Legal Services	No Appearance
Amnesty International Canada	No Appearance
Assembly of First Nations (AFN)	Julie McGregor (Legal counsel)
Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC)	Joëlle Pastora Sala (Legal counsel)
Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police	No Appearance
Canadian Association of Police Governance and First Nations Police Governance Council	No Appearance
Canadian Feminist Alliance for International Action and Partners – Canada without Poverty and Dr. Pamela Palmater	No Appearance
First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada	No Appearance
Government of Alberta	Doreen Mueller (Legal counsel)
Government of British Columbia	Jean Walters (Legal counsel)
Government of Canada	Anne Turley (Legal counsel) Amber Elliot (Legal counsel)
Government of Manitoba	Heather Leonoff (Legal counsel)
Government of New Brunswick	Heather Hobart (Legal counsel)
Government of Nova Scotia	Sean Foreman (Legal counsel)
Government of Nunavut	Alexandre Blondin (Legal counsel)
Government of Ontario	Kirsten Manley-Casimir (Legal counsel) Catherine Rhineland (Legal counsel)
Government of Saskatchewan	Colleen Matthews (Legal counsel)
Government of Yukon	Chantal Grenier (Legal counsel)
Human Rights Watch	No Appearance
Indigenous Circle Chapter of the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association	No Appearance

III

APPEARANCES / COMPARUTIONS

Inuit Tapiriitt Kanatami (ITK)	Elizabeth Zarpa (Legal counsel)
Liard Aboriginal Women's Society	No Appearance
Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO)	Jessica Barlow (Legal counsel) Jared Wheeler (Legal counsel)
Missing and Murdered Women and Girls Coalition Manitoba	Angie Hutchinson (Representative)
Manitoba Moon Voices Inc.	No Appearance
Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC)	Virginia Lomax (Legal counsel)
Nunatsiavut Government	No Appearance
Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada	Beth Symes (Legal counsel)
Quebec Native Women Association	No Appearance
Union of BC Indian Chiefs	No Appearance
Winnipeg Police Service	No Appearance
Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF)	Mary Eberts (Legal counsel)

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1 --- Upon commencing at 9:16 a.m.

2 **ELDER BELINDA VANDENBROECK:** Okay. Thank
3 you, everybody, for coming here today and being with this
4 circle. There has been a change in the agenda and we're
5 inviting family members, if they wish, to come to sit in
6 the first row of seats to share anything that they would
7 like to share to the Commissioners. And if there's any
8 even written documents that need to be presented to them
9 they will be accepted at this time.

10 And just a reminder again for family
11 members, when you are sharing your story, to remember it's
12 a live stream; okay? So, it'll be across Canada and just
13 to be aware of that.

14 We're going to have an opening prayer by
15 Katherine Whitecloud, to begin with, and then Grandma
16 Shingoose will do ceremony with a song and there will be a
17 gift presented to the Commissioners. And I think that we
18 are all very aware that there's been a lot of mixed
19 emotions in these three days, especially by family members.
20 And this is the time that I believe -- now that the
21 Commissioners are here, that you can present your
22 suggestions, recommendations.

23 One of the thing that I want to say, being
24 an Indigenous person who loves to cook and feed people, you
25 got to feed people when they come to your meetings. It's

1 very important. And but I can only imagine the cost of the
 2 food in this place. Yikes. But if it was held somewhere
 3 else we could have brought our own food. We could have
 4 bought like lots of good things.

5 So, I will call up Katherine now to say the
 6 opening prayers.

7 **MS. KATHERINE WHITECLOUD:** Morning.

8 --- OPENING PRAYER AND SONG/PRIÈRE D'OUVERTURE ET CHANSON:

9 (SHORT PAUSE/COURTE PAUSE)

10 **ELDER BELINDA VANDENBROECK:** Hello. Hello.
 11 Hello. Okay.

12 So, what is going to happen now is that
 13 Grandma Shingoose here is going to sing a song of her
 14 choosing and we will be doing the gift giving as well. The
 15 -- I'm not sure Qulliq -- Qulliq -- codelick (ph --
 16 codelick (ph)) will be lit as you're singing; okay?

17 **MS. GERALDINE SHINGOOSE:** The song --
 18 bonjour. My English name is Geraldine Shingoose. My
 19 spirit names are Sky Woman, Northern Lights Woman. I come
 20 from the Bear Clan and my warrior spirit is Grandmother
 21 Turtle.

22 The song I'm going to sing is for the
 23 children, for the children that are going to come after us,
 24 our future, but also it's for the children that are -- that
 25 -- for the missing and murdered Indigenous women that are

1 missing or murdered, that sacred bond that was -- that they
2 had, the mothers and the children. So I want to
3 acknowledge those children and sing this song for them.

4 **ELDER BELINDA VANDENBROECK:** Thank you very
5 much, Grandma Shingoose. That was beautiful.

6 And while the Qulliq is being lit, she has
7 asked us to have a moment of silence for the murdered and
8 missing women, and to remember their beauty, their
9 awesomeness, their uniqueness.

10 So, at this moment we will have -- you can
11 stand if you want, but we will have a moment of silence.

12 (SHORT PAUSE/COURTE PAUSE)

13 **ELDER BELINDA VANDENBROECK:** Thank you very
14 much.

15 I said this before I think in the first day
16 that when we are saying prayers for the ones who are
17 missing and have been murdered that we must remember that
18 they had in their bodies the beautiful water of life. And
19 as we say our prayers, to say our prayers to the spirit of
20 the water that was in their bodies, the sacred water that
21 gives us life, that produces life. And they will always,
22 always be in our hearts. Always.

23 And as I'm waiting for the Qulliq to finish
24 being lit we will have -- I lost my paper. I need it. My
25 memory's like a sieve, you know. I got to catch it when I

1 can.

2 And we were -- we're now going to have a
3 gift giving to the Commissioners. The grandmothers have
4 given them a gift for their bundle so that it can travel
5 with them. And it is a turtle and turtle represents truth.
6 And that's what needs to be told in all of this, in
7 everything that we do, that we must speak the truth,
8 whatever that is, and we may not be happy to hear the truth
9 sometime but we need to.

10 Oh, okay. All right. So, I'm going to let
11 Velma and, geez, Carol, and I think all the grandmothers
12 that were in the circle last night to come up and make
13 their presentation. And I really want to emphasize that it
14 is the truth that we want at the end of this inquiry,
15 whatever that may be. And I know it's going to be painful
16 all the way. And we have to honour the families who go
17 through this every single day of their lives. There isn't
18 a day that goes by that they don't feel the sadness and the
19 grief and we must always remember that.

20 Okay. You can go ahead then.

21 **MS. VELMA ORMIS:** Bonjour. (Speaking in
22 Native Language).

23 We want to present some gifts, some sacred
24 medicines and we want to say miigwech to our beautiful Jade
25 for giving us this most beautiful turtle to travel with

1 you. And as we were cleaning the sage yesterday, we
2 cleaned it for you because we know that you'll need it
3 many, many times. And if you ever need more, just call me.
4 We'll clean more for you. So, with that, we'll present the
5 gifts and say miigwech for having us in your circle. It
6 was so sacred and so heartwarming why we're here.
7 Miigwech.

8 **MS. CAROL MOAR:** The turtle is one of our
9 spirit helpers in the women's teachings. It's the turtle
10 that guides us. Because the shell has 13 sections to it,
11 and if you count around it has 28 for the 13 moons and 28
12 for the cycle in between. And because of the importance of
13 our sisters that are gone missing or murdered, I think it's
14 so important that we have a turtle as part of your bundle.
15 And the sage is the women's medicine. It's a time that us
16 women can -- we can use it all the time. And so again,
17 with that, it's for our sisters and for their families. So
18 I'm going to walk around the circle because I am contrary
19 but I'm not going to go backwards. Yeah.

20 (SHORT PAUSE/COURTE PAUSE)

21 **MS. CAROL MOAR:** I want to thank the
22 grandmothers for their gift to the Commissioners. I also
23 just want to let people know that the sage in that cedar
24 there is available to anyone that wants to take some home.
25 And Jo Seenie, the next one going to be speaking, and Chris

1 picked those fresh.

2 **ELDER BELINDA VANDENBROECK:** So the next on
3 our agenda this morning is -- that's a sign I think. You
4 don't need paper.

5 Anyway, we're going to have Joannie (ph) --
6 see I can't even say that name right. Joannie (ph), like
7 where did that come from? Anyway, Jo Seenie and Danny (ph)
8 are going to talk about the original law of the land, which
9 seems to be forgotten in this country so we're bringing it
10 back. We're like clan mothers here. All Aboriginal women
11 are clan mothers. We were the ones that did what needed to
12 be done when life was happening. And I say -- and I'm
13 probably going to -- probably going to have whatever, but I
14 think that -- I believe that the clan mothers need to teach
15 the men how to be men. That's been missing for many
16 generations already thanks to the residential school,
17 thanks to the other things that happened even before that.

18 And the one thing that I've now -- I'm 69
19 years old. I've been sober for 42 years. And I'm very
20 proud of that, very proud of that because I never thought I
21 would come out of it. Is that our -- the most important
22 thing in our lives, the most important thing, the only
23 thing we had to live by other than living under the law of
24 God was our families. And almost right from contact our
25 families were discombobulated, like totally. And it didn't

1 take long.

2 I mean, you think -- you know, so here you
3 are as a newcomer and so you and I are going to speak.
4 Well, I think that's going to be fun because you have no
5 idea what my language is and I don't know what yours is but
6 we live together and then things start to happen. Then
7 there's intermarriage. I figure the Métis people were here
8 a long time ago, not just the Red River.

9 And so in -- because we have to remember
10 that our lives were thousands of years -- our ancestors
11 were here. There's no 150 years. I mean, try adding
12 20,000 to that and more. And we have to remember every day
13 that we honour our ancestors. That's why we're here today.

14 But because the families have been so
15 discombobulated with all the systems in place, I mean,
16 still our children are being removed from us, and the
17 mothers are suffering too whose children are taken. And
18 you think about, you know, I'm -- what happened when I
19 left? What did my grandfather and grandmother do when I
20 left? I didn't know where I was going. They didn't
21 either. But there I went, you know, for 10 years.

22 So we have many years of healing to do and
23 it's our responsibility. No one else. We need to do that
24 for ourselves.

25 I am a carrier of my Innu (ph) language,

1 which you know is Cree, and our Innu (ph) way of life. And
2 I don't have to ask anybody's permission from any other
3 tribe. I am from the Innu (ph) Nation, Mosakahiken (ph)
4 and Innu (ph).

5 So with that I'm going to call Jo Seenie to
6 come and speak on the clan mother's law, the original law
7 of the land.

8 **MS. JO SEENIE:** Bonjour. (Speaking in
9 Native language).

10 I just want to acknowledge our ancient
11 ancestors, also acknowledge the grandmothers and the
12 grandfathers, acknowledge our families and also to remember
13 the unborn, and that whatever we do today is for the love
14 of those yet to come, so that when we make decisions or any
15 kind of things that are done for the future that we always
16 remember those.

17 When I heard about this that was happening
18 here I heard it through some of the family members and how
19 they were upset because they didn't have the -- there was
20 miscommunication or misunderstanding of what this gathering
21 was about. They felt that they weren't being heard. And a
22 lot of them are upset as we speak and offended. And but
23 yesterday when we arrived -- I wasn't going to come. I
24 wasn't going to come to this meeting and but I know that
25 I'm here on the will of the Great Spirit and that the words

1 that I need to share are really deep words and that I'm not
2 here to come offend but to address our proper defence, our
3 protection under tribal law.

4 In this territory I've always been known to
5 stand up and stand against things that happened to the
6 earth. I get in trouble a lot here because I -- I'm
7 against raping to Mother Earth and against raping to our
8 peoples, so I'm very vocal and very straightforward and
9 offend the system.

10 I guess I just -- I don't want to talk so
11 much about me and how I been involved in helping with our
12 families because this is about our families and these are
13 about the loved ones that are missing, both male and
14 female.

15 I have a writing that I wanted to read that
16 we have. The old man that helps us -- right now we are
17 going through something that happened to us when we came
18 back from Standing Rock. We came in as who we are as
19 tribal people. We identified ourselves as our Anishinaabe
20 name, our clan and our territory, and representing us as
21 Indians. And because of that we were targeted and pepper-
22 sprayed, then beaten at the so-called Canadian border, also
23 along with my 10-year-old son who was also pepper-sprayed.

24 And the reason why I'm bringing this up is
25 because of the violence that's still done towards our

1 people and that this needs to stop. And I think about our
2 families who are back home who feel that missing and
3 murdered -- MMIW has now become an industry. And I hate to
4 say it like that. People get offended by that. But it --
5 people who don't have good hearts -- and we know they're
6 there. There are good-hearted people, a lot of good-
7 hearted people but there are hearts that are not good who
8 would thrive off that and that needs to stop.

9 There are families who make decisions from
10 searching or paying their bills who lose their children,
11 threatened by the system. And you can't blame them for
12 being upset when things -- these kind of meetings are going
13 on because imagine -- and we can't imagine. I mean, a lot
14 of us have loved ones that are -- who have been murdered or
15 missing. So a lot of us are affected in our communities,
16 so-called communities.

17 I recommend to the Commissioners that when
18 you go to Montreal that you let them know ahead of time
19 what this gathering was because there's -- the families
20 thought this was going to be about them expressing what
21 they need to express. But if you give them that
22 information ahead of time then they wouldn't be so upset.
23 They'll still be hurt but at least they'll understand.
24 Because even when you look at when families have missing
25 ones and they're in the news at the moment, it's almost

1 like they get all the attention. And I'm not -- I don't
2 mean that in a bad way, but there's families that are still
3 searching on their own, having a hard time to search. Some
4 of them have to do things. They have to be constantly
5 doing things. They do walks. They do some kind of -- just
6 so that they know that they're doing something for these
7 families, for their loved ones.

8 But I wanted to also acknowledge that there
9 was actually a quiet protest that was going on yesterday
10 and that says something. Then when they -- when this was
11 presented to me I felt sad. If you -- just raise this if
12 you feel like you're not being heard. Raise it. And then
13 I was like, well, I guess my hand will be -- the families
14 will be like this all through the whole time if they don't
15 have the understanding of what this was about. So I'm
16 going to keep this.

17 I'm trying to keep this short so I'd like to
18 read this from our helper who is a legal advisory in tribal
19 law. And he wanted me to read this message to the people.
20 I'm not really a writing and listening -- reading things.
21 I'm usually just say what I need to say, so this is the
22 first time I'll be reading and I'm really, really nervous
23 and that's kind of unusual for me to be really nervous.

24 "Bonjour. Dante. Greetings to all my
25 relatives." (As read)

1 I just want to add that we're not racist but
2 that we are tribals, so don't be offended by what I say.

3 "Greetings to all my relatives. I am a
4 member of an Indian movement that has
5 addressed issues since the late 60s by
6 using methods that brought about
7 immediate positive results, yet these
8 same methods were condemned by most
9 white people and Native organizations,
10 as well as Native people themselves.
11 They had their Indian minds altered so
12 they would be accepted by the white
13 man. In my travels I was fortunated to
14 meet old Indian women and men who spoke
15 limited English or not at all but were
16 intelligent beyond the word and known
17 exactly what Indian law really was, is
18 and can be continued without the white
19 government's interference. The Indian
20 law I speak of has stopped both federal
21 and provincial court judges from
22 convicting Indians who stand up for the
23 people and the earth. This movement
24 has nothing to do with Idle No More or
25 the American Indian Movement as those

1 organations [sic] are registered under
2 the white man's law. As well meaning
3 as they may be, our struggles are not
4 for equality because we do not want our
5 children and grandchildren to be
6 equally messed up like most white
7 people are. And even though there are
8 good white people among us there are
9 exceptions to the rule that simply
10 proves the rule..." (As read)

11 Oh my goodness. Okay. Sorry.

12 "...the majority that rule of them are
13 messed up. Prior to the European
14 invasion we are still experiencing,
15 there were treaties between our tribes
16 that were made with spiritual
17 foundation that were based upon peace
18 that we few tribals still live by to
19 this day. We are seldom noticed
20 because our objective is not to please
21 the television audience but to pass on
22 to our children a living philosophy and
23 not a program that will destroy them.
24 I am pleased and elated that when our
25 younger people come to accept that our

1 tribal law is the only answer because
2 it works and can resolve any problems
3 that the white government and its
4 followers confront us with. It will
5 bring peace to you all, and not the
6 illusion of peace that governments have
7 presented to the people globally.
8 Should any of you take more than
9 interest in what I'm saying there are a
10 few tribals among you that can direct
11 you to where you begin -- can begin.
12 We do not need another neo-colonial
13 system or natives that want to join the
14 white man political parties that
15 compounds further suppression of all
16 Indian people. In closing, I thank you
17 all and I will leave you with a quote
18 from the late Art Solomon (ph)
19 Anishinaabe Arthur -- author and
20 teacher. "A curriculum that is in
21 harmony with earth will be -- will
22 bring harmony to the people of the
23 earth." Miigwech. Hai Hai. Keep a
24 good mind for us all. (Speaking in
25 Native Language)." (As read)

1 And I just want to give this to the legal
2 briefing. This is a legal -- this briefing was researched
3 and written by an individual classified as an Indian, not a
4 person or inhabitant of the ceded or a conquered territory
5 claiming no academic or professional standard that are
6 required. Should the briefing be in the area of problems
7 that belong to any legal citizen or inhabitants that owe
8 allegiance to the Government of Canada or the Crown of
9 England, this briefing is outside this allegiance and not
10 restricted by the laws, religion or concept of this
11 allegiance. The legal sense of this briefing is to
12 establish for the first time since the Europeans first
13 believed they were the superior race and attempted to
14 conquer the world by using the concept of discovery, which
15 permitted all other Aboriginal groups to be in direct
16 conflict and outside acceptance of any social order
17 practiced by these codes and ethics of European concept.

18 The concept of international law are
19 respected in this briefing in which the nation of the world
20 follow because Aboriginal code ethics and law have been
21 disregarded or destroyed, making international law the only
22 law between nations left to be respected. If this law does
23 not exist, there is no law between nations, man or
24 concepts, but the fact that there are international
25 boundary lines between countries of various names which

1 were brought into existence by conflict of interest and
2 ideologies settled by war.

3 Between these nations from which a treaty
4 has -- was agreed upon and signed does not give this
5 briefing its legal and just existence for the Indian. The
6 legal -- the legality of the Indian was restricted by those
7 who managed alienation, severalty and guardianship of the
8 sovereignty and territories of the Indian tribes.

9 The citizens and the inhabitants of Canada
10 cannot teach, instruct or relate to the Indian of his
11 unique legal sense because of the allegiance owed to
12 protect the Government of Canada, therefore, disqualifies
13 any of the science of instructions to history, law,
14 government or religion. The facts present -- presently
15 being printed and advertised are for its white citizen
16 members that are policy of this citizen -- civilized
17 nation. And they are in direct conflict with the actual
18 documentations between Indian tribes and the Government of
19 Canada.

20 My goodness. This briefing is the
21 disqualifying instrument needed by the Indian when the
22 question of validity to any statement that distinguish the
23 Indian from the non-Indian and the Indian being the
24 Aboriginal found in the various areas of North and South
25 America.

1 I know that's really deep but it needed to
2 be said. And it comes with a good heard and that there are
3 Indians who are awake and that we are back with our tribal
4 and custom usage and that we need to protect our future.

5 And remember that I came here with no
6 intendance [*sic*] to be offensive to anybody but that the
7 law needed to be said. And that in order for us, we need
8 to reclaim the women to be the true title holders of this
9 land. And also, that we have to remember that there are no
10 borders across this land, and to remember our South
11 American relatives who are also being attacked and
12 murdered.

13 So I come to you with a good heart and to
14 remember our ancient ancestors because the spot that we are
15 in right now, they were under here. And to remember those
16 family members, to connect with them and hear what they
17 have to say, and that their names of their family loved
18 ones are not just names. And I know a lot of you know
19 that. You all have good hearts and are here for that
20 intention, to help.

21 So peace, miigwech to you all, my relatives.
22 We all come from tribal ancestry. Miigwech.

23 **ELDER BELINDA VANDENBROECK:** Thank you very
24 much, my friend. Truer words have never been spoken. And
25 we are the descendants of the original people of this land.

1 And I'm very proud to say that. There's not too many
2 Canadians that can say that but I can.

3 Okay. I am now going to call on -- where
4 did you go? She's going to be explaining the circles and
5 what's going to be happening later.

6 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** I just -- thank you.
7 We are going to take a short break before we start the
8 first circle. And this will allow us just to set up the
9 space in a good way as well.

10 The first circle. So, as you've heard the
11 grandmothers speak this morning, yesterday the
12 Commissioners asked the grandmothers that have been in
13 attendance throughout the week if they could provide
14 guidance on ways to ensure the families could participate.
15 And the grandmothers -- bless their -- them because they
16 are already working very hard -- stayed up until 10:30 last
17 night to provide the guidance that was necessary. And the
18 grandmothers had said that the first circle really needs to
19 be the families.

20 And so we are going to take a break but when
21 we come back I ask that the families have the inner part of
22 the circle. The grandmothers and our presenters will also
23 be welcome in that inner circle. But if there's room
24 needed, because there's more family members than fits in
25 here, we want to make sure a second row is available for

1 them too.

2 And, essentially, it's a directed circle.
3 And what that means is the grandmothers will help direct
4 the family members go through some points. And there is a
5 speaking stone that will be passed around. And when the
6 stone is passed no one has to speak. Like a circle you
7 don't have to speak. You can pass the stone, but while
8 you're holding the stone that's that person's turn.

9 But we did want to be really clear. This is
10 being live webcast. So, you know, some rules are general
11 guidance you have in circles, like, you know, what you're
12 saying in the circle stays in the circle. It's not exactly
13 the same. So we wanted to be very clear that this is still
14 part of the public process and that's it's being live
15 webcast. And we just want everyone to know that, not to
16 discourage anyone from speaking their mind, but so you have
17 that awareness.

18 And then also, the families will be invited
19 -- families will be invited to have lunch and we will be
20 coordinating that and you'll be able to speak with myself
21 or some of our other staff that we've identified.

22 So, I do really quickly want to identify
23 health staff yet again who are in the room. And so
24 obviously the grandmothers are in the circle and we had a
25 number of them providing health support. But, for

1 instance, if any of the staff who are in a support --
2 health support capacity -- I see one staff member here for
3 sure. And we have Jade. A number of people from here know
4 Jade Harper (ph). She's also a staff person. And can you
5 please stand up? In the back is Jodie (ph) -- sorry, Jamie
6 (ph). And is Jodie (ph) in the room? We have four health
7 staff members and you can, if you want, go see them. They
8 have things if you would like to talk to them about. And I
9 just wanted to identify them for that purpose.

10 And so we'll take a break. We'll make sure
11 that the inner circle is cleared for families and the
12 grandmothers and our presenters.

13 We have three presenters still with us. But
14 as you can guess, originally on the agenda was Karen Drake.
15 And Karen Drake is in the circle and she actually met with
16 the grandmothers last night. She's graciously also
17 following the guidance of the grandmothers that the circle
18 that she was planning will happen or we can find a new way
19 for her to be able to present that material. And that was
20 based on the wonderful knowledge the grandmothers had to
21 share with us.

22 So, in the directed circle, in the inner
23 circle, the families will each be given the chance to have
24 a stone. The grandmothers will be inviting a
25 representative from each family to join the circle.

1 There's some points but, you know, if you look on the
2 agenda, it's not like you have to say all of them. You can
3 say what you want. So what the key messages you heard
4 were, what you learned over the course today, what ideas
5 and recommendations you have so that the National Inquiry
6 can move forward in a good way.

7 There will still be the Manitoba hearing
8 will be taking place in October when we will actually be
9 doing the full hearings with families. And I just wanted
10 to bring that to your attention.

11 I will not be doing any facilitation. It
12 will be the grandmothers who will be directing the circles
13 when we come back from our break. And so we'll take a 15-
14 minute break now so we can get it set up. Thank you.

15 --- Upon recessing at 10:02 a.m.

16 La séance est suspendue à 10h02

17 --- Upon resuming at 10:24 a.m.

18 La séance est reprise à 10h24

19 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Hello. We'd like to
20 get the circle started, so if we can call everybody back
21 into the circle. We can call everybody back in to begin.
22 I'll go outside and get some people out there.

23 **MS. KATHERINE WHITECLOUD:** We'd like to
24 optimize our time together. This morning is an
25 opportunity, as discussed at the meeting last night, to

1 provide recommendations for our Commissioners and for the
2 Commission and how -- and their move forward on a path so
3 that -- as a young lady who spoke before had indicated,
4 people have come here with -- that are upset and we don't
5 want this space to be one where people are upset. We want
6 this to be a good way of honouring our sisters and our
7 mothers and grandmothers that have gone on before us or
8 have not -- are missing.

9 And so we want to provide -- have that
10 opportunity this morning and so we encourage people -- and
11 there is a lot of noise in the hallways so could we have
12 those doors closed, please? Could we have those doors
13 closed, please, because it's really noisy out in the
14 hallway? Thank you very much.

15 And one of the interesting things -- and we
16 talked about this last night a little bit is about the --
17 and we started out yesterday talking about our traditional
18 laws and what that means to us and Dawnis gave us a
19 wonderful presentation at the end of the day yesterday.
20 One of the key -- I won't say laws, but how we live is that
21 we respect each other and we -- I've never, ever known in
22 my lifetime growing up where we had community where our
23 people got together where it's noisy like that. Never
24 ever. It was always quiet, respectful. If people were
25 talking they talk like this. Because the space is sacred

1 and the space was a time for people, individuals, to raise
2 their voice with what they were going to share. And so I
3 want to encourage that here because we can't talk about it
4 but not do it. So, let's do what we say we're going to do,
5 which is to listen to each other.

6 I'm going to ask Sheri to explain what the
7 directed circle means. And we're going ahead and we're
8 just taking the bull by the horns because we want the best
9 out of this circle.

10 --- **TALKING CIRCLE/DISCUSSION EN CERCLE:**

11 **MS. SHERI COPENACE:** Bonjour. (Speaking in
12 Native Language).

13 My English alias is Sheri Copenace and I
14 just want to thank everybody here and for that beautiful
15 ceremony this morning and for each and every one of you for
16 being here, bringing your kind, good and compassionate
17 hearts and spirits here.

18 So what we're going to do this morning is
19 we're going to have a -- you see the inner circle here, we
20 invite all family members to come in and to sit in the
21 circle. Everybody here is equal in the circle. Not one is
22 above or below anybody. And you see the huge number of
23 people sitting in this circle and I want to thank the
24 people sitting in the outer circle as well for supporting
25 the work that's happening this morning.

1 What this directed circle is, is we would
2 like everybody to have space and time to be able to speak,
3 so it's a little -- it is different from a sharing circle.
4 What we're going to ask you to do is share and so that the
5 Commissioners and everybody else here can hear a key
6 message or a key direction about how this can go in a good
7 way because we know more hearings are coming up and we
8 would like to hear what your thoughts are on that, what
9 kind of guidance you can give on that and that's what we're
10 asking for this morning. And everybody in this inner
11 circle will be asked to do that. We're -- the circle is
12 also not to force you to say anything. That's up to you if
13 you choose to say anything or not. But the only thing is
14 to be mindful to allow everybody to speak here because I
15 think we have -- I don't know. I don't have a watch but --

16 **UNIDENTIFIED VOICE:** 10:30

17 **MS. SHERI COPENACE:** -- it's 10:30 and I
18 think we have until 12:00. We're going to have lunch at
19 12:00 noon today.

20 And I believe that was the other message
21 that we were going to give that the families are going to
22 be invited to lunch at -- I'm not sure where. Inn at the
23 Forks. So it's the families that are being invited there.
24 So that's another message that we're sending out today.

25 So, for me, because this is about families,

1 I would like to pass this rock to whichever family would
2 like to start first. I feel that it's very appropriate for
3 us to begin in that way. So, we'll pass it to a family
4 member, then we'll go sun-wise and then just pass it along
5 when you're finished.

6 **MS. MAGGIE CYWINK:** Good morning, Elders,
7 medicine, Commissioners and family members, and the
8 audience here today. My name is Maggie Cywink. I'm from
9 Ontario. I am a family member for 23 years. What I would
10 like to say moving forward in a good way is that the
11 Commission needs to think about seriously to dismantle the
12 National Family Advisory Circle and then appoint families
13 to control in provinces and territories their very own
14 advisory circles. I think it's very important for families
15 to have that control inside of the provinces and
16 territories. It will give families an opportunity to give
17 you advice, connect with families, feel like families have
18 that kind of responsibility and role and be connected to
19 you and be connected to each other.

20 I would like to thank you and pass this
21 forward. Miigwech.

22 **MS. MARIE BAKER:** (Speaking in Native
23 Language). I hope I'm speaking loud enough because a lot
24 of times I feel people aren't speaking loud enough.

25 I am grateful for having come here. I am a

1 family member and it has been a long time since my mother
2 went missing, so at times I don't expect that much, you
3 know, of a recognition of that because it seems that many
4 people -- many families are grieving the loss of one of
5 their relatives from a more recent time. Anyways, for me,
6 it's at least 60 years plus that I lost my mother.

7 But I really respect the opportunity at this
8 time to even say anything because I usually don't, you
9 know, seem to have that opportunity.

10 I was given an opportunity yesterday to use
11 this red material or cloth, you know, to, again, indicate
12 maybe that I didn't quite agree with what was being said.
13 I kind of laughed about it after because I was thinking,
14 oops, maybe I went too far. But I had been concerned with,
15 you know, the way people were speaking. They didn't seem
16 to take into account the danger or the threat to people in
17 families where they are speaking out now or -- well, of
18 course, in the past and now, you know, will be doing so at
19 the inquiry. And I did get some people to speak to and I
20 did notice that they changed the tone or the words, I mean,
21 to suggest that there was more of a need for protection of
22 families.

23 I think -- well, they had mentioned this
24 thing about justice centres. I don't think it was that
25 clear to people that these could be places or what I'm

1 calling "sanctuary". Actually, I could expand on that a
2 bit more but I hope to include that in, I guess, the
3 statements that we're going to eventually give in October,
4 you know, under the idea of how do we commemorate, you
5 know, our lost loved ones. Well, of course, right away I
6 thought, oh, I want a garden. I want a garden where
7 families could go to and we could gather at times. So, I
8 don't know. I'm going to write these ideas down.

9 But I kind of would have liked to have heard
10 maybe more about that but I do feel that even a -- when
11 we're having these kind of more formal meetings, I still
12 wish they'd work in a little space more. I realize the
13 minute of silence, or was it two minutes, was -- I welcomed
14 it but I still feel like I'd like to see more expression of
15 grieving. Maybe not just for our families but just really
16 for everyone, you know, to take part in that, you know,
17 acknowledgement that we have lost, you know, our people.

18 And, of course, me, I was up the, you know,
19 the words to, of course, genocide and holocaust, but we're
20 in a very appropriate place for that. Even though I keep
21 being told this is not a holocaust museum, it's a human
22 rights one, I just feel that they have neglected really
23 recognizing what happened to our people. And I don't mean
24 just locally like Anishinaabe but, anyways, I hope they
25 don't get any more business from us. I hope we can find a

1 more friendly place to us that honours our -- you know,
2 whatever we're doing.

3 But I don't really like -- to me this is one
4 of the big weasel words that they got us thinking about is
5 reconciliation. And I won't go into that but then there
6 are other things that people keep saying about -- I don't
7 know. They -- everybody just seems to be wanting to be so
8 desperate to forgive -- to give -- to forgive people when
9 we haven't even, you know, hardly made an approach on
10 getting social justice. I know, like I said, we'll see
11 more of that in October when our families can, you know,
12 speak in front of others, just to be brief about it. But I
13 don't expect too much sport from my own family.

14 And I was saying certain areas there will be
15 people having to pretty much stand alone, so we have to get
16 peer support because we're not always going to get it from
17 our families. And I don't understand why they wouldn't say
18 things here like that but I guess the two groups that I
19 noticed have not been addressed that much are the Christian
20 people. It's hard for them. They have certain ways that
21 prevent them from looking at, you know, violence and
22 criminal activity. Again, they are being asked to forgive
23 really quickly, like before even sometimes investigations
24 happen.

25 And as -- and the youth. I'm right now

1 participating in trying to get more of a youth, senior
2 dialogue going. We don't see it that much in Winnipeg.
3 And one person said that it's up to the seniors to go out
4 there chasing young people to talk to them. And I thought,
5 hmm, that doesn't seem too practical. So I'm hoping to --
6 whatever I'm doing there to set up this dialogue will maybe
7 result or move more towards a senior centre for Indigenous
8 people. I believe Sioux Caribou has talked about that and
9 I feel that among the other cities in Canada that have some
10 centres or some better programs for seniors that I think we
11 definitely need that here.

12 But like I said, I am grateful for the ones
13 that, you know, made some changes to how they were talking
14 about this idea of legal -- you know, the historical, legal
15 rights. My own personal view on that it was way too
16 academic. I'm glad they did give handouts, printed
17 handouts after. But I don't think the people worked that
18 hard to adapt their information to this particular audience
19 and particularly families. I know you can sit through
20 those things, say, oh, you know, I'm learning all this new
21 stuff. It sort of goes in one ear and out the other as far
22 as my experience is. So I think the more concrete examples
23 when people are presenting information, I think that'll
24 help bring our people together in a knowledge that, you
25 know, that we need to know.

1 I'm, again, very grateful for, you know,
2 there at least being something here. I -- you know, I'm
3 glad that they're putting emphasis now on the families
4 today. I didn't see it when it started out that much so I
5 was thinking, okay, maybe I'll try this, waving this red
6 flag around. But, actually, I did better by just scooting
7 around and -- in my little sneaky way talking to people and
8 that's how I felt I was able to affect change here.

9 So, next time you have a meeting I think
10 they need to have like a, I don't know, a person, a desk or
11 something designated where -- well, especially family
12 members can go and, you know, talk to them immediately and
13 maybe the information or whatever the -- you know, that
14 person wants to share can then be shared. Oh, yeah, the
15 other step I thought was important and I was so glad that
16 there were ones that listened to me is I've been very
17 concerned that we -- and hopefully by this time, you know,
18 there is a recognition that we do need a blog for the
19 families to communicate.

20 So there was two women I talked to -- well,
21 one was from NWAC and another one mentioned some resources
22 from another women's group that might have a little, teeny
23 bit of money that might help this happen. So I hope
24 nothing, you know, is put there as an obstacle to that,
25 even if it's a beginning and even if the inquiry itself or

1 whoever. I think the group you mentioned that you want to,
2 you know, see stopped, even if they set up something, you
3 know, that there is maybe more of a formal blog or
4 something that will not, you know -- something that will
5 not be so, you know, political and can be defunded quickly.
6 I really hope that for at least two years we have a kind of
7 a blog where we can share experiences.

8 Again, I've been very grateful I could meet
9 people that I've met over the years and share what's going
10 on in their area.

11 Again, I violated things by speaking too
12 long but I figured, well, I'll give it a try because I
13 didn't think that red flag thing worked that good, although
14 I did get a bit of attention there.

15 So, again, miigwech for listening and,
16 again, very grateful that you're here and could listen to
17 some of the ideas that some of our families might have.

18 **MS. SHERI COPENACE:** Before we move to the
19 next one, I've just been asked if we can talk a little bit
20 louder. I know you were pretty clear but just for the
21 other one.

22 **MS. MARIE BAKER:** Oh yeah.

23 **MS. SHERI COPENACE:** Okay. Thank you.

24 **MS. ELIZABETH ROSS:** Morning. My name is
25 Mikisayclay (ph) from the Deer Clan. I'm from Winnipeg.

1 My name's Elizabeth Ross. I'm here on behalf of my
2 families who have murdered loved ones and who haven't been
3 able to make it here today for whatever reason.

4 I -- I'm not sure if I could make
5 recommendations at this time if that's an expectation. I
6 think it goes back to that decision of not wanting the
7 inquiry and just wanting communities to have the support.
8 I didn't take that decision -- I didn't believe that was a
9 legal decision at the time. I just felt it was necessary
10 and I'd -- but how I feel about being here or anywhere
11 without the families I never -- I didn't want to go forward
12 without the families.

13 But knowing recently that some steps are
14 being made to bring their cases forward, it, I guess, in a
15 way, brings some relief that something is happening. So I
16 haven't totally -- even though there was time this summer
17 to do that I wasn't able to totally explore what I would go
18 forward on or not.

19 I haven't consulted with the family members,
20 but because of what I've been through, it makes it really
21 hard to go forward with saying any recommendations or what
22 I think -- what I see or envision. I feel that it will
23 push more for that change because I haven't seen it happen
24 and I just feel it's getting worse. And even though a lot
25 of communities have stepped up, in my view, things haven't

1 gotten better.

2 So I guess I'd like to just -- by expressing
3 that to see where that will move towards in terms of how
4 people treat one another or each other. I guess I'm
5 speaking about the lateral violence. And this is something
6 I've learned about only within four years and it's an issue
7 I have had to deal with my whole life and that people I
8 don't think know about. If I'm just learning that within
9 four years and wondering what I had to deal with from
10 people growing up and wondering why people were violent
11 towards me. And I still see that happening every day.
12 Yeah.

13 Thanks. I'm very glad to be here though. I
14 feel like I -- even though the families are not there I
15 feel like I want to put closure towards that because I know
16 their cases and their voices are being heard. I knew they
17 didn't -- for some reason they weren't being heard and I
18 hope to try to carry on that work that I haven't been able
19 to carry out for whatever reason. But I'm just grateful to
20 be here and to acknowledge to two families of murdered
21 women. Miigwech.

22 **MS. DAWNIS KENNEDY (MINNAWAANAGOGIIZHIGOOK) :**

23 Bonjour. (Speaking in Native Language).

24 I had opportunity to speak yesterday so I
25 was invited into the circle. My cousins aren't here today.

1 And I'm remembering my auntie, their mother, Millie (ph),
2 who is much missed.

3 And I guess what I would say is -- oh, first
4 something I have to say is that I'm keeping my phone on.
5 And I know that's not with protocol but I'm going to do it
6 because I have a niece who is struggling with meth
7 addiction, who has chosen to get help and is hospitalized
8 right now with psychosis and has made one attempt on her
9 life and so she calls me. So I'm going to keep my phone on
10 and I'm going to answer and I'm going to leave if she calls
11 me. And I just want to say if that happens or if I'm
12 checking my phone, it's no disrespect to anybody's story
13 but that's something I'm going to do.

14 And I would say that I really took heart in
15 seeing the grandmothers speak together. They stayed last
16 night until 10:30. I don't know, when I got home I felt
17 really tired. But those grandmothers, they did their work
18 and they talked and it was really good to see that they
19 could make a decision and the way that it was respected
20 here. I would say like I'm really proud of that. I'm
21 really proud of that and I'm really proud of the way that
22 this happened and that that's respected because that's the
23 way that I was taught is that it's our grandmother's role
24 to correct things, to make sure that they happen in a way
25 that the -- is in accordance with the way that we do

1 things, you know. So, it's good that we go out and we try
2 to do the best we can and it's good that we have grandmas
3 who can correct us when necessary.

4 So I want to say that and then -- though one
5 suggestion that I -- well, I guess I have two suggestions.
6 And I know some of them have already been thought of but
7 what I was told is when we invite people somewhere we make
8 sure that they have water and we make sure they're offered
9 food and we take care of that. That's a requirement and
10 that's for everybody. So, that's one thing I would offer.

11 And another thing, I'd really like in
12 October for there to be -- for us to gather in a place
13 where we're close to the fire and we can just go out and
14 sit and we can kind of go back and forth without having --
15 I don't mind walking but it feels very far away and I would
16 like it to be -- to feel closer. And I like the idea that
17 if there's rent paid that it's going to go to some -- to a
18 place where our people are very welcome and feel welcome
19 and where they do good work for the people.

20 Miigwech. (Speaking in Native Language).

21 **UNIDENTIFIED VOICE:** (Speaking in Native
22 Language).

23 I'm with my Wolf sister here. And she asked
24 me to come down with her. And I'm thinking about a lot of
25 people who have been murdered within the system. We never

1 received no justice because of a law. A law that's very
2 biased and one-sided. And a defence of this law is only
3 for Canada, not for the people of these territories.

4 Based on the rights of discovery, we are not
5 considered human. We are lesser than that. We're not even
6 in that. So why should we have human rights?

7 I'm not here to complain about that or
8 anything like that or want rights from a criminal that
9 thinks that we're lesser than them. But what I want to see
10 is that the supreme law of this land, through tribal custom
11 and usage, be adhered to and obeyed. Because when it comes
12 to the rule law of treaty is based on peace and only peace,
13 not on a theft of land, murderer of people, all the murder
14 and rape and everything that's going on today, the poverty
15 that's created to cause all this damn crime out there and
16 to protect the so-called peacekeepers from murder charges,
17 whether it be a lawyer, judge, politician or anything else
18 that are within our territories from the east coast to the
19 west coast, from the north to the south. Whole half side
20 of the world is the Americas. This is our empire. This is
21 our territory here that we live upon.

22 The peace has to be adhered to. And the use
23 of any law to protect any government official is to cease
24 and desist. You want some recommendations? There's a
25 recommendation. No better way to hide a crime than to use

1 a law, even if it is genocide.

2 But I'm speaking to you as a citizen of my
3 own tribe with my own people, which is a different country
4 than Canada. And Canada's not even a country. It has no
5 sovereign land base here. It has no sovereignty. No
6 Canadian has no sovereignty. You're in our home. Just
7 like when we're at the boarding room we got beat up and I
8 had to fricking curl up on that ground on a cold cell floor
9 in pain because I wanted to live by who I am.

10 I know the violence. I've had family killed
11 by cops and everything else too, in the past, even before
12 1492. But the only reason why treaty always comes up, keep
13 the peace, is because of troubles in the past that created
14 a foundation to all international law, which are six
15 treaties worldwide that define the territory. Three of
16 those treaties are here. This is under our command, not
17 the queen. Forget that Roman law you're talking about.
18 All those that are guilty, they are guilty. There is no
19 excuse. No more creating laches or laches because it
20 becomes negligence.

21 You know, don't want to offend nobody, like
22 we were saying earlier, but I know there is no kind way to
23 say it. I have to be harsh. That we have to use our
24 sovereignty to protect people within our territory. I'm
25 not just talking about our people. I never talk about our

1 people. All people are our people in our territory.

2 But some of the things I would never hear
3 people say. But when it comes to the tribes that belong
4 here, come back home. Thank you.

5 **UNIDENTIFIED VOICE:** (Speaking in Native
6 Language).

7 Well, there's lots to say about what's going
8 on. My family, too, went missing, you know, return, come
9 back, some hurt themselves, all because of politics and other
10 things. But that's a story I would tell because I'm here
11 with Jo and she spoke well, and here with (inaudible) too
12 to speak on behalf of the tribes and I'll pass this on.
13 Miigwech.

14 **MS. JO SEENIE:** Bonjour. (Speaking in
15 Native Language).

16 I just wanted to mention something for the
17 Commissioners real quickly. I spoke earlier. That there
18 are women that are inside as commissioners, some native
19 women but also other women that are in there and they have
20 a voice as well and please take them serious. They have a
21 right to say things that need to be said, vice versa, male.
22 We have sisters in there that we -- our women shouldn't be
23 afraid to say what they need to say and to be respected.

24 But also, communication at your next place,
25 I said earlier about letting them -- the families know

1 exactly what this meeting was about and the -- because they
2 felt that they weren't heard, so more communication. So
3 miigwech.

4 **MS. JOYCE CARIBOU:** Hello. Can you hear me?
5 Yeah. I'm the mother of a victim and a daughter,
6 grandchild, sister, my -- and an auntie. They were taken
7 away from me for -- all of them. And what I think about
8 these women that are being killed, what my point of view is
9 as if they're trying to decolonize the woman so there won't
10 be more of our people here. I hope you understand what I'm
11 trying to say.

12 Like, you know, none of our woman will have
13 children and their children and never -- and lots of my
14 families were murdered so I'm saying I'm a mother,
15 daughter, granddaughter, sister, auntie. And I've been
16 through a lot. It hurts. No justice was served for the --
17 oh, I'm just getting all nervous and, you know. But as
18 long as I spoke my mind. Thank you.

19 **MS. SUE CARIBOU:** Hi. My name is Sue. I'm
20 going to stand up for my family. I've been here the whole
21 three days. I'm one of the NFAC, National Family Advisory
22 Circle. And I stand for my family that's been murdered and
23 still missing. This is my sister, Joyce. She's been
24 fighting depression, fighting for her daughters to get
25 justice. This is my niece, Gail. I'm afraid to lose her.

1 She attempted suicide quite a lot. I'm proud she's here
2 today, both my sister and my niece.

3 We have a lot of injustice [*sic*] in our
4 family. I'm a strong person. I fight. I continue to
5 fight for my family. I speak for my family. I'm the voice
6 for my family. I'm a voice for a lot of families here in
7 Manitoba. They come to me and they ask me how I can still
8 be standing with all the families I'm -- I have murdered
9 and missing. But I have an auntie and elders that I talk
10 to. They're my support. Best support, the grandmothers.
11 They teach me a lot.

12 I'm 52. My grandfather was murdered in the
13 70s. My caregiver is still missing from 1972. Then in the
14 80s I lost another grandfather, an uncle, a nephew, a
15 sister, a niece, two cousins, and my niece Tanya is still
16 missing and nobody's searching for her. Me and my family
17 continue to search by ourselves with the help of these two
18 beautiful people and the help of my supporter, Belinda.
19 She buys us the equipment out of her own pocket. That's
20 the best support I ever had. If it wasn't for Belinda to
21 give us that money to buy the supplies, me and my family
22 wouldn't have continued to search for my niece. And I'll
23 continue to stand and be the voice for all my family that's
24 still -- no justice, nobody charged to this day.

25 It's 2017 and my family has been murdered

1 and gone missing since the 70s. And I'm going to continue
2 supporting families that are going through the same thing
3 I've been going through all my life with my family.

4 I'm afraid to lose my nieces from suicide.
5 I'm afraid to lose my sister from depression and not come
6 out of that depression. I went and picked them up today,
7 this morning, with the help of Belinda giving me the funds,
8 the cab fare to go pick them up. Nobody else has given my
9 family any funds to help us anywhere else. It's very sad
10 that our family still struggles to this day.

11 A lot of families have been coming to me for
12 the last two days and asking me why isn't any of the
13 families speaking. I, myself, was confused, but then I
14 asked questions. And our people need to start asking
15 questions to understand things. And I'm very grateful that
16 these two came to the meeting yesterday, and the
17 grandmothers for having a meeting. I'm grateful for the
18 families for coming and not giving up. I'm proud of all
19 the families for having that voice for their loved one.
20 And I'll continue to support all the families.

21 I got a foundation also called Families
22 First Foundation. I didn't know the policy went through
23 but it went through. I just have to copy applications. If
24 any family member wants that help we're on the Facebook.
25 It's called Families First Foundation. I'll help you in

1 any way I can with buying a monument, getting a headstone
2 for your loved one. Whatever it is you need from the
3 Families First Foundation I'm there to help you with that.
4 And I'm here as a National Family Advisory Circle to be
5 there for families if they want to talk to me, to support
6 them and to support the Commissioners. I'm in the middle
7 of the Commissioners and the family.

8 Even though I have a lot in my family that's
9 been murdered and still missing, they keep me going. I'm
10 their voice. I'm their only hope. They don't have a
11 voice. They were murdered and still missing so they can't
12 speak for themselves. So I'm here for all my loved ones
13 that were murdered and still missing. I'm here for my
14 sister, my niece to continue to have their voice out there
15 for my beautiful niece, Tanya Niffenack (ph).

16 When my parents were murdered in 1979, both
17 my parents were murdered. I was 11. My sister took me and
18 my late brother in. My late brother also died of a heart
19 attack. I call it a broken heart because his eight-year-
20 old daughter got murdered. Five months after that he died.
21 Two days after my late brother her husband died, my
22 brother-in-law. So my family's been going through tragedy
23 after tragedy.

24 I got a granddaughter in the hospital right
25 now. Grateful that Bernie (ph) gave me some advice before

1 I left to the -- to go to the hospital. I did what she
2 told me to do. It helped my granddaughter. Now she's
3 going to stay one more night to make sure she's okay. I'm
4 grateful for all the advice that she gave me and for blue.
5 That's what we're there for is to support each and every
6 one, support one another. It would make Mother Earth a
7 better place to live if we were there for one another,
8 search for our loved ones together, support one another.
9 And I thank the Creator for another day.

10 I still have one surviving auntie. That's
11 who I go to when I feel that I can't do this anymore. I
12 struggle with depression every day. Thank God for my
13 daughter. She comes and gets me every lunch time. She's
14 going to university but she still takes that time to make
15 sure mom gets up and gets out of the house. I'm grateful.

16 My kids all got educated, which I didn't
17 have. I made sure my kids graduated. They all have jobs
18 to support their children. I didn't have my parents there
19 for me and my sister and their grandkids. None of my
20 nieces and nephews got to know their grandparents as they
21 were taken away. They were murdered.

22 What do you call good behaviour? When you
23 shoot five people you get eight years good behaviour.
24 Shame on our justice system. That guy left us orphans but
25 he got that good behaviour for leaving so many orphans,

1 nieces and nephews that didn't get to know their
2 grandparents. Yeah. I still say shame on our justice
3 system to this day because I still have loved ones,
4 unsolved cases, still niece that is not even being searched
5 for. I still say shame on our justice system to this day.

6 I pray. Every day when I wake up I pray
7 during the day. I pray when I go to bed. I pray for all
8 my family that they keep fighting that depression. I pray
9 they don't take their own lives.

10 I thank you guys for all being here, for
11 supporting each other. I'm grateful every day when I wake
12 up. I'm grateful at the end of the night that I didn't get
13 a call that one of nieces or nephews committed suicide.
14 I'm grateful my sister is not in bed fighting that
15 depression. I'm always grateful for that every day. And
16 I'm grateful that I have such wonderful support, beautiful
17 people that are loving and caring. They're beautiful
18 inside and out. I love them by my heart. They search.
19 They supply. But, most importantly, from their heart.
20 That's what we all need. Follow your heart.

21 Thank you and have a good day and God bless
22 you all today. And if any of the families want to speak to
23 me, I am here for all of yous. Thank you.

24 **UNIDENTIFIED VOICE:** Well, I don't know what
25 to say. I'm just going to pass it on because I don't know

1 what to say. I'm just like -- I'm just depressed right
2 now.

3 **MS. PAULINE SHIRT:** I just want to say
4 miigwech to our sister here. The fact that she's sitting
5 here with us is a -- you know, is her -- you know -- you
6 know, then we heard her voice. I want to say miigwech to
7 her.

8 I want to say speaking the language that I
9 was raised with, I am (inaudible) from Sad Lake Treaty 6.
10 And one of my sisters was murdered and a lot of my loved
11 ones. My childhood girlfriend, Pauline Pappin, you know of
12 her that was, you know -- who was murdered in the Pickton
13 farm.

14 (Speaking in Native Language).

15 I've -- I'm not going to translate
16 everything, what I said. You can -- each and every one of
17 you understand what I'm saying because each and every one
18 of you the spirit of the language is inside you. You can
19 understand it. All you have to do is open your minds and
20 your hearts and your spirit will tell you what is
21 happening, what I have said.

22 I want to say miigwech to all the families
23 who've travelled many miles in here, you know, to come and
24 sit with us so we can hear their voices, so we can listen
25 to that -- you know, we can support the spirit of this

1 whole meeting, of this missing, murdered woman. Because I
2 went there. You know, I was there. I lost a lot of loved
3 ones.

4 In fact, I came here when I was going to be
5 flying. I was told that I had lost, you know, one of my
6 best friends. So but I also became a grandma, you know,
7 that same day. And so I just want to say in my own pitiful
8 way that I ask the Creator that I will do whatever I can to
9 help each and every one of you in the best way as I can.

10 So I just want to say miigwech to each and
11 every one of you for voicing your opinion and sitting in a
12 circle, sitting in a circle because that's how our way of
13 life is. And also, to listen to the Creator's law, to
14 listen to the Creator's law. That's where we get all our
15 answers.

16 So I just want to say miigwech to all the
17 work that has been done in here and that we will -- you
18 know, we will support each other in the best way. So I
19 just want to say miigwech. Hai Hai. Miigwech.

20 **UNIDENTIFIED VOICE:** That rock?

21 **MS. PAULINE SHIRT:** Give what?

22 **UNIDENTIFIED VOICE:** The rock.

23 **MS. PAULINE SHIRT:** Oh. I left it in my
24 heart. He wants -- and I said, "What"? "The rock," he
25 said. And I forgot all about it.

1 **UNIDENTIFIED VOICE:** (Speaking in Native
2 Language) .

3 I just want to use the second language that
4 everybody uses because I know, as an Anishinaabe person, I
5 know not everyone understands our language and we all have
6 different languages because there's many different tribes
7 in this room and we all have our own languages. Like when
8 she was speaking I didn't understand all the way through
9 when she was talking but I was able to pick up here and
10 there what she was talking about.

11 And also, as I was listening to the stories
12 that I heard from these young people that have lost their
13 loved ones, you see I, myself, too lost a grandniece back
14 in 2008 at home. It happened right at home. But the
15 person that took the life of my grandniece wasn't from
16 there. And I still carry that.

17 And, you know, when I was listening to these
18 people sharing their stories, I go back to that day, the
19 day it happened, of all the anger that came into me and
20 sadness and grief. And I'm sitting here today holding this
21 rock and also holding this tobacco, which is a very sacred
22 for my own personal point of view because of who I am.

23 Yesterday she talked about Midewiwin lodges,
24 beautiful stories. I, too, carry a story. And a lady
25 sitting over there right across from me, Sheri (ph),

1 carries a story too that I know, because she belongs to a
2 lodge that Donna (ph) had talked about yesterday.

3 After she got done talking yesterday I went
4 up to her to wish her the best. And this is what I told
5 her. "You know," I says, "You made me cry three times
6 while you were talking," I said. But I wasn't joking when
7 I said that. I had tears coming out as I was listening to
8 her story. Happiness. You know, I was happy for her, the
9 story that she had shared with us, especially the Midewiwin
10 stories. I was very happy for a young person to carry so
11 much which she collected from the -- that sacred lodge,
12 Midewiwin lodge.

13 And I know in this place here where we're at
14 there's a good number of Midewiwin people here. And I know
15 that (speaking in Native language) is listening to us here,
16 watching us as we're gathered with sadness and searching.
17 And we're going to find what we're searching for, but we
18 have to use our tobacco the best that we know how. Like
19 this tobacco that I'm holding, it's going to go home with
20 me and it's going to raise smoke over at the sacred site
21 where I do my ceremonies. It will probably happen this
22 evening because I'm going to leave here shortly.

23 But I want to thank you *[sic]* all for
24 listening to me. Miigwech.

25 And one of the things that I want to share

1 with you, which is very -- another important -- that I
2 earned, sobriety, because many of yous [sic] here do carry
3 sobriety.

4 You see, back in 1982 that's when I changed
5 my way of life. I reached out for help from the
6 contemporary point. I went for treatment. So I've been
7 sober 35 years. And I also don't smoke.

8 I shared a story with that lady, Maggie
9 (ph), yesterday. I also don't gamble, you know. No
10 offence to people that are gamblers, you know. That's just
11 me. I needed to do that because I couldn't handle my
12 gambling addiction just like I couldn't handle my drinks.
13 So the only way that I found out is to put it aside. So I
14 always share that in front of people because I'm proud to
15 say that I'm a recovering alcoholic. Miigwech.

16 **MS. ELIZABETH DANIELS:** Good afternoon,
17 everybody. My name is -- my English name is Isabelle
18 Daniels and I represent my niece that was taken in 2009.
19 Sorry, just give me a sec. She was 16 at the time of her
20 death. And her technical cause of death was hypothermia so
21 there was nobody brought to justice. She was raped by a
22 middle-aged man. She had an obscene amount of Xanax and
23 alcohol in her system. He tossed her out of his truck and
24 left her for dead behind the Enterprise on Regent Avenue.

25 And so my -- for my family it's hard to come

1 to these things because her cause of death wasn't
2 technically murder but she was raped, she was beaten. She
3 was left for dead. She was left face down in the back of a
4 garage, an auto body shop where she was found by one of the
5 employees in the morning.

6 So, for me and my family it's hard to come
7 to these things because we know that there is little
8 advocacy for families like ours where it wasn't a clear-cut
9 case in terms of Canadian law and criminal law that she
10 wasn't murdered. And where is the advocacy going to happen
11 to have those people, those law -- those cops, those -- the
12 perpetrator to be held accountable for what he did?

13 My auntie then ended up killing herself
14 because of the loss of her child through her addiction.
15 She has left five children in the care of CFS who my mom
16 raises. So the ripple effect that happens from one act of
17 one person goes on for generations. My auntie left behind
18 five children, not to mention the one that was murdered.
19 And the youngest one is just six or seven years old. My
20 mom takes care of all those children. She's a kokum. She
21 has raised her kids. I am on -- I am the youngest of her
22 children and I am on the sunny side of 40. And here she is
23 again reliving that life as a mother and as -- and going
24 through that -- the teenage years again through her
25 children.

1 So we are honoured to be in the process of
2 this inquiry but we're also discouraged because we don't
3 know a lot of the information that is -- that -- why are we
4 reopening these wounds? Why are we sitting here and crying
5 and telling our story if the advocacy at the level of law
6 enforcement is not going to come from the recommendations
7 of this inquiry? When are we going to see action in terms
8 of -- I'm happy that this inquiry is taking place. Don't
9 get me wrong. But where is the change going to come in
10 terms of law enforcement? When are these people going to
11 be held accountable for the lives that they've taken?

12 Just because a coroner says that somebody
13 died of hypothermia, there's causes that led up to her
14 death. This person was considered to be an upstanding
15 person of Transcona. And here he is discarding the life of
16 a 16-year-old. They said they wouldn't charge him with sex
17 acts with a minor because she was the technical age of 16,
18 which is the legal age to consent for sex in this province.
19 And how was she able to consent for sex when she had five
20 times the legal limit of alcohol and she had a lethal dose
21 of Xanax in her system?

22 So for us we want to know that from this
23 inquiry, from all this trauma being resurfaced and being
24 rehashed every time we come to these meetings, that there
25 will be actual action that happens from this inquiry. We

1 want to know that all these people are not being led down
2 this road where the same results will happen in terms of
3 Phoenix Sinclair. That inquiry led to no action in terms
4 of people at this level of CFS. All those social workers
5 are still employed, if not program managers of people who
6 are still street involved. All those people are still
7 employed. And here that girl is no longer on this earth
8 and was not able to become a mother and live her life.

9 I am also a survivor. My mom is a
10 residential school survivor. I am a survivor of sexual
11 abuse and sexual exploitation. I work also with women who
12 are sexually exploited in the only program in this city
13 that helps women at a street level, specific to the
14 population of sexual exploitation through homelessness, sex
15 work and addiction. I don't see any of those people being
16 represented here in the inquiry either when we have more
17 than 50 percent of our clients are either on the MMIW or
18 potential victims of violence because of the state of
19 poverty that we have in our province.

20 I would like to see programs available in --
21 on reserve lands in terms of how to stay safe when becoming
22 or moving into the urban area. It's funny that we are
23 Anishinaabe people but we are newcomers in our own land.
24 So when we have to come to urban areas for education, we
25 have to come to urban areas because we have no economy in

1 our homeland or what is considered to be homeland by the
2 federal government on reserves, there is not going to be
3 any change in terms of violence on -- in our communities.
4 There's not going to be any change in terms of violence
5 that happens to our women when they come into an urban area
6 because we need to change the mindset of law enforcement.
7 We need to change the mindset of CFS. We need to change
8 the mindset on what causes poverty and the people that are
9 more -- most burdened by poverty, and that is our
10 Anishinaabe people.

11 I think that we have a long way to go but I
12 think that we are on the right track by having the
13 grandmothers lead meetings like this.

14 I was a little discouraged the first two
15 days. I'm not going to lie. My mom didn't understand the
16 terminologies that were being used when we were doing the
17 Indigenous law. So I -- for my recommendation for people
18 who are not lawyers or people that don't understand legal
19 jargon there should be -- I think when people are speaking
20 that they need to remember that we all don't have law
21 degrees and we all don't speak that language and we don't
22 understand that terminology. So, yeah, a lot of it went in
23 one ear and out the other because we don't know what's
24 being said and we don't understand that language. So,
25 going forward, I think that you need to remember that

1 you're speaking to people who, again, are not lawyers and
2 don't have law degrees and are not social workers or work
3 in that capacity. So vocabulary is very important.

4 Keeping in mind -- and accommodations for
5 families to attend these events. My mom was given cab fare
6 and bus fare by a third party organization that fundraised
7 on their own in order to have money for people to get here.
8 I feel like families are highly unrepresented in this
9 circle. If accommodations and travel can be made for
10 people who are employed by the inquiry, then you should
11 make accommodations and travel available to family members
12 to attend these inquiry meetings. I think it's just that
13 important. We shouldn't have to be scrounging around and
14 looking to agencies to attend these meetings. And that's
15 what happened here this -- over the last three days.

16 I'm thankful for the people that helped us
17 out to get here. I'm thankful for my -- for the people
18 that ensured that my mom had lunch money. My mom, like I
19 said, is not employed. She's a foster parent, so most of
20 her money goes to the children that she raises. So she
21 couldn't afford to be here all day because she didn't have
22 lunch, she didn't have breakfast and she didn't have dinner
23 money. And I think that's important when you're
24 remembering that you're dealing with a large population
25 that is still very, very much affected by poverty.

1 You have a lot of these families that are
2 still on reserve and communication to them to come to urban
3 areas and accommodations for them to come to these urban
4 areas and these urban meetings is crucial to making this
5 inquiry go by smoothly.

6 I thank you all for your time. Thank you to
7 Commissioners. Thank you to grandmothers and family
8 members and everybody that's in attendance today.
9 Miigwech.

10 **MS. SHERI COPENACE:** Just -- I know that --
11 I don't want to like cut anybody short or anything but I'd
12 like to like -- I have great respect for everybody but I'd
13 like to ask the family members to speak first and I -- you
14 know, I apologize to the grandmothers sitting in the
15 circle, but if we could do that because it's almost lunch
16 time. So I really thank you if we could allow that to
17 happen. Miigwech.

18 **MS. CANDACE COPENACE:** Bonjours. My name is
19 Candace Copenace. I'm from Kenora.

20 The most recent loss I remember is Delane
21 (ph) Copenace. We looked for her. We looked for her for
22 weeks. And it's like it's the same thing. Like there was
23 no follow up, no explanation how she went missing or how
24 she died. And I still ask.

25 But the first loss I remember is 30 years

1 ago when my -- both of my grandfathers, they went missing
2 in the same month. They both went missing. And that was
3 30 years ago. And there was no explanation. They couldn't
4 -- the police, the government, they couldn't tell me what
5 happened to them. And I still pray for them every day,
6 their spirits, every night. And that was 30 years ago.

7 And so I don't know about this. We're -- is
8 anything really going to change? You know, this was a long
9 time ago. And I do appreciate that this is MMIW but I have
10 fathers and grandfathers that went missing, you know. It's
11 all of us. It's our whole people that are going missing.

12 I'm a survivor. I got beat up by my own
13 people. And I survived.

14 But I do appreciate all the help that I'm
15 getting because this is the first time I'm really -- I've
16 been crying for three days. It's the first time that I'm
17 actually acknowledging what's going on. I usually just
18 hide it. And then all the medicine, all the grandmothers,
19 all -- everything is helping me acknowledge what I have to
20 acknowledge.

21 So I don't know. I was brought up by a
22 white lawyer in Kenora. He fought -- he was a criminal and
23 family lawyer in Kenora. He taught me a lot. I'm not a
24 lawyer myself but I used to have to help him when -- like
25 his affidavits and everything like that I had to proofread

1 them and change his grammar and everything.

2 (LAUGHTER/RIRES)

3 **MS. CANDACE COPENACE:** So I learned a lot
4 but I didn't go to law school myself. But I really
5 appreciate what he did for the people in Kenora. And he's
6 still my dad but he's a white guy.

7 (LAUGHTER/RIRES)

8 **MS. CANDACE COPENACE:** Yeah, he comes to
9 Winnipeg a lot and he still teaches me. And I learned a
10 lot from my grandmothers and my mom about all the medicines
11 and everything.

12 But I'm really appreciative of this place
13 right now. I'm learning a lot. And I hope things can go
14 forward from here because 30 years ago there was still
15 nothing happening for the missing people. And I hope
16 something happens. I know the justice system and the
17 police in Kenora, they really mistreat our people.

18 But I can only do what I -- I don't know
19 what I can do. Just help the younger people. That's all I
20 can do, and pass on what knowledge I have. Miigwech.

21 **UNIDENTIFIED VOICE:** They need to introduce
22 themselves.

23 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Oh, yeah, if you
24 want to say your name. Yeah, just for the families.

25 **MS. SHERI COPENACE:** We're trying to pass it

1 to the families first.

2 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Yeah, yeah. Okay.

3 **UNIDENTIFIED VOICE:** If we have time.

4 **UNIDENTIFIED VOICE:** Let them introduce
5 themselves.

6 **MS. GERALDINE SHINGOOSE:** I'm -- hi. I'm
7 just going to introduce myself and pass the rock so the
8 families could speak. I'm one of the grandmothers. My
9 name is Gerry Shingoose. My spirit name is Sky Woman and
10 Northern Lights Woman. And I just want to say chi-miigwech
11 to the families for sharing. And I truly pray that there
12 is follow up after for you guys.

13 **MS. CAROL MOAR:** Bonjour. My name is Carol
14 Moar. I walk with two spirit names, Blue Sky Woman,
15 Morning Star and I'm from the Deer Clan. And I also
16 believe the families are here and that's more -- they're
17 the ones that need to speak, so I'm going to pass it on,
18 but I did want to introduce myself to the Creator and to
19 all the lovely people here. Miigwech.

20 **MS. PATRICIA CARIBOU:** Bonjour. (Speaking
21 in Native Language).

22 My name -- my English name is Patricia
23 Caribou and I'm -- my name is When The Flower First Bloomed
24 Woman from the White Bear Clan. And I just wanted to say
25 also -- acknowledge everyone here, acknowledge the circle

1 and the medicine, the pipes, the pipe carrier, and I come
2 to share my gifts with you and my rock here. This is a
3 blue lapis and it's -- has the energy for your throat so
4 you can speak. Chi-miigwech. (Speaking in Native
5 Language).

6 **MS. KAREN DRAKE:** Hi, my Karen Drake. I'm a
7 citizen of the Métis Nation of Ontario. And this is the
8 first time I've ever had an opportunity to hear from family
9 members and I'm very, very grateful for it. Thank you.

10 **DR. HADLEY FRIEDLAND:** My name is Hadley. I
11 had a lot of space to talk in the last two days and I'm
12 really grateful to be listening today.

13 **MR. MIKE ROURKE:** Thank you. My name is
14 Mike Rourke. I'm a little bit sad. I just lost my brother
15 Monday night and I just wanted to say God bless you though.

16 We lost a daughter in Vancouver Island just
17 up by Alert Bay. And I just want to support all of you
18 people for all your losses. And I just want to hand the
19 mic to Betty.

20 **MS. BETTY ROURKE:** My name is Betty Rourke.
21 I am a wounded mother, a wounded sister. I want to speak
22 on behalf of my daughters. I know that Kim and Gerry (ph)
23 would have wanted to be here today but they were not --
24 well, Kim's not feeling well. But, for Gerry (ph), she was
25 disappointed that the meeting was being held here. Both

1 Kim and Gerry (ph) feel like this is not a safe place for
2 them.

3 We did have a meeting a few weeks ago with
4 Christa and we were expecting to meet at the Thunderbird
5 House. It was changed and we met in a hotel. It was
6 disappointing. The Thunderbird House had everything
7 prepared for us. And one of the ladies that was supporting
8 us was waiting over there and we had to get her and she
9 came to the hotel.

10 So, as I said, I'm a wounded mom and I
11 defend my children. Of course, you know, like a wounded
12 bear I'm going to defend my surviving cubs. So I ask the
13 Commissioners, because a lot of family members, survivors,
14 we are not comfortable here. I come here.

15 I'm -- I had a tough mother. My mother made
16 me a tough woman. I'm very resilient I am. I live in a
17 Christian world. I live in the traditional world. My
18 spirit name is She Walks With The Sacred Teachings. And I
19 don't understand that because I'm a Christian, but then
20 they gave me -- when I went to get the -- in the sweat
21 lodge my spirit name is, you know, The Sacred Teachings.
22 And I'm -- I do go to a sweat lodge in -- but I'm not too
23 familiar with everything. And I don't understand when the
24 smudging and stuff like that. I do it because I don't want
25 to offend anyone. But I'm more comfortable in the church.

1 So like she said her stone was to -- for the
2 -- to speak. Well, I speak -- my God, my Creator will
3 speak through me.

4 And so as a wounded mother I beg you,
5 Commissioners, please, when you have the hearing in
6 October, please have it at Thunderbird House where we're
7 comfortable, where my daughter Gerry (ph) is comfortable
8 and Kimberly and many other survivors.

9 That's all I would like to say today. And
10 thank you all. Thank you so much every one of you. I
11 always feel so happy when I leave from all -- everyone that
12 loves me.

13 Like yesterday I didn't know where I was
14 going to have lunch from but then somebody come and gave me
15 an envelope with money in. Hey. I went to Skinners and
16 had my favourite.

17 I love you guys so much, all of you. Thank
18 you.

19 **MS. LINDA NECKAWAY (ph):** My name is Linda
20 Neckaway (ph). I always get emotional when I'm here
21 because it triggers me so much of my sister that's missing,
22 Lily Flett (ph). And I heard Dawnis talking about her
23 yesterday when I was -- had an appointment. I was
24 listening on a webcast. Thank you for talking about her.

25 She went missing in 2010. We did many

1 searches on our own. Didn't get any help from others but
2 with friends. I mean, financially.

3 I've been craving for this for a while since
4 she's gone missing. Don't know where she went. She's just
5 gone.

6 We were at a conference or a Truth and
7 Reconciliation event here in 2010 in Winnipeg. She was
8 last seen there. And there was a lot of people at the
9 conference when this was going on or the TRC event.

10 My sister -- my other sister and I -- my
11 sister was -- my other younger sister was supposed to be
12 getting surgery at the hospital and she didn't -- my --
13 Amelia (ph) didn't show up. We don't know what happened.
14 So we did searches again. We had some police help. And
15 just talking to them I don't know if they did any searches.
16 I feel like they didn't.

17 It's been -- it's the -- I still struggle
18 with this every day. I miss her a lot. I blame myself
19 because, you know, when you're the oldest in the family you
20 should be taking care of brothers and sisters. And she's
21 gone. She was a younger sister of mine.

22 She went through some sadness and grieving
23 because of her own relationship that didn't work out
24 previously and started getting really depressed about her
25 situation. She was a well-spoken woman. She attended

1 lodges and many ceremonies. A lot of people knew her.

2 So today I -- I've been sitting here in and
3 out for the last, well, three days now. I couldn't stay
4 because I have a family member that's sick. I come in and
5 out. I'm also unemployed and have to pay for parking to
6 come here and so I have to leave.

7 Anyway, my recommendations were to --
8 because I live on reserve, to have some support out there
9 in regards to there are mental health workers that do come
10 in but they're always bombarded with some many other
11 community members. I wish there were a central location
12 like in Thompson -- I live in Northern Manitoba -- where we
13 could have people, you know, to go talk to there, mental
14 health workers.

15 Nothing ever happens up north and I wish it
16 were because we have to travel so far south to, you know,
17 come to events like this. And most times we have -- I've
18 been trying -- I've been coming on my own and that's a
19 struggle.

20 A lot of us, as I listen, that we don't have
21 any -- we don't even know how to walk on that healing
22 journey. And maybe have some more wellness conferences in
23 regards to how to deal with grief, depression, anger,
24 because it all happens in our families. It's almost like,
25 you know, to practice this way of life is the -- with the

1 ceremonies here, I didn't know that either. I have to ask
2 for -- you know, I follow and I watch people do it and I
3 started learning that way. But some of the things inside,
4 we need a little bit more help with.

5 It's been quite a journey for myself in
6 walking without my sister. It's a different kind of grief
7 because I feel like she's, you know, she's -- I don't know
8 if she's gone to the other side. I don't know if she's
9 still with us. I don't know that. Still a question mark.
10 I'm still -- I'm grieving for that.

11 And one thing I would like to say that not -
12 - I'm hoping that not everything happens in Winnipeg. I
13 know it's central. But I would also like to get the north,
14 you know, things happening in the north so that some of the
15 people will feel what it's like for them to come up north,
16 you know, that need the funding, that need the food, that
17 need the hotel. And a lot of people, you know, can't get
18 there. And there's a lot of people here that can't get
19 here because of that.

20 I've been listening to some of the language
21 that's happening here too. At first I didn't know what was
22 happening. I just had a question mark, like, what's
23 happening here? I felt like I didn't belong at first
24 because there was people here that are smarter than me.
25 That's how I felt that I didn't belong here. So I was in

1 and out listening. And I seen Belinda here and I figured,
2 well, if she can be here I can be here too, you know.

3 (LAUGHTER/RIRES)

4 **MS. LINDA NECKAWAY (ph):** So I know that I
5 can fall on her at any time.

6 But I'm grateful to be here today and I'm
7 grateful for another day. And I always get triggered every
8 time I'm at any conference regarding missing and murdered
9 women because we all go through the same grief. And the
10 triggers that happens will keep continuing. And I get
11 upset and I start, you know, getting teary-eyed but that's
12 okay.

13 Thank you for listening.

14 **ELDER BELINDA VANDENBROEK:** Thank you,
15 Linda. I just want to say that Linda and I have been
16 friends since we were little. And her and I were best
17 friends and my sister, Edna, and her sister were best
18 friends. So, we've known each other for a long and she's
19 one of my -- to me, my relative.

20 And since it's almost lunch I'm going to
21 pass and carry on.

22 **MS. SHERI COPENACE:** (Speaking in Native
23 Language).

24 Good greetings, my relatives. I just
25 announce myself and my three spirit names. I belong to the

1 Elk Clan. And I've gone through twice to that good and
2 kind-hearted lodge that you've heard referenced yesterday
3 and today, that Midewiwin lodge. And, to me, that's -- you
4 know, what you -- what you're being shared with there is
5 like to be a kind and good person. And, for me, I respect
6 all walks of life and I -- and that's what you're taught in
7 there. But I also hold close to my heart our Anishinaabe
8 ways. And I know, like, you're talking about Indigenous
9 law here and to me it's like you're seeing it in action
10 right now, even us sitting in the circle.

11 So, for me, what I say to the Commissioners
12 is listen to what the families have said. And I'm sure
13 they've said that before. And maybe there's new things
14 that they've said. So do what they ask of you. That's
15 what I would say. Do what they ask of you. And that's
16 what I have to say.

17 So miigwech to everybody here. I really --
18 and I thank that our grandmother over there for speaking
19 our language because I know when she spoke that language
20 that she was reciting laws to us. And if the families want
21 to speak in -- when they come before you -- in their own
22 language, have translators there maybe that can translate
23 for you after or during.

24 So, for me, thank you, chi-miigwech, for all
25 the people here, and most especially the ones that spoke

1 their original language. Miigwech.

2 **MS. KATHERINE WHITECLOUD:** Really quickly.
3 And I'm not sure if we're going to have the opportunity to
4 share later on today because this is for the families and I
5 do have extended family that are missing. I have a
6 grandson that is missing. And I'll speak about that later
7 because I want to provide the opportunity to families to
8 speak.

9 And quick recommendation that is if there is
10 an opportunity for you to sit together with the
11 grandmothers, that you take that time to do that because we
12 have much to share with you and it's not possible to do
13 that here because we are cognizant and respectful of the
14 family's time.

15 And having said that -- can you hold this
16 for me for a minute? I'm going to -- yesterday I spoke
17 with Dawnis last night at the grandmother's meeting, and we
18 spoke about your sister, Millie (ph), who was a good friend
19 of mine. And I spent a great deal of time and I have quite
20 a bit of her artwork that she gave and that I purchased
21 from her. And I told Dawnis that I would find what I have
22 and I would give it back to her so that she can give it to
23 her -- Millie's (ph) children because they don't have
24 anything of hers.

25 Because we've recently moved I couldn't find

1 everything but I do have four pieces of her work I want to
2 give back to you that she made, that her hands crafted, so
3 that you can give them to her children. And I would -- and
4 I commit to bringing back all that I have of hers to give
5 to you and to give to you so that you can have the work
6 that your auntie made and that you can have the work that
7 your sister made, and I will return it to you.

8 So, Dawnis, I want to give you this. I put
9 it in here with tobacco and this is the work of your auntie
10 that you can return to her children.

11 **MS. LOUISE HAULI:** I just wanted to say from
12 the videos that we saw yesterday about Inuit law, just to
13 clarify that what we saw yesterday is -- was family law but
14 there's more laws that were not in the video. So I'm
15 hoping some day it will be able to be addressed somehow.
16 And I feel very honoured to be here and friendly people,
17 caring people, I'm very happy to be here. Thank you.

18 **MS. BERNIE WILLIAMS POITRAS:** I just want to
19 say haw'aa, haw'aa, haw'aa. My name is (speaking in Native
20 language), which means Golden Spruce Woman. I come from
21 the house of the (speaking in Native language), which is
22 the House of the Raven. That's on my grandmother's side.
23 And I'm also Nuu-chah-nulth, which is Coast Salish. I come
24 from a remote island off of the west coast of B.C.,
25 formerly called the Queen Charlotte Islands. And we fought

1 for the reclamation of our traditional name, which is
2 called Haida Gwaii, some also call it Gwaii Haanas or the
3 Misty Isles. It's a rainforest so.

4 My colonial name is Bernie Williams Poitras.
5 I'm also a family member. I want to say haw'aa to the
6 traditional people from this territory, Treaty 1. I also
7 would like to say haw'aa to the clan mothers, to the Elders
8 and to the grandmothers here, but especially to the family
9 members.

10 I want to make this brief because there's
11 other family members here too. I am a family member. My
12 mother was murdered in November 5th, 1977. I have three
13 other sisters that were murdered too in the downtown east
14 side of Vancouver, one in Merritt, B.C. I never grew up
15 with my family. I grew up in care, Sixties Scoop
16 Residential School.

17 I am a product of a thousand years of love
18 that I can say. I say haw'aa to my ancestors because I'm
19 the last survivor of the family on both sides of my family.
20 I'm the last woman on both sides.

21 My mother was very young. She was 52. My
22 sisters never made it to the age of 40. I'm going to be 60
23 years old in a couple months. I'm a mother of 3 amazing
24 sons and 10 grandchildren. And I work on the front line in
25 the downtown east side of Vancouver. I am very nervous. I

1 have a lot of love for the family across Canada. We walked
2 with the Walk for Justice five times. We walked 93 days.
3 Each time we walked I met a lot of these amazing,
4 incredible families.

5 I'm on the front lines every day with the
6 Elders. I only have one Elder left out of eight that --
7 who started this movement with us back in the 80s and that
8 they were doing it long before. But first and foremost, I
9 am a land defender and a protector.

10 A lot of people don't understand how those
11 two -- they coincide with one another. And I'm really
12 grateful for our sister Jo and her brothers for creating
13 that awareness that everything that has happened to the
14 land is happened to our women and is still happening.

15 My recommendation to the Commissioners,
16 because I am one of the support team from the west coast
17 for these Commissioners and I think they are really amazing
18 human beings, and I want to express my frustration on one
19 thing is that this lateral violence has really got to stop.
20 You know, at the finger pointing, the blame game, that
21 really needs to stop. And it's almost like we're pitted
22 against one another again.

23 The recommendation that I have is the
24 health, healing and wellness centres. This is so -- an
25 imperative. There's so much money that goes into the

1 downtown east side. We estimate about a million dollars is
2 spent every day down there and no one is getting better. I
3 believe that we are the most -- we are the biggest
4 commodity to these organizations in the downtown east side.
5 And I have no problem saying this. I also have no problem
6 saying that these organizations have really benefitted and
7 that they've built their empires off the backs of our
8 people, the ones that are suffering still yet.

9 I also believe and hold the justice system
10 accountable. These police officers know on those front
11 lines that I work in. I know every nook and cranny of that
12 downtown east side and we watch them. We keep records of
13 these police officers. We see the beatings. We have filed
14 several suits against them but they will always walk on it
15 because they're so protected. This Indian law that we talk
16 about really needs to be looked at, to be implemented back
17 in.

18 We watch in those front lines -- we've lost
19 like a whole generation through Fentanyl right now. Our
20 people, our grandmothers, our clan mothers, our matriarchs,
21 the Elders, are the experts when it comes to health,
22 healing and wellness. And we've been asking for those
23 health, healing and wellnesses in Vancouver.

24 When the residential school -- like the TRC
25 -- and please don't, you know, take this wrong. I looked

1 at all the money that -- with the walks that happened
2 nationally, you know, for the TRC and I asked one
3 individual how much did each one of these venues cost
4 across Canada when you were doing these major walks for --
5 at the TRC. We estimated over 300,000. I says, "You know,
6 this is shameful. Each places that you went to you could
7 have built a health, healing and wellness for our
8 communities to bring in our Elders."

9 I'm new to this medicine out here and this
10 is -- I was never so proud to be a part of the opening the
11 other morning. This is so new to me. My -- as my
12 matriarchs and my house will say, "Skundaal, you have to
13 use" -- that's my other nickname. It means "little one."
14 So when they talk to me they talk to me, you know, as
15 Skundaal. And they say that you have to learn your own to
16 know who you are. And I'm slowly learning.

17 But these front lines, a lot of people
18 forget about them. They forget about them. I sit in the
19 alleys with them. I'm watching Elders now through the
20 residential school payments that were paid out that are
21 smoking crack. I was never ever so angry to find one of
22 the Elders -- now they're 72 years old -- who has given up
23 because his own wife died. The monies that were
24 implemented and, you know, paid out, you know, has helped
25 to kill more people. Now we've lost like a whole other

1 generation of our youth through this Fentanyl crisis that
2 we've got well over 1500 right now in B.C. alone. The
3 majority of it is right downtown east side. We have only
4 one Elder that carries that medicine. That is Rita Blind
5 from northern Saskatoon, who has been our Elder, our
6 community Elder, and she's the only one that's left who's
7 carrying that medicine.

8 A lot of people say they are pipe carriers,
9 who hand you out their cards, this is what I -- this is a
10 good work that I do. And I was always taught to ask
11 questions. Who is your teacher? When they can't tell me
12 that, I walk away. I say, "Haw'aa. Thank you. I got to
13 go."

14 And the reason why I'm, you know, talking
15 about, you know, that the downtown east side is because
16 women are still going missing. Women are still being --
17 our women are being murdered at such a high rate now
18 through the Fentanyl.

19 My recommendation also is about the
20 coroners. To date we've got over 200 bodies in the morgue
21 that are not accounted for. Still to this day over 200
22 loved ones that have families who don't even know who they
23 are -- where they are, I mean.

24 My recommendation is to really push at the
25 coroners because a lot of the deaths down in my area in the

1 downtown east side, they write it off as, you know, as like
2 an overdose. A lot of people don't talk about the hot
3 capping. Hot capping is when they give you the wrong drug.
4 That is intentional. Nobody ever talks about that.

5 I don't mean any disrespect by my words. I
6 just want to tell you this is my reality, you know, as a
7 family member, that I push every day. You know, I know I
8 can't, you know, bring my mom and them back, but I'm sure
9 the heck going to stand and do everything that I can to
10 make sure that the families, you know, get what they
11 deserve, which is justice, you know, for their loved ones
12 and that.

13 And I want to say haw'aa again for the
14 medicine and for the Elders and the medicine carriers and
15 the grandmothers for being patient and teaching me. I ask
16 a lot of questions because I want to learn because my three
17 sons are also part Cree, and I try to, you know, learn as
18 much as I can to bring home because they're not ready to go
19 to Fort Qu'appelle, Saskatchewan yet. They're slowly
20 working their way out here.

21 But I just want to say to, you know, to the
22 families my heart and my love is always with you all the
23 way and but just how effort in allowing me.

24 And the Commissioners, I think these four
25 individuals here are really great humans. I've had the

1 opportunity to spend a lot of time with them. And, you
2 know, we're -- we are all learning and we are a work in
3 progress together. And a lot of errors have been made and
4 there's going to be many more, you know, errors that are
5 going to be made. And we just have to be patient.

6 I've waited over 30, almost 40 years now and
7 I'm learning to be patient and not to get angry. But I ask
8 a lot of questions and, heck, for the rest of the team that
9 is here, I want to say haw'aa to you, you know, because
10 they've been working such long hours. And to Jade and
11 them, they're amazing. They're just amazing. Haw'aa to
12 you guys for making me feel so welcome, you know, in your
13 territory. Haw'aa.

14 **MS. SANDRA DeLARONDE:** I'm just concerned
15 about people that are diabetic. You know, maybe we could
16 reconvene after lunch?

17 **MS. SHERI COPENACE:** So I just want to thank
18 everybody again for -- especially the ones in this inner
19 circle but even the ones in the outer circle, thank you for
20 your support and your kindness in giving of your time this
21 morning. And I want to thank the family members for all of
22 their wise words and their recommendations.

23 So we're going to break. And as I said
24 earlier, I know that the families are being asked for lunch
25 over at Inn Of The Forks and I guess everybody else is on

1 their own. So we'll see you back here at 1:30. Miigwech.

2 So, for the families, it's on the second
3 floor at Inn Of The Forks. Miigwech.

4 --- Upon recessing at 12:29 p.m.

5 La séance est suspendue à 12h29

6 --- Upon resuming at 1:51 p.m.

7 La séance est reprise à 13h51

8 **MS. KATHERINE WHITECLOUD:** I'm assuming this
9 is on. Okay. It is. Good afternoon. We are -- I wonder
10 if I could ask someone to close that door again. There's
11 too much noise that comes in from the hallway. I'd
12 appreciate that.

13 We had the opportunity this morning to
14 provide recommendations. And I want to clarify what the
15 role -- the -- what we were doing this morning. Based on
16 the recommendations from the grandmothers' meeting last
17 night was that we want to provide an opportunity for
18 families to make -- provide recommendations to the
19 Commissioners moving forward on how these -- how hearings
20 should proceed. This, itself, is not a hearing. It's an
21 opportunity for grandmothers and others to provide
22 Indigenous perspective on how we understand law as it
23 affects our family and it affects our missing and murdered
24 women and children.

25 And so this afternoon we are going to be

1 moving into that portion of the agenda where Indigenous
2 perspectives are going to be brought forward to the
3 Commissioners led by Ms. Watson -- no, who's leading it
4 this -- Karen? Grandmothers. Okay. The grandmothers?
5 All right. Okay.

6 So there was one lady -- you almost became a
7 grandmother. But we were waiting for Sandra to come back
8 because she -- we were going to provide her with the
9 opportunity. She was sitting in the circle and was the
10 last person that was going to speak and I don't see her
11 here.

12 And we do have -- the schedule indicates
13 that -- and I don't know if it's because of your travel
14 schedules that your -- your flight is when? 3:15? Because
15 we're to finish up here at 3:00 and go to the Oodena circle
16 for 3:30 for closing ceremonies, which means we have an
17 hour.

18 And this is one of the things how time goes
19 by really, really quickly without us realizing it. And
20 because you took so long to eat and so long to come back --
21 no, that's fine. Those are things we have to take time
22 for. So we were waiting for Sandra but she's not here.

23 So, we're going to move into the
24 grandmother's circle, the stories; right? Okay. So who's
25 going to lead this part of it? The people withstanding are

1 invited to come into the circle because you're part of this
2 conversation now, whoever that is. Please run, jog. Don't
3 be afraid.

4 **UNIDENTIFIED VOICE:** Don't stand. Run.

5 (LAUGHTER/RIRES)

6 **MS. KATHERINE WHITECLOUD:** Please come
7 forward for this afternoon's session. Yeah, you can stay.

8 **UNIDENTIFIED VOICE:** There's lots of chairs
9 over there.

10 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Just a housekeeping
11 item. Any of the parties withstanding, you don't have to
12 join the circle if you don't want to. And any time there's
13 any type of circle you're not forced to participate but we
14 are welcoming you to come into the circle or have a
15 representative come into the circle.

16 **ELDER BLU WATERS:** So I'm going to start
17 this off. I was there last night at the meeting.

18 (Speaking in Native Language) and Red River.

19 For me, I want the Commissioners to know and
20 those parties of standing about -- a bit about traditional
21 law from my point. We were displaced from our nations. My
22 family ended up in Toronto. So my res was Hyde Park. And
23 because of the systems that were in place my grandmother
24 worked two jobs. She raised me just to provide for us.
25 And we hunted in Hyde Park as children. We hunted geese,

1 beaver, ducks, because we didn't have food; right? So we
2 had to hunt. So that's part of our traditional way was to
3 follow those teachings that we had heard from stories from
4 the very beginning of time that I sat on my grandmother's
5 knee about our ways of life, about our laws. But yet, as
6 we were hunting, we were fearful that we were going to be
7 taken away by Children's Aid.

8 So, one of the things that the Commissioners
9 have to really look at is the Child and Family Services,
10 the removal of our children, the threat that I was always
11 going to be removed just because I was hunting and
12 following traditional laws. That's something that's very
13 fearful for a lot of people. You know, and a lot of us
14 still are displaced from our communities because of
15 colonization, because of laws that are in place by
16 government saying who is and who is not status, who is
17 entitled and where does it stop at.

18 So where do we belong? Where do we belong
19 in a society that's taken away all our traditional rights,
20 ways, lives? We need to look at that part of traditional
21 law.

22 And I'm also a family member. My
23 grandmother was murdered in 1977. And at 16 years old I
24 went to court, because I was the witness, to see who was in
25 the house when they found her. And as a young 16-year-old

1 I had no legal counsel. I had nobody to support me there.
2 I had no one to guide me through that process. And when
3 the process was finished it was weeks. I don't remember
4 those weeks because these are traumas that we all
5 experience when we lose a loved one. So trauma-informed
6 processes have to go into place. Units have to be
7 developed, places that are safe for us to express what we
8 feel and what has happened to us with the loss of our loved
9 one.

10 And that person who took my grandmother's
11 life was tried under Canadian law. And after, only after,
12 because I wasn't even present, although my body was
13 physically there, I found out through that process that
14 this person received a life sentence for 10 years in
15 Penetanguishene Mental Health because he pleaded that he
16 couldn't read or write, but yet he was a shipper and
17 receiver who read documents every day. So the way our
18 Canadian law is written that those that are the
19 perpetrators are not punished. They're not -- their
20 sentences are not done according to traditional law.

21 I never had the chance to speak to this
22 person to tell them the impact that they had on not only my
23 life, my brother's life, my auntie's lives, all those that
24 my grandmother had touched, all those families that we had
25 gone to help feed down in Regent Park because that's what

1 we do. We support each other.

2 So he pleaded out. So our system allowed
3 him to plead out. And after I found out, not only did he
4 murder my grandmother by manual strangulation, but he
5 sexually assaulted her after she was dead. And that was
6 never even brought up in the trial because he pleaded out.
7 So the crimes were never announced. People never knew what
8 this person really did.

9 And after 10 years the police came to me --
10 they found me. They came to my place of work. And I'm
11 assuming through looking through income taxes or whatever
12 they knew where I worked. And they came to tell me this
13 person is getting out of jail. And I was like, "Wow, how
14 did you find me after 10 years?" They said, "Well, we have
15 to inform you they're getting out of jail." And I said,
16 "But what does that mean to me?" Right? They shouldn't be
17 out of jail. They should have been tried under a different
18 system; right? They should have been sat down with the
19 people so the people could tell them the impact of their
20 actions so that they could learn that they had broken
21 traditional laws, that those were not our ways to take a
22 life because all life and all living things have spirit.
23 All living things have value and that includes us as human
24 beings because we're born into the -- our spirit comes into
25 this body when we're born. So we're a gift. We have

1 value.

2 So I would like to see the merging of the
3 Canadian law system with traditional law systems so that we
4 can bring back those traditional laws, those ways of
5 dealing with people face to face and having them understand
6 the impact of their actions, and having them work with our
7 healers, with our Elders, so they realize what they did,
8 broke that law and they don't do it again. Because our
9 system right now sends them off to jail, they get back out.
10 They come out worse than they went in. Then they reoffend
11 again and they're back inside again and somebody else's
12 family is going through the same thing and that should
13 never happen. We have to teach those that wrong how to
14 live right and how to get life. And the way to get life is
15 through our ceremonies and going back to our traditional
16 ways with our traditional laws, with our traditional
17 ceremonies, our languages and our ways of being.

18 Hai hai, miigwech. Thank you for letting --
19 allowing me to share.

20 **UNIDENTIFIED VOICE:** Sandra, you didn't get
21 to share.

22 **MS. SANDRA DELARONDE:** Okay. Good
23 afternoon. First of all, my apologies for being late.

24 I wanted to, first of all, thank the
25 families, survivors and two-spirited people who were brave

1 enough to come to these sessions without invitation.
2 Because we know in the way that we've been taught that we
3 don't go somewhere unless we're invited. So thank you for
4 your courage to come and lift your voices and your hearts
5 that your words will be heard by the Commissioners of the
6 National Inquiry.

7 And then I also wanted to acknowledge and
8 honour Dawnis Kennedy for her presentation. It isn't often
9 when you hear someone speak that all the worlds open up and
10 allow for the truth to come straight from the heart and
11 create change. What we experienced yesterday through your
12 good heart was that we witnessed spirit physically change
13 this process and to have the hearts and minds of the
14 Commissioners and the staff open to change this process, so
15 thank you so much. And thank you to Creator and all the
16 ancestors for allowing that to happen.

17 I just want to first of all acknowledge
18 Helen Betty Osborne. I was 10 years old. My family lived
19 in The Pas when she was murdered. And what isn't often
20 said about her story, and a lot of people claim ownership
21 for creating change for the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, but
22 more importantly, it was her spirit that -- her restless
23 spirit that kept people thinking and searching for the
24 truth. Because she was from northern Manitoba, she didn't
25 have a home in The Pas or Opaskwayak Cree Nation, no one --

1 she had no champion in that community. But more
2 importantly, I think that while the community of The Pas
3 has been, to an extent, unfairly painted as being racist,
4 no one on either side of the river took responsibility for
5 justice for Helen Betty Osborne in those early days except
6 for her spirit.

7 And I know that in many traditions that we
8 don't speak of those that have passed on, and certainly
9 within Helen Betty Osborne's family she wasn't spoken of.
10 Beyond what people see as racism and certainly the truth
11 and the evidence presented by the AJI that had she not been
12 Aboriginal she wouldn't have been murdered, beyond that is
13 the fear that people face when telling the truth. The fear
14 that people face when confronted with criminal activity.
15 So a whole community or whole communities that you would
16 think had nothing to fear by telling the truth feared for
17 their lives because of the engagement of organized crime in
18 that community that is not -- has not been part of the
19 discourse.

20 So, Commissioners, when you're speaking to
21 families or when families have the courage to come speak,
22 you have to take into account those that live in fear
23 because our truth is oftentimes tempered by our fear. So
24 we have to look for ways that individuals that are gang
25 involved or subjected to issues around human trafficking,

1 which we know are -- which we assume are led by organized
2 crime, are protected. Not just during the time of their
3 presentation but they will need forever protection. So how
4 do you do that? I mean, that, I think, is a big
5 consideration to how you protect women and girls and two-
6 spirited people that are involved in those situations.

7 So we need to discuss how fear to create
8 change or be part of change is also how we discuss
9 recommendations for the National Inquiry.

10 And, you know, we have had conversations.
11 And for those in the room, we have begun a conversation
12 with the Commissioners for the establishment of a regional
13 sub-commission in Manitoba that would hopefully feed into
14 the findings of the National Inquiry. And as a coalition
15 we're really hopeful for that to take place so that we can,
16 you know, work to ensure that issues like bringing families
17 forward is front and centre of the work. And I just
18 acknowledge the Commission for bringing families forward
19 today.

20 So that would be our continued discourse
21 from the coalition is the need for a regional sub-
22 commission that puts families first. And in the future for
23 expert panels that you will include family members as
24 experts.

25 Miigwech.

1 **UNIDENTIFIED VOICE:** Thank you, Sandra.
2 Keeper of the stone.

3 **MS. KATHERINE WHITECLOUD:** Thank you very
4 much, Sandra, for those recommendations.

5 We would like to move into discussion of
6 what lessons we can take away from what we heard from the
7 expert presenters of the first two days for those that have
8 been here all three days. But more importantly, what
9 lessons -- what additional lessons do we want to provide to
10 the Commissioners based on the expert presentations, how
11 those are interpreted by our traditional means of
12 interpreting what was presented. So that is part of what
13 we want to talk about this afternoon.

14 And the other part, the other -- the second
15 part is what teachings or concepts the National Inquiry
16 should further research, which was recommended here by our
17 sister that is somewhere, provide more materials on or
18 ensure is included in future expert hearings. So what do
19 you feel needs to be included in the hearings? In October
20 the hearing is coming here to Winnipeg. And this is when
21 the families will have the opportunity to tell their
22 stories and make their presentations to the Commissioners
23 and to the Commission. That's in -- what are the dates in
24 October? The week of October 16th. Put that in your
25 calendars for those who wish to make presentation to the

1 Commissioners about your personal stories.

2 So, what is it that we want the
3 Commissioners to learn here that will help with addressing
4 your concerns, your issues? How can the Commission address
5 you, as families, about what needs to be done with regards
6 to our missing and murdered women and children? So, what
7 lessons can we take away or add to from our expert
8 presenters?

9 And we all heard Dawnis speak and we had two
10 other ladies that spoke for a day and a half. And what
11 teachings or concepts does the National Inquiry need to
12 further research or provide more materials on or ensure is
13 included in future expert hearings? Because we had -- we
14 heard family members say it would be helpful if the
15 information was available to them before the hearing starts
16 so they know process and so they understand what is
17 happening, and as well so they could input into it. So
18 that is what we're doing now.

19 So I'm going to ask Sheri, my colleague, to
20 speak right away because she has been at one before.

21 **MS. SHERI COPENACE:** (Speaking in Native
22 Language).

23 My English alias is Sheri Copenace and I
24 come from -- on the east side of Lake of the Woods but I
25 live here in Winnipeg now. And I heard our sister say this

1 morning, which I truly believe, that we don't have a
2 provincial boundaries or any boundaries whatsoever. And I
3 come from the Anishinaabe Nation and I know that's a vast
4 territory, vast.

5 So, for me, in regards to teachings and
6 Indigenous ways, I know there's many nations in here, and
7 for the Commission to be really -- to research into those
8 different nations because we want to avoid that pan
9 Aboriginal ways too. Like we all -- even though we're all
10 different nations, we do things differently. The concept
11 might be the same that we honour all of creation, we honour
12 all of life, but we might do things a little bit
13 differently.

14 And for me, even sitting in this circle is
15 practicing and living Indigenous ways. Like, for me, as an
16 Ojibwe, that's what we do. That's what I've been taught
17 that everything we do is in a circle, even everything you
18 look out in creation is circular and there's a reason for
19 that. We welcome everybody into our circle. We, as
20 Anishinaabe people, we lead these ways and other people
21 support it by being a part of it. We don't ever say no to
22 anybody. We welcome them here.

23 And I already spoke this morning about being
24 respectful of other ways as well. Whatever the -- whatever
25 people follow, that's up to them. But for me, what I know

1 is that Creation gave me a way of life that's powerful,
2 that's connected, that helps me make relationships, both
3 with the, you know, the spiritual realm, the human, all of
4 life. So, for me, I really cherish that Anishinaabe way of
5 life but I also respect all ways of life.

6 And the other thing that I mentioned this
7 morning is about language and how our laws are embedded in
8 there. And if you are a first -- like original language
9 speaker you'd know that, how difficult it is to translate
10 to another language because you lose a lot of that meaning
11 of what you're attempting to convey. So, for me, I would
12 say like if families choose to speak in their language,
13 make that space for them. Make that safe space for them.

14 And the other thing I was talking to these
15 women about is I've been taught too that as a family member
16 if I want to bring my spiritual teacher, then allow -- make
17 that space as well. Bring -- allow that -- bring -- give
18 them the resources for that to happen. Because we know
19 that when you bring your teacher or your -- yeah, your
20 teacher is with you, you know, it opens much more doors
21 than we could ever imagine. And it's powerful. It's
22 strengthening for those families and for everybody in that
23 circle.

24 So, for me, I know that our laws are even
25 here in this room, even out there in creation. When the

1 woman rendered that song, it's in there. That's what I've
2 been told.

3 And, for me, too, like, I wasn't here for
4 the opening ceremony but I know they spoke for that water,
5 so I'm glad they did that because even that's a law in
6 itself. And I've been told that if I wanted to even just
7 talk about -- make an attempt to write about water law,
8 because Anishinaabe ways it's so vast and so deep, that I
9 wouldn't be able to ever write that, that maybe it would
10 fill this whole building or much more. And it would just
11 be a piece of that.

12 So, that's what I'm saying to you. Like, we
13 have such beautiful strong ways that -- and it's simple.
14 Like, we're -- it's not complicated or complex. Creation
15 gave it to us in that way. So that's what I would say is
16 that for us to respect that, to follow the families and to
17 follow the ways of the people that you're visiting.

18 So miigwech.

19 Who's the next grandmother? This way?

20 **MS. CAROL MOAR:** I guess I'll come over
21 here.

22 Bonjour, everybody. Again I'm going to
23 introduce myself. It's Blue Sky Woman, Morning Star and
24 I'm from the Deer Clan and an honoured member of Saugeen
25 First Nation.

1 I thought long and -- I've been thinking
2 long and hard. I apologize. I apologized at the meeting
3 yesterday. Although I was here, I was usually busy
4 smudging our families and our people here. And so I wasn't
5 really keeping, like, my brain on what was being said,
6 although I wanted to. But I was here for the purpose of
7 the families and the purpose to be a helper and that's what
8 I concentrated on.

9 But as far as my feelings of traditional
10 laws, the ceremonies, we start our ceremonies with our
11 children as soon as they're born. We wrap them up tight
12 and put them on our backs. And the first teaching they get
13 is listening because they can't move their heads around to
14 look, so they learn to listen to the world around them, to
15 Mother Earth around them with their hearing.

16 So, right as -- and I miss that and I missed
17 raising my children with that but my grandchildren are
18 getting the teachings. And we need to bring those
19 ceremonies back. And it doesn't necessarily have to be our
20 ways because all messages teach respect and love. And we
21 have to get our people, and especially our young ones, to
22 respect each other again and to love one another again and
23 not to hurt each other.

24 I'm a foster mom of three teen boys. And I
25 made one quit talking to me about violence. He's always

1 talking about The Bloods. And I made him stop. I said,
2 "Not in front of me. You know, I don't want to hear it," I
3 said. I love those young men but I don't respect them for
4 hurting our own people. And I know they're only trying to
5 survive the only way they know how but I can't respect them
6 for hurting our own people. And so he quit and he is
7 learning respect and he doesn't talk about gangs or
8 anything like that.

9 And I just think that our -- the one thing
10 that we're forgetting and Dave Crushane (ph) Senior, who
11 was a residential school survivor, there's one abuse that's
12 not talked about and he quoted it. He said, "They taught
13 us self-hate. They taught us that everything about us was
14 wrong. The way we lived was wrong. The way we looked was
15 wrong. Our long hair was wrong. Didn't matter what we did
16 they taught us self-hate."

17 And our ceremonies teach us how beautiful we
18 are. And the coming of age ceremonies for our young ones,
19 for our youth that are coming of age, the berry ceremony,
20 it teaches our young girls to respect and love themselves.
21 And it teaches them that the community and their immediate
22 families love them. And I'd love to see more ceremonies
23 like that coming back to teach our youth because I'm -- I
24 love the youth and I work with the youth and I work with
25 women. And my pipe is for the women and for the youth and

1 for the young children. So that's what I have to say.

2 I think, for me, the traditional laws is
3 just starting from the basics of getting our first name as
4 we're being born, our first spirit name, and continuing
5 from that moment on, from the first breath in Mother Earth
6 is our ceremonies. (Speaking in Native Language).

7 **MS. VELMA ORMIS:** (Speaking in Native
8 Language).

9 I really say thank you for the invitation
10 here and I've learned so much. But I want to talk about
11 what we've been doing for the last six years. My late
12 teacher, Tabesanequat (ph) Canoe, he was my first teacher,
13 he -- before he passed he had a vision and he had asked
14 Edward Mandamen (ph) to find an Elder to carry it out. And
15 I was the one that was asked and he said that it was good.
16 I'd know what to do. And he wanted the four directions,
17 the four colours of people around the outskirts of the
18 city. So the first year we did that there was a snowstorm
19 but we went anyway because he'd been told that we were
20 going to do it that day.

21 So we hang those four flags and we sing and
22 we give food for the spirits and tobacco. And the young
23 people that go with me, they bring their drums and they
24 sing and we offer that water too. And when we went from
25 the east to the south we hang that flag near the Brady (ph)

1 landfill. And it was storming and we prayed for Tanya
2 Niffenack (ph). That's where she is in that garbage dump
3 and it's not right. And many, many mornings, early
4 mornings and late nights when I sit by myself I think of
5 her and pray that some day that she's brought home and has
6 a decent burial because it's not right for one of our
7 beautiful young women to be left there.

8 And I wanted to share that with you and we
9 are going to keep and continue doing this every December
10 around that first date when we first started. And we'll do
11 it. And I hope some -- some day when I can no longer do it
12 that someone younger, I want to pass that on so that they
13 can do that and pray for all the people, not only inside of
14 the city, the four colours of people, but the ones on the
15 outside too. So I wanted to share that with you.
16 Miigwech.

17 **MS. WHEN THE FLOWER FIRST BLOOMED WOMAN:**

18 Bonjour. (Speaking in Native Language).
19 I'm very honoured to sit here in this
20 circle.

21 My name is When the Flower First Bloomed
22 Woman and it's my gift to bring consciousness to the
23 people. I do that in my work. I have a private practice
24 here on the urban reserve and I work in O-Chi-Chak-Ko-Sipi
25 Healing Lodge and also at Saugeen First Nation.

1 At the healing lodge I work specifically
2 with people that have committed sexual offences and
3 homicides. And it is there that I bring that Indigenous
4 law to mix because that's been my whole work, has been
5 mixing this way, the west -- the academic with the
6 spiritual. There's a lot of people that would disagree
7 with that and that's okay. I've found it to be powerful
8 and beautiful.

9 And when I'm sitting in that -- sitting with
10 those men that have killed our women, that are -- that have
11 sexually abused our children and I talk to them and they
12 get that grandmother's lesson, very strict, and when I do
13 that I'm speaking and helping -- trying to help for
14 everybody because I think about the mothers, the
15 grandmothers. I think about everybody and I make a person
16 accountable for his own sake and for that of the people to
17 make it right.

18 What carries me in my work is I was taught a
19 long time ago by one of my teachers, who is Michelle St.
20 Pierre (ph) who's gone on to the spirit world who is a
21 Mohawk. She taught me. She said, "Who are you to say
22 who's good and who's not good? Who are you to say who's
23 the monster?" And I said, "Well, what do you mean?" She
24 said she lived many lifetimes. And she said, "I think that
25 I've been that. I've been that murderer. I've been that

1 molester." And I had to say to her, "Me too. I guess I've
2 been that too." That's what carries me is that I'm no
3 better. I'm no better than that. But a wrong is a wrong.

4 And when I speak with the men and I tell
5 them, "This is wrong what you've done." And those prayers,
6 every day, 24 hours a day those men are praying. "Who are
7 you praying for?" "I'm praying for my victim and their
8 family." "Okay."

9 So I was asked to come here today to speak
10 about these things, about my knowledge. And I try to
11 figure out what to share. And I know that that's
12 important. It's important that you know that people that
13 are put on the other -- put in behind bars that they're
14 taken to task for what they've done.

15 I work from those first four Ojibwe laws.
16 The first 4 of the 44 laws are sharing and caring,
17 kindness, honesty and faith. Those are the first four that
18 I learned, that I carry. And any time that those are
19 present then I know, hey, I'm doing good today if I'm doing
20 these things. I'm living that law.

21 The other thing too is teaching my children.
22 The most powerful teaching in my family, who is mostly
23 Christian -- you know, they never had traditional teachings
24 or my grandmother died giving birth to my mother. But they
25 say when that happens that there's a powerful thing that

1 happens, that we're gifted in other ways because we didn't
2 have our grandmother. So, we carry that kindness and
3 that's one thing that people say a lot about my mother.
4 She's so kind. She's so kind. And that's like -- that's a
5 huge thing for me.

6 Indigenous law is kindness. Indigenous law
7 is sitting in a room where -- with people that have hurt
8 you. And Indigenous law is forgiveness so that you can
9 help yourself and move forward. Indigenous law is standing
10 up for yourself, being who you are. Doesn't matter if you
11 -- you know, like sometime we're trying to judge ourselves,
12 you know, like, well, I didn't grow up like that or I
13 didn't grow up on the res or, you know, all this stuff, you
14 know. Or I did grow up on the res and then, you know, like
15 we're always judging ourselves. And no way, man. You're
16 100 percent right now who you are.

17 I try to teach my children that this -- that
18 they belong here. This is yours.

19 And one thing I'm going to leave you with is
20 whenever I start a group, when I work with a group of men,
21 for the past 20 years -- and of course, you know, like
22 sometimes I have a big group and there are all kinds of
23 roughnecks in there. So I got to try get them to -- okay,
24 I got to try to get -- she's laughing because she works in
25 the jail too. But I have to try and get them -- okay, I

1 got to get them just right or else they're going to walk
2 all over me or be scared to death of me.

3 And then I say to them, all Indigenous men,
4 I say, "You ever walk down the street and then people they
5 don't want to look at you? And they look up all over or
6 they look down all over?" And they're all going, "Yeah,"
7 kind of grudgingly. "You know why?" "Why?" They're all
8 expecting me to -- wonder what's she going to say? Say,
9 "Because you're the landlord and the rent is due and they
10 don't got the money."

11 (LAUGHTER/RIRES)

12 **MS. WHEN THE FLOWER FIRST BLOOMED WOMAN:**

13 Because I want to teach them how powerful
14 and beautiful they are. Yes, those people that have hurt
15 people so much. And I want to teach them to love
16 themselves, to know how strong they are. Because when they
17 go home I want them to love their women and love their
18 children and honour their grandmothers.

19 I was trying to explain one time well, what
20 is it -- what do you do anyways, you know? Because there's
21 not a lot of people that blend the clinical and the
22 traditional for their work. I was thinking, thinking, what
23 do I do? What do I do? Okay. I know what I am. I'm a
24 professional lover.

25 (LAUGHTER/RIRES)

1 **MS. WHEN THE FLOWER FIRST BLOOMED WOMAN:**

2 (Speaking in Native Language).

3 **ELDER BELINDA VANDENBROECK:** Thank you. I
4 have to stand up because my darned knee is sore from these
5 chairs. They're ugly.

6 (LAUGHTER/RIRES)

7 **ELDER BELINDA VANDENBROECK:** (Speaking in
8 Native Language).

9 I am so grateful today and every day that
10 I've been alive that I can speak my language, that I can
11 think from my language, that I can live from my language,
12 and that it gives me the guidance to live the way I'm
13 supposed to live.

14 I was wondering what I was going to talk
15 about because there's so many things that -- so much to
16 learn even, you know, to teach. And first of all, too, I
17 do again want to honour the 500 tribes that lived here, and
18 that means 500 languages. That just truly -- I'm just
19 amazed at that. And we were supposed to be killed off but
20 here we are. And we really like the word "resilient". I
21 don't know why. It means nothing in my head. You know, I
22 just know that I know who I am and that I know where I come
23 from and that I know my relations -- not all of them,
24 thanks to residential school. I'm still trying to catch up
25 to that.

1 The one thing -- I just want to -- a little
2 story about I did a workshop called decolonizing the body,
3 mind and spirit. And, you know, there was people that were
4 upset at me for charging what I did but it was a three-day
5 workshop, which I thought was pretty cheap myself. It
6 seems to me it's okay if you pay the white man to do a
7 workshop but not us guys, not us women.

8 And the one thing that I have learned in my
9 69 years of living is that I am not afraid of anybody. I
10 don't care who they are. I am not. And certainly I'm not
11 afraid of the justice system. And I don't ever have to
12 whisper the clan mother's law. Ever. This is my land.
13 This is my territory. And we had a clan system before
14 anybody came here. So I will always honour that in my
15 life.

16 So I went to a residential school for 10
17 years. I don't remember the day I left. I don't remember
18 the train ride. I remember getting to the train station,
19 lots of yellow buses. Don't remember getting on that bus.
20 Don't remember the ride to the residential school. I was
21 nine years old.

22 When I got to the residential school -- we
23 were driving up to the school. Big school. Huge. Stairs.
24 People in white outfits, men and women. And the minute I
25 saw that I thought I was going back to TB Sanitorium, which

1 I'd been for a year-and-a-half of my life at five years
2 old, at which I was tied up in a straightjacket for a lot
3 of the time because I wanted to go and check out the
4 hospital. Excuse me. I mean, I'm five years old. You
5 think I want to stay in bed? I don't think so.

6 Anyway, so I don't like being tied up.
7 Anyway, so I thought that's where I was going back. Oh my
8 god, I guess they said that I fought. I kicked and I hit
9 anything that was in my way that was trying to get me off
10 that bus. Anyway, I don't remember getting off that bus.
11 I don't remember my walk up the stairs or going into that
12 building.

13 There began my journey of life that was to
14 change me forever. Little did I know that when I was
15 playing down the hill at Begedi (ph) Reserve Mile 5 of
16 which -- where I was born, at the bottom of that there was
17 a burnt out place. I didn't know that was the old Mackay
18 School. I didn't know that's where my mom and dad went.
19 Nobody told us those things. So, little did I know that I
20 was now going to be entering the new school of the old
21 Mackay School that was burnt down on my reserve.

22 I grew up with my grandparents. I -- my
23 whole family was very religious. And we went to church
24 every Sunday and my grandmother knew all the hymns in Cree
25 and she used to sing them and I just loved them. I still -

1 - you know, I really get goosebumps when I hear them. When
2 I go back home -- and sadly enough, the only time I go home
3 is when I'm going to a funeral and that's when I hear them
4 because I don't go to church.

5 Anyway, so coming back, you know, to -- it's
6 almost like the land before time. I don't know what else
7 to call it. Land before time. And, you know, we have to
8 know, as the Indigenous people to this country, we had a
9 way of life. It's still here but over there, back then, we
10 don't seem to remember that we had a way of life before
11 anybody got here. And I'm including our own people in
12 this. My grandmother didn't know the history of Canada.
13 She just lived her life. She was happy living her life on
14 a reserve, which we didn't want, and living on welfare
15 because they were old.

16 So, you know, you have to remember that we
17 did not want reserves and we did not want welfare. We
18 wanted to be able to look after ourselves, hunt for
19 ourselves, then this Act comes in, *Fisheries Act*, all that
20 stuff. It's just so controlling. It just drives me crazy.

21 Anyway, so I went to a residential school
22 for 10 years. Sexual abuse happened in my life when I was
23 about 12 by a student who was a bully, just petrified all
24 of us. The year she didn't come back we were very
25 grateful. So that set a thinking in my head that would

1 play into my life.

2 And after she -- like, coming in into that
3 residential school I didn't know that things were going to
4 change my life forever. Saturday nights we used to watch
5 cowboys and Indians movies. And, you know, sometimes when
6 I try to explain what colonization is I say when we first
7 got there, three or four years, we cheered for the Indians,
8 cowboys and Indians movies. Four or five years later we're
9 cheering for the white guys. So what happened? A switch
10 up here.

11 And then you begin the journey of hating
12 yourself, hating anything that's Indian about yourself.
13 You begin to think you're better than your grandparents and
14 your parents and everybody else that's on the reserve
15 because you're smart now.

16 While I was in school I -- after the -- that
17 student didn't come back from -- to residential school, my
18 life there was okay. I mean, it's not like that every
19 single day of my life I was fighting the fact I was there.
20 You just live your life. You got no choice. You have to
21 live it.

22 So coming into junior high and senior high
23 my life was okay. I made a lot of good friends. Ukrainian
24 -- I call them my Ukrainian white friends and they don't
25 mind at all. And I used to go home with them on weekends.

1 And I -- already back then I was already someone that spoke
2 up against injustice. Got me into trouble a lot. And but
3 I just knew that my life had to be about sticking up for
4 people. That's what I knew at that time. I didn't call
5 it, you know, justice. Who knows words like that when
6 you're little?

7 But anyway, so when I -- by the time I lived
8 my life in residential school living -- and I ran for
9 school party. I was modelling in high school and all those
10 things. I got involved. I was track and field and I love
11 track and field. And so by the time I left when I was 19,
12 I didn't feel good about myself but I didn't know why. I
13 didn't know why. I didn't know all the underlying messages
14 throughout my years there, from the teachers, from students
15 and, you know, all the name calling and all of that. And
16 especially, especially the movies, you guys. That was --
17 if ever you can go into an old channel of cowboys and
18 Indian -- watch it. It's abhorring. It's like how could
19 they even make movies like that?

20 Anyway, but the messages are there every
21 day, every weekend, every year. So they get down and down
22 and down. And then when you have to try to pick them up
23 and be who you are it's hard. Because there's so many
24 things that play against you for being who you are. You're
25 not a good person if you're Indian in this country. That

1 was the message most of my life. And when I woke up as to
2 who I am that ended then because I will never accept that
3 from anybody again.

4 But what happened was every time that I
5 thought -- and I would think about -- we had our way of
6 life before anybody get -- how come nobody talks about
7 that? How come I can't go to somebody and said, you know,
8 I want the teachings of whatever?

9 So the only thing we had was religion. You
10 know, if -- you were an okay Indian if you went to church.
11 You're pretty good. You're just the same as we are.
12 That's the white people saying that.

13 And then, you know, it took me 10 years of
14 my life to undo that up here. Ten years. And I'm an
15 educated woman. I'm not stupid. But that's how long it
16 took me and my heart and my spirit to know that and to
17 believe that we are good, kind, loving people and this is
18 our country. Like why do we have to fight that anyway?
19 This is 2017. I thought we were all smarter than that in
20 Canada. I don't know about the United States. I don't
21 want to talk about Trump, by the way.

22 (LAUGHTER/RIRES)

23 **ELDER BELINDA VANDENBROECK:** I don't know
24 where he came from but anyway. He could go back there if
25 he doesn't like it here. But I'd like to have a talk with

1 that guy. I really would.

2 (LAUGHTER/RIRES)

3 **ELDER BELINDA VANDENBROECK:** I think we'd
4 have fun. But anyway, so it -- because every time I would
5 come to, okay, we had a way of life before anybody else
6 came here, then this one would say, "Oh, no, but you guys
7 are -- you go to church and everything and that's your life
8 and blah, blah, blah." And then I'm here again, you know,
9 a year or two and then three. And I'm no, no, no, no. I
10 got to talk to people that know what they're talking about.
11 Then I come over here. I'm back home. Oh but you have to
12 -- oh my god. And if you don't go to church you're -- and
13 if you follow this way you're working the devil. Oh my
14 god. Like that is our life here. Do you know people are
15 still at that stage right now? Not knowing who they are.
16 And you would think that we should know, that every one of
17 us should know who we are but we don't.

18 One day I got a phone call from the matron
19 of the school. Loved her. And I used to always phone her
20 at least once a month. And I'd say, "Hi, Mrs. Grace. It's
21 Belinda." "Hi, Belinda." And it was Palm Sunday too, by
22 the way. And by then I already was not going to church at
23 all. That was years later.

24 So anyways, she says, "Oh, did you go to
25 church this morning?" And I'm like, okay. Ooh. How do I

1 deal with this? Okay. I got to tell her the truth. I
2 said, "No, Mrs. Grace. I don't go to church anymore." I
3 said, "I follow the ways of my grandfathers and
4 grandmothers and I honour them." "Oh, that's nice." So
5 that was one hurdle.

6 Next hurdle was my mother. My mother died
7 at 93, 2014. And she called me evil right until then
8 because she knew that I followed the ways of our
9 grandfathers and grandmothers.

10 The day that I knew was 1989, that I knew at
11 that moment. I'm in my house on 608 River Grove up that
12 way. And I just -- I don't know what happened that day. I
13 guess I woke up and I'm, you know, going about my business.
14 All of a sudden I just knew that it was like if something
15 was moving into my body it was coming in pretty good and
16 strong. And I said, "I know who I am and I know where I
17 come from. And I don't ever have to ask anybody's
18 permission to be who I am. And no one will ever sway me
19 from that. Not the queen. Not the pope." I'd like to
20 talk to those two too someday.

21 (LAUGHTER/RIRES)

22 **ELDER BELINDA VANDENBROECK:** And just have a
23 good chat with them. And I knew from that day no one would
24 ever sway me from who I am, no matter who it is. And that
25 day was a good day.

1 So my life, my goal in life is to keep
2 teaching the kind and gentle way. And I want to say to all
3 the men, our Indigenous men in Canada, today I am asking
4 you to look after your children, protect your women and
5 grandmothers. From this moment on you have to think about
6 that, otherwise, we're here another 100 years talking about
7 the same thing and we can't afford to do that.

8 Do not hurt your children. Do not hurt your
9 wives. I'm not talking to the white guys in this country
10 because they'll keep doing whatever they're doing,
11 believing whatever they want to believe. But if they want
12 to have a chat with me I'm ready for them too, because if
13 we talk about prevention it starts at the home. It's a
14 fathers, the mothers, the brothers and the sisters. You
15 have to look after each other. That's what I know for
16 sure.

17 And to all the families of the murdered and
18 missing women, I love you and I'll be there for you any
19 time.

20 (APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENT)

21 **MS. KATHERINE WHITECLOUD:** Thank you very
22 much, Grandmother Belinda.

23 Grandma Shingoose.

24 **MS. GERALDINE SHINGOOSE:** Hello. Bonjour.
25 My name is Gerry Shingoose. My spirit names are Sky Woman

1 and Northern Lights Woman. I come from the Bear Clan and
2 my warrior spirit is Grandmother Turtle. I'm a mother of
3 three. I'm a grandmother to eight grandchildren. And I'm
4 also a great-grandma to two great-grandchildren who are
5 very dear and precious to me.

6 I'm a residential school survivor too. I
7 went to Muskowekwan Residential School for nine years. I
8 didn't get a chance or opportunity to go home during the
9 holidays. I stayed there for the 10 months with my
10 siblings and other children that couldn't travel home.

11 Today I'm a happy grandma. I'm a
12 grandmother and that's my role. And I carry it well. And
13 why I carry it well is I carry it for the people because
14 that's what my late father taught me.

15 My family comes from Tootinaowaziibeeng,
16 Valley River. Very traditional community. They were one
17 of the communities that had sundances and kept the
18 ceremonies going and my dad was one of them.

19 After residential school that's when he
20 taught me. He told me, he says, "Gerry (speaking in Native
21 language)." He says, "I knew when you were four years old
22 when we were living in the bush," he says, "that, my girl,
23 you were going to be gifted. You're -- and the
24 grandmothers and the grandfathers, our ancestors told me
25 that you were going to carry a responsibility." And then I

1 told him, "Well, who's the grandfathers and the
2 grandmothers?" I didn't know because I spent all those
3 years in residential school. So he says, "Well, the wolf
4 came to me," he says. "He come and told me," he says,
5 "when you were just a little girl," he says, "and he gave
6 me that message that I was supposed to teach you." And the
7 wolf is the one that carries that message from the spirit
8 world to the physical world here on Mother Earth. Whenever
9 you need guidance from that spirit world that's who you
10 ask. You ask that wolf.

11 He taught me lots before he passed on in
12 those short years. And those teachings still come to me
13 what he taught me. But he also gifted me a pipe and then
14 he says, "My girl." He says, "I'm giving you a pipe," he
15 says. I was 29 years old. I didn't know what a pipe was.
16 He says, "And I also want you to do the sweat lodge," he
17 says. And I said, "Well, that's a big" -- I'm thinking
18 that's a big responsibility. And then I ask him again,
19 "Who told you?" And he says, "The grandfathers and the
20 grandmothers." So I took it and he showed me the way. He
21 showed me how to do it.

22 My father was very, very dear to me. I
23 spent years with him learning from him after that when he
24 told me. In 2001 he passed away. It was very, very hard
25 on me. I still choke up when I think about it because he

1 showed me the way of life. He showed me ceremony.

2 After he passed I grieved. I put my bundle
3 away. I put my teachings away and I just lived physically.
4 I didn't want to go to ceremony anymore because if I went
5 to ceremony I would think of my father and I would break
6 down. That hurt and that pain, that grief, that grieving.
7 Anything that reminds you of your loved one you try to
8 avoid and that's what I did. I did for 10 years.

9 When I moved here to Winnipeg in 2010 I was
10 isolated. I didn't know anybody. 2012 is when I came out.
11 That's only five years ago. And you know what woke me up
12 was the youth. I seen the youth. They were so inspiring.
13 They were so gifted and so much energy and I wanted to help
14 them. So I brought out my pipe. I started going out there
15 into the community, took my drum wherever I went. I
16 carried bags, many bags. The grandmothers know all the
17 bags we carry.

18 And I went out there and that's when I
19 connected with spirit, with myself, who I was, where I came
20 from, why I'm here. I found my purpose. So I'm here
21 today. The last three days were very, very emotional for
22 me. But not for me because I was trying to take what I
23 heard. I usually do that.

24 I have so much love and compassion for the
25 families. I hear their stories. When we went to -- like

1 people go on walks. People set up sacred fires. People
2 set up camps here in Winnipeg. And I go and I listen to
3 them. And it's so inspiring what I hear from our community
4 members. But especially the youth, what I hear from them.
5 They have a different vision. It's so authentic and
6 original and they are -- they have so much pride. And they
7 do it through art. They do it through media and they do it
8 through that magazine we see, Red Rising. Like, you know,
9 it's so -- you just see so much activity, so much beautiful
10 activity out there that it's so inspiring. And those are
11 the ones that are carrying the families like I want to
12 carry the families.

13 When I came here the first day I sat with
14 the grandmothers and they were so beautiful to sit with.
15 Like, it just -- I learned so much from each one of you. I
16 want to say thank you. And what we brought to you was that
17 spirit, the one that I lost for that 10 years. We brought
18 those medicines. We brought those pipes. We brought the
19 tobacco. We harvest sage in front of you. We sang songs.
20 We have a sacred fire over there. All this ceremony is so
21 beautiful. And that's where the answer is.

22 Last night I had a sweat lodge. We had a
23 sweat for the women. It's heart medicine. There are women
24 that are -- been sexually exploited, who are sexually
25 assaulted. It's a 12-week program and we had a closure.

1 And we closed it with a sweat. And the women from the
2 previous groups -- we've had like four or five groups
3 already -- they keep coming back. They came into the sweat
4 and they sang songs. And it was so beautiful to hear them
5 because when they first came to the groups they didn't know
6 their identity. They didn't know where they came from.
7 And that was -- so that's the beauty as we see as
8 grandmothers is we see that growth. We see that change.
9 And that's what's going to help this inquiry is that that
10 spirit.

11 And you're going to see families share.
12 You're going to see families hurt. You're going to see
13 their tears, that sacred water that they share with you.
14 They're going to be the voice for those little ones, the
15 ones that can't speak for themselves. But it would be so
16 beautiful if we could say to those little ones come in and
17 share because you never know what they have to say. They
18 can do it through art, drawings. They could say it with
19 words because then they're so pure they could speak from
20 the heart. And they know what to say. So I hope that
21 those voices are heard as well.

22 So I just wanted to share that and welcome
23 everybody later on. We're going to go smoke the pipes at
24 the sacred fire later. So I just want to say chi-miigwech
25 to each one of you for listening to me.

1 **MS. KATHERINE WHITECLOUD:** Thank you very
2 much.

3 Recommendations from listening for the three
4 days that I've been here to you, the Commissioners, and I
5 will speak directly to you.

6 You heard all of our grandmothers speak and
7 others that are not here now who have gone home, in the
8 sense of physically they've had to fly out, speak about --
9 and speak in their language, and the grandmother Pauline
10 who sat over here and spoke extensively in her language to
11 all of us. And although we may not have understood the
12 language we understood the spirit of the language and what
13 she was talking about.

14 You must accommodate all these languages
15 that are spoken during your Commission hearings because it
16 is through language that we have learned what traditional
17 Indigenous law is because it's built into our language, all
18 of the understandings, that we are raised with as children,
19 that we actually learn while we are in our mother's womb,
20 that we learn in the way we are carried, in the way we are
21 spoken to and the way we are taught at our grandmother's
22 and great-grandmother's, grandfather's knees. And we learn
23 through experience.

24 And there must be room for people to be able
25 to share that with you because what we see today, the

1 product of our women being murdered, abused, assaulted, our
2 children being abused and assaulted, is a product of being
3 disassociated from their true self from whether it be from
4 residential school, whether it be through the Sixties
5 Scoop, whether it be through forced assimilation and
6 particularly from the reservation life, which is as far
7 from natural as it possibly can be.

8 Our traditional way of life, our laws are
9 from the land. We only need to look at the plant life and
10 the animal life to understand the laws that were intended
11 for us because we are only one component of nature and we
12 are part of that. You need only look to British Columbia
13 and the wild forest fires that nobody can control, that
14 started because of lightning strike. There is a lesson in
15 that.

16 You need only look at what happened to Fort
17 McMurray last year. There is a lesson in that. That is
18 natural law. We all need to be fearful of what is going to
19 come next because Mother Nature will determine. And she
20 will take care of herself. She will cleanse herself. And
21 she may cleanse herself of all of us for all the harm we've
22 done to her. That is natural law. That is Indigenous
23 perspective. That is written into our languages and
24 through our songs and in our ceremonies.

25 When we talk about sovereignty -- read the

1 report called "Sole of Sovereignty." And it outlines very
2 specifically that to be sovereign means you first of all
3 have to have your language. It means you have a land base,
4 and we know where our land is. We walk on it every day and
5 we are tasked with the responsibility of caring for her.
6 And we need to, as Indigenous people, smarten up and be
7 more vocal about it because that is our responsibility to
8 care for our Mother, the earth. That's a responsibility
9 that's been given to us as Indigenous peoples. That is
10 where our sovereignty lies.

11 Our people have been removed from their
12 lands. We have -- are not allowed to travel freely. We're
13 not allowed to hunt, gather and all those things that are
14 natural to us that are a part of natural law for how to
15 take care of ourselves, to keep our bodies well. The
16 reason why our people are sick physically, spiritually and
17 emotionally and in our minds is because we are not eating
18 the natural foods and we are not living a natural life. We
19 are living a processed life that is so far removed from who
20 we are supposed to be as a people.

21 How many of yous [*sic*] went to a fast food
22 outlet today? Uh-huh. You're all going to get sick.

23 (LAUGHTER/RIRES)

24 **MS. KATHERINE WHITECLOUD:** We live in a
25 drive-thru world where we want everything instantly. We

1 want to go through a drive-thru, get our Tim Horton's
2 coffee or we can't function. Go through a drive-thru for
3 our food because we didn't take the time to pack our own
4 lunch this morning, prepare our own natural meal. We want
5 to be able to answer our phone right now like the shoe
6 phone that Maxwell Smart used to have and we never thought
7 it would arrive and it did.

8 (LAUGHTER/RIRES)

9 **MS. KATHERINE WHITECLOUD:** And it's not
10 helping any of us. Our children don't know how to
11 communicate anymore. Our young people don't know how to
12 have a conversation or sit in a room and spend time with
13 their grandparents so they can learn because they're so
14 busy with that thing in front of their faces. We allow
15 that and that is removing our children from the natural
16 ways of learning, which is to sit and listen to us, to sit
17 and watch, to watch nature, to be out in nature, to listen
18 to grandma, grandpa, auntie, uncle. That is built into
19 part of the reason why we are where we are now and why
20 you're having to hear -- have these Commission hearings.

21 What about process? You all are Indigenous,
22 you, as Commissioners. You have the where with all to
23 change the way this is being conducted. That is why you
24 were chosen, I'm assuming. Change it so we're not sitting
25 in a courtroom system. Change it where we don't have to

1 give witness.

2 (APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENT)

3 **MS. KATHERINE WHITECLOUD:** Because our way
4 is when you speak, every word you speak is sacred.

5 My grandmother taught me be careful what
6 comes out of your mouth because you can never take it back.
7 Every word we say is sacred. We don't have to put our hand
8 on a Bible and say I promise.

9 Oh there. I was speaking the truth.
10 Because that is what we were taught that you don't speak --
11 and all you speak is the truth. As children we were taught
12 that you don't speak when Elders are in the room unless you
13 ask for permission. You respect your mothers, your
14 grandmothers, your aunties, uncles. You respect your older
15 brothers and sisters. We are not to call our older
16 brothers and sisters by name ever. We refer to them by the
17 term in my language. Tu-doda (ph) is older brother. Wee-
18 nona (ph) is my older sister. Don't ever refer to them by
19 name. That's respect. And today we have children who care
20 -- call their parents by first name and we allow it.

21 Those are such simple things. But that is
22 the beginning of the lesson and teachings in what it means
23 to be an (speaking in Native language), that person that
24 the Creator made you, all those teachings that he gave you
25 specifically for how to walk your life, how to conduct

1 yourself in life. And if you have that, then you wouldn't
2 be sitting here. Then you wouldn't have to be crying.

3 Language is so important. Change the
4 process. Don't have us come and sit in rows. Don't have
5 us swear that our words are going to be the truth because
6 they are naturally going to be the truth.

7 You asked about further research. I
8 encourage you to read the research that has already been
9 done by our traditional people. You will find too, also,
10 that you're not going to see a lot of our traditional
11 Indigenous knowledge written anywhere because we are an
12 oral people. We learn from our grandparents. We listen
13 and we hold it in here so we can pass it on because
14 anything that is written on paper can be twisted. It can
15 be torn up. It can be burnt. But our laws that are taught
16 to us by our grandparents and our great-grandparents remain
17 in here and, therefore, in here so I can share it here with
18 my grandchildren and my great-grandchildren.

19 So I encourage you to sit with Elders. I
20 encourage you to have a circle of grandmothers and
21 grandfathers everywhere you go before you even start your
22 hearings because they will teach you this is the law in our
23 community. These are the laws amongst our people. These
24 are the laws that keep this in mind when you come to listen
25 to our people come and tell their stories. This is the

1 reason why we have you here.

2 When we talk about what is it that bother --
3 that our children are suffering from -- I mean, our people,
4 I call it a deficit of spirit because we have not
5 connected. We live a physical life but we don't live our
6 spiritual life. And first and foremost we were put here as
7 spiritual people and we must reconnect with that. And how
8 do we do that? Whether it be God, the church or whether it
9 be through ceremony, we need a spiritual life and -- in
10 order for us to know that we have a place in this earth and
11 what our place is and our purpose is. And, especially for
12 those that have gone on before us, we have ceremonies --
13 and I know you all do too.

14 And I talked about this with somebody just
15 in the last couple days because I knew this hearing was
16 coming here. We have a specific ceremony when someone
17 finishes their life on earth with us. And we help them go
18 on their journey to the other side. And we support them
19 for four days during and four days after. And then a year
20 later we have a memorial to release them so that we can
21 walk with a happy life and they can also where they are.
22 And that has not been done, not only for our missing and
23 murdered women, but it hasn't been done also for all of the
24 children that died in residential schools.

25 And so we have families and mothers and

1 grandmothers and aunties and fathers and everybody else,
2 grandfathers, still grieving and crying for those children
3 who died years and years and years ago in residential
4 school and nothing's ever been done for them. And that
5 also leads to this constant grieving that we're in, that we
6 still haven't addressed, that is a part of this issue too.
7 And that has to be done. And, again, sit with your
8 grandmothers and grandfathers in your communities of where
9 you're going for your hearings and they will tell you what
10 needs to be done from that -- from a ceremonial
11 perspective.

12 And I listen to the grandmothers say, "Men
13 take care of your women. Honour your children. Honour
14 your women. Uphold them and uplift them and protect them."
15 That starts from those little boys listening as small
16 children to their mothers and their grandmothers and
17 learning what love really is. Understanding what love
18 really is and what it means. Not only does it mean it's a
19 gift, but it's a tremendous responsibility and it's a
20 tremendous gift that they have to offer also. And nowadays
21 our young people don't understand that because it's about
22 use and abuse because that's what they see in the homes or
23 if they -- and with 80 percent of a lot -- of the children
24 in care being our children, they're growing up without
25 that. They're growing up with use and abuse.

1 And so men, young people, grandmothers -- we
2 issued a statement here in Manitoba a couple months ago
3 that we take full responsibility for our families and our
4 children. Remember what we say is sacred and we have to
5 follow that up with action and I -- we have to do it
6 individually, in our own homes and in our extended families
7 and then throughout the communities. I encourage all of
8 you. That's why I keep saying you have to listen to the
9 grandmothers. You have to.

10 We begin with song. We begin with honouring
11 water. We uplift our pipes and our tobacco and we light
12 our sage and our cedar and our sacred medicines and we will
13 close with that. And that is why I quote a dear friend of
14 mind, Dr. Larry Emerson (ph), who just completed our life
15 with us this past week, which I just found out about
16 through social media. And he had a profound saying that
17 when young people used to suffer -- and he was a professor
18 in the university -- and I'm going to refer to that also in
19 a little bit. He used to always pull out his drum and he
20 would start singing. And automatically that singing would
21 soothe students and would uplift them and it would give
22 them strength. It would calm their minds and their hearts.
23 And they could then study and they could reconnect and
24 refocus why they're there. They're there for their people,
25 not just for themselves. They're there for their family.

1 Somebody told a story the other day. Who
2 was it? You. About -- yeah, about the little guy who
3 became a lawyer and no one even called him or thanked him
4 or honoured him and he went home and his mother's house was
5 full of flowers because they were honouring the mother for
6 raising a child to be that strong that they're able to
7 complete university and to get their degree. That is how
8 our society is. We do not honour the individual unless we
9 -- as family members we honour them. The community honours
10 the family. And we need to bring that back instead of the
11 crab in the bucket. We're in the crab in the bucket
12 syndrome. We need to get out of that. And you all are
13 part of that. I call you "you all" because you are
14 Indigenous also and you understand that concept.

15 Regarding -- I was going to talk about
16 something and now I forgot because I just was on a roll.
17 Our song. Our song is still singing but there's something
18 else I wanted to say as a recommendation for you.

19 This young lady spoke the other day about an
20 education system that is not working for our people. The
21 education system was used to tear our children away from a
22 way of life and to tear our children away from who they
23 really are as individuals and Belinda just spoke about
24 that. If something is going to be changed, if something is
25 going to be done to right this ship the way it should be,

1 then utilize the education system and start when our
2 children are little and support the parents in ensuring
3 that they have that -- our children have a right to be
4 loved and to be honoured. And so that our parents have
5 that opportunity to teach your children their languages, to
6 teach our children in their way of life, much like other
7 models. If you want to use other models that work, look to
8 Finland. It works. Look to our people. It works but
9 nobody believes that it works. I believe our system works.

10 I want my grandchildren to be taught in our
11 language until eighth grade because, you know what, they
12 will surpass everybody else in any test you give them once
13 they get done high school. Because as the Sole of
14 Sovereignty says, that report -- and I only cite that
15 because everybody needs five letters or six letters
16 attached to the name before anybody will listen to them.
17 Where it states that the language is what provides children
18 with that knowledge. And if they are raised within their
19 own language and taught within their language, they get to
20 high school they will excel in every subject and they will
21 excel in university just like this young lady did because
22 she grew up with language and ceremony.

23 So if you're going to change system and make
24 -- and it's been made 100 times but make it again. Teach
25 our children in our languages. Allow us to teach our

1 children with ceremony and song and dance instead of
2 punishing us if we don't send our children to school,
3 instead of punishing our children because they went hunting
4 instead of sitting in a classroom. Instead of punishing
5 our children because they wanted to help grandma and they
6 stayed home and helped grandma and you punish them because
7 they weren't in the classroom. In the meantime, they
8 learnt in one day with grandma what you couldn't teach them
9 in a year in grade school.

10 (APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENT)

11 **MS. KATHERINE WHITECLOUD:** Thank you. So
12 those are my recommendations to you and I hope you make
13 them also when you're done. And we encourage you to
14 continue to sit with grandmothers and grandfathers wherever
15 you go because you will get your education. And the
16 experts that were here, I honour you and I respect you for
17 all that you shared. And I'm just adding to it and I'm
18 building to it because I know you had your lessons from
19 your teachers and your elders that you shared that
20 knowledge.

21 My sister works in a law school too. And
22 sometimes she's too white in her way of thinking and it's
23 difficult to get her back to the Dakota way of thinking
24 because you get removed from it because you're in that
25 circle all the time. Remove yourself from the circle. Go

1 home to ceremony as often as you can, even the whole
2 summer, and it will reground you and refocus you. It's
3 like a grandmother said, a grandfather. When you live in a
4 city, especially those who only live in the city, you lose
5 connection from the land. Take your shoes off. Go walk on
6 the grass. Be pretty woman. And you will reconnect.

7 Thank you very much. (Speaking in Native
8 language).

9 (APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENT)

10 **MS. SHERI COPENACE:** I just want to thank
11 everybody. I know I see three more people that are asking
12 to speak. So I will -- we will, of course, support that
13 but I know the Commissioners and the Grandmother Annie here
14 wants to speak as well, so I don't -- who wanted to -- I
15 would kindly ask you just to like keep it like really --
16 she asked first -- and then we can do it as quickly as
17 possible.

18 **MS. ELIZABETH ZARPA:** Okay. Thank you. I'm
19 running kind of -- I'll go quite fast because I also have
20 to go. But thank you to the grandmothers and to everybody
21 who shares a piece of their story. And it's like
22 Toowayoung (ph) said, you're going to come out of this and
23 you're going to see differently. And these past three days
24 have been really insightful.

25 But speaking from an Inuk woman's

1 perspective and a woman's perspective, I recognize that
2 being here, traditional Cree, Oji Cree, Anishinaabe
3 territory, Treaty 1, it's beautiful. And speaking on a
4 National Inquiry representing Indigenous women, I think
5 it's key also to keep in mind that -- I think a
6 recommendation that I would see as something that's really
7 important is more Inuit drum dancing, throat singing.
8 Thank you. Thanks.

9 And I really, really valued the teaching
10 about the emotiq (ph) and the Qulliq. I think that was
11 really beautiful. And I just know there's Inuit in
12 Winnipeg and I'm like where are they? You know, there's
13 very few of us. And it would be nice to see more Inuit in
14 the audience.

15 And also -- which leads me to my next idea
16 of recommendations would be to have more Inuit experts. We
17 had one from Pond Inlet in Nunavut, which was really,
18 really, really insightful. But Inuit, we live in the north
19 in Inuit Nunangat so, like, all throughout the north in
20 Inuvialuit, Nunavut, Nunavik, Nunatsiavut, Greenland and
21 we're also in the south too, urban settings, going to
22 school. So, I think it's really important to have other
23 Inuit experts and also more time. Trying to fit Inuit law
24 into an hour and a half is just really, really almost
25 impossible. You need a whole day or something.

1 And translation. I think the consecutive
2 translation you -- we didn't get the chance to really delve
3 into asking questions that we kind of wanted to or I wanted
4 to because it was just such a short timeframe and the
5 translation made that -- it was longer, so we need longer
6 time for translation.

7 We also have to recognize that the dialects
8 are different in Inuit Nunangat. I'm not fluent in
9 Inuktitut. I know a little bit. But I know that the
10 dialect sometimes can be a little bit confusing, so making
11 sure that you have more translation from different dialects
12 and keep -- being mindful of that for the expert hearing in
13 Montreal.

14 The other area that I thought was really,
15 really important is just I was questioning throughout the
16 entirety of the expert hearing why and the audience didn't
17 get the chance to question the experts. Because I think
18 that's -- that would have been really -- and might have had
19 more time but -- it might have added more time but I think
20 that it would have been a really insightful experience to
21 have the option to allow the audience to ask questions as
22 well.

23 So I think also -- I think that's
24 predominantly everything right now. So thank you so much.

25 (APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENT)

1 **MS. SHERI COPENACE:** So I'll give this to
2 Thelma and then to this young lady, then the Commissioners
3 would want to say a few words -- or however. Yeah.

4 **MS. THELMA MORRISSEAU:** Miigwech, Sheri.
5 Bonjour. (Speaking in Native Language).

6 I just wanted to -- actually, I had a lot to
7 say but I know I'm limited, so what I wanted to share at
8 this time is that I'm not here on my working capacity but I
9 work at a placed called The Office of The Children's
10 Advocate. And I'm sure you're aware that we have them
11 right across Canada. So I'm what they call an advocacy
12 officer there. And what our office does is that we look at
13 child welfare matters that come across our desk. We
14 recently got an expanded mandate, which is going to cover
15 five more areas including justice education, mental health,
16 some other ones I can't remember right now.

17 But I think what I wanted the Commissioners
18 to know -- and I'm sure you do but I just -- I feel
19 compelled to have to tell you. I've been there 17 years
20 and I think I can honestly say that 99.9 percent of the
21 files that come across my desk are Indigenous children.

22 So we know that Manitoba has the highest
23 number of children in care across Canada. We also know
24 that close to 85, 90 percent of those children are
25 Indigenous, whether they're First Nations or Métis or

1 Inuit, they're Indigenous children. And the sad thing
2 about this as I see it has a repetition of residential
3 school. Because we know residential school took the
4 children away from the homes, took the children away from
5 the parents and the grandparents whose job it was to raise
6 them. And so the communities became silent because there
7 were no more children, there was no more laughter. And
8 it's the same thing that's being repeated in child welfare.

9 What I also have seen is that our young
10 girls, Indigenous girls, how I believe child welfare is a
11 stepping stone to exploitation, sexual exploitation, human
12 trafficking. That is a really serious issue in our
13 country. It's a serious issue right here in Manitoba.
14 People don't realize that it's right here in our back door.
15 It's happening. So I really think that issue has to be
16 looked at. We have to stop taking our kids from our homes.
17 We have to.

18 If our people are going to heal, we have to
19 give back a purpose to the mothers and the fathers, the
20 grandparents, the aunties and the uncles to look after
21 their children. If you have no children in your community,
22 you have no one to look after and what purpose do you then
23 have?

24 So I'm asking in a really good way that that
25 be looked at. Our kids are being placed in homes that are

1 not Indigenous homes. And I recognize as well that many of
2 our people are still hurting, are still wounded, are in a
3 journey of still healing and perhaps they can't do that
4 work. But I also know there are so many that can and there
5 are grandmas, mushums and kokums that are willing to look
6 after their children. And for whatever reason, child
7 welfare is not hearing their voice. That has to change.

8 If our children are going to learn a
9 language it has to be their language, not someone else's.
10 Another language should come second or third. But their
11 own language should be taught first. But when they are
12 placed outside of their community, outside of their family,
13 they're not being exposed to any of that. That's not fair.
14 That's not right. Ethically, morally, that's not right.
15 We can't continue to do that.

16 I had -- my husband and I had supper the
17 other night with a really beautiful family who lost a
18 daughter a year ago. And I have her permission to talk
19 about it. Her daughter was Christine Wood (ph). And I
20 want to talk about it because I really believe this issue
21 is not just an issue for Indigenous people. I think it's
22 an issue right across Canada and we all have to do
23 something about it.

24 That little girl, that little 17 or 19-year-
25 old girl who was in the city and went missing shortly after

1 she left her mother and dad at the hotel died within hours
2 of leaving the hotel. And she was found. I wanted to tell
3 you this because that family -- I've never met a family so
4 beautiful as Christine's parents, Melinda and George Wood.
5 They are such beautiful, spiritual people. And despite the
6 pain that they live with every day, they can still have
7 hope and strength. They are real teachers for all of us.

8 Throughout the time that their daughter was
9 missing -- their daughter actually died -- went missing
10 August the 20th, 2016. So they just celebrated one year of
11 her missing just the other day. So when we had supper with
12 them the other night that's all they wanted to talk about.
13 And we let them. That's the least we could do. They
14 talked about her in such a beautiful way.

15 Their little girl was found outside of
16 Winnipeg just past the Town of Dugald where her body had
17 been buried in a ditch on a farmer's field. And I don't
18 have enough time to tell you everything but there's some
19 really important things that happened there. But
20 significant to it there was all kinds of spiritual signs
21 that the family received. And one of the primary teachers,
22 if you will, was that fox.

23 In our culture the fox is taught to be a
24 messenger. And so many times that fox came to that family
25 throughout those months they were waiting, they were

1 looking for her, waiting for her to appear. But when they
2 finally found her body it was on this farmer's field.

3 And what had happened, this farmer had got
4 up one day and he had a fox sitting on his woodpile. This
5 is a shagenash (ph), a white man. He had this fox. I
6 mean, you know, and usually in our culture we take great
7 significance when animals come to see us, and normally not
8 for their culture. But he paid attention to that fox who
9 came and sat on his woodpile. And without realizing,
10 without knowing why but it's almost -- I believe it was
11 spirit-driven, myself. But he jumped in his truck and he
12 drove around his land. And he said, "I have no idea why I
13 went where I went." But he drove down that road off of
14 Highway 15 and it wasn't very far down that road he saw
15 something in the ditch and half exposed was Christine's
16 body.

17 And that man -- we believe that an animal
18 came and removed part of that earth so this little girl
19 could be found so that the parents would be able to have
20 some closures. We really believe that's what happened.
21 And this man has been so kind to the family. He planted a
22 tree for Christine. And you can go there and you can go
23 and offer your prayers there. They've set up like a little
24 area for her. You can go there. Traditional people can go
25 there and smudge. Christian people can go there and say a

1 prayer. There's a cross there. It's really beautiful how
2 this man has taken it upon himself to take care of that
3 site where her body was found.

4 And, you know, that gives me hope for
5 mankind because it tells me that people overall inherently
6 are kind, and that we all hurt the same. We all bleed when
7 we're cut. So more than differences we have more
8 similarities. And I want us to honour that.

9 I am so grateful to Christine's parents for
10 what they have given to my husband and I. (Speaking in
11 Native Language). I have -- she talked about her daughter
12 loving butterflies and how she put a little -- some kind of
13 little structure there with a butterfly. And just before
14 that in March I was getting ready to go to my Midewiwin
15 ceremonies. And this is no word of a lie. This is the
16 truth I am speaking. When I went to ceremonies I had this
17 young woman in my head. That's all I could think of. She
18 is who I thought about. She is who I prayed about and for
19 her family.

20 And we have two lodges for the Midewiwin.
21 There is the Midewiwin teaching lodge and then there was --
22 there is the Midewiwin initiation lodge. And it was that
23 morning as I stood in front of the Midewiwin initiation
24 lodge, as I was entering to my right were butterflies. So
25 I know that Christine was there. Her spirit was there.

1 And, you know, some people may not believe
2 that but I know what I felt inside and I know what my
3 spirit told me. And so I share that with you and in
4 thinking about how really extremely important it is for
5 families to have closure because Melinda said, "I know
6 she's gone but I also know she's in a better place. I
7 thank God for allowing her to come home to me so that we
8 can put her in a good place and have some closure."

9 And so it's critically important to help our
10 families across Canada to find closure, to find where are
11 their loved ones, where are their daughters, their mothers,
12 their sisters, their granddaughters? Where are they?
13 Their sons, their grandsons. In order for our people to
14 heal they must be able to have some closure.

15 So I share that much with you. I say chi-
16 miigwech allowing me these few words at this time.
17 Miigwech.

18 **MS. SABE TUWIA:** Tansi. My traditional name
19 is Sabe Turiwa, and -- sorry. So I would ask for
20 implementations of changes of policy to -- within the RCMP
21 and police forces to end discrimination against the peoples
22 of the land. Also, I'd like to see policy also changed in
23 terms of reference to women. So currently in Vancouver
24 there have been changes to -- that have been implemented;
25 however, I don't feel that they're adequate enough but it's

1 definitely a good start. And so that's feminist policies
2 and they watch it via video and it's mandatory.

3 I'd like to see cultural competency training
4 implemented into the police forces for those policies to be
5 changed. I'd also like to see funding implemented for
6 families to be able to access cultural services, whether --
7 cultural services, so if it's gas monies or bus monies.
8 And also for Elders to receive compensation as equal as
9 psychiatrists and psychologists, I'd like to see our people
10 be recognized and receive the same amount of pay as well.

11 Also, I'd like to see more changes in the
12 education system as well, for more of our people to --
13 well, I'd like to see changes in the educational system.
14 So currently there's, you know, history that's being shared
15 and spoken about that I believe is outdated and inaccurate.
16 And I'd like to see those changes -- I'd like to see that
17 eradicated from there and for truth to be spoken and for
18 there to be a system overhaul. I'd like to see changes in
19 the Constitution as well, more than a recommendation, and
20 for a day where we can be free from discrimination and
21 violence. I'd like to be able to walk down the street and
22 not be a target.

23 I'd like to see services be changed for our
24 young people so that they have access to treatment, alcohol
25 and drug treatment, for there to be services enacted for

1 family violence. Sorry, I'm really shaking.

2 I'd like to see our language -- languages
3 recognized equally as French, Jamaican, Mexican, Italian,
4 to be recognized. We're supposed to have human rights and
5 I'd like -- also like to see this Inquiry based around the
6 human rights of Indigenous peoples, but that framework.
7 And one day I'd like to see changes in the Constitution as
8 well. But, you know, a framework definitely free from
9 discrimination as well and racism.

10 Also, I think that services, whether they be
11 cultural or western-wise, that those services be available
12 to all people, to all people that are people of the land.

13 I stand here today. I was one of those kids
14 that was -- that grew up without knowing any culture and I
15 found culture later on in life, which I'm very thankful
16 for. I grew up not knowing -- well, when I was a little
17 girl I grew up with my grandparents and they taught me
18 language, culture way of life. You know, we hunted. And
19 my kokumm she fished and she trapped. She was a trapper.
20 And so I don't know those ways and I had to learn, you
21 know, some of those ways through exploring that for myself.
22 But I think that it's essential that Elders also be present
23 in the education system, you know, in the community,
24 everywhere because there's a generation that's growing up
25 without language, without culture.

1 And, you know, when I was a little girl I --
2 and I heard this story from this woman and she shared about
3 being groomed at a very young age from, you know, her
4 environment. You know, and for me that was my stepfather
5 and then it continued, you know, when I grew up in care.
6 And, you know, being one of those kids that -- I really
7 didn't fully understand back then but, you know, I, too,
8 was -- grew up to be groomed to be sexually exploited, you
9 know.

10 I stand here today and I think that, you
11 know, I'm one of the lucky ones because I was one of the
12 ones that got away; right? And a lot of my sisters they
13 didn't have a chance to get away. And a lot of our
14 sisters, you know, every day that this Inquiry goes on,
15 that there's a lot of young girls and boys that don't get
16 to come back either.

17 And when we look at that history, you know,
18 of that relationship between westernized culture, society
19 and our people, you know, we're all by-products, you know,
20 of colonialism and what that means. And I would really
21 like for, you know, the Commission, for each of you to
22 really understand, to dissect that, to look at that, the
23 relationships between the Crown. I know it's a big task
24 but I'm hoping that some of these changes will come, you
25 know, for the people.

1 So I just want to say thank you.

2 **COMMISSIONER BRIAN EYOLFSON:** I'd just like
3 to thank everybody so much. I'd like to thank everybody
4 that was here with us this week. And just from the
5 beginning everybody that contributed to such a great
6 opening we had Tuesday morning at the sunrise ceremony and
7 the sacred fire and the panellists that we had this week.
8 They gave us a lot to think about.

9 And I'd also like to thank the families and
10 survivors who shared some stories with us today and gave us
11 some recommendations. And that's really helpful for us. I
12 mean, it's the stories that help us do our work to look at
13 the hard questions we have to look at. And the
14 recommendations that help us move forward and make
15 improvements to how we're going this work and make
16 adjustments so we can keep trying to do this better. So I
17 appreciate that so much.

18 And I really want to thank all the
19 grandmothers that were here with us this week and helped so
20 much and for all your hard work last night in helping us
21 make today what it was. It was a really great day. So a
22 big chi-miigwech to everybody. Thank you.

23 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** I was on a
24 little bit of a holiday last week with my son. We went on
25 some adventures. So the weekend before coming here I read

1 my material and I prepared. And I wasn't feeling prepared
2 enough but I read the materials and I had some questions so
3 I was prepared. And I -- you know, we prepare for things
4 and we don't realize what we were actually preparing for.
5 I think my preparation was last week with my son, not the
6 things that I read.

7 I've learned so much about the importance of
8 relationships, how we nurture life. Dawnis, you couldn't
9 have said it more perfectly. The water, the food, our
10 bodies, each other and the earth.

11 This is personally and professionally the
12 toughest work that I'll ever do, second to being a mom,
13 which I do at the same time as this work. And I want to
14 thank the grandmothers. I want to thank the ceremony and
15 for bringing us through that and guiding us through that
16 and opening that door. I don't know how else to sort of
17 articulate that or explain it. It opened something on
18 Tuesday morning that allowed for something.

19 And I want to thank the grandmothers. Last
20 night we gave it to you to guide us and I'm sorry we took
21 as long as we did to take that step. A lesson learned
22 there, that's for sure.

23 This is an incredible -- we've been told and
24 we feel it and acknowledge it, an incredible task the four
25 of us carry. We can't carry it by ourselves. We can't do

1 it by ourselves. And we're not. And you reminded me of
2 that again this week, so thank you.

3 I want to thank the families and I want to -
4 - I'm sick of apologizing because words aren't enough.
5 Thank you for teaching me. We'll be back in October and
6 we've learned a lot that next time -- there's no right way.
7 People keep saying, "We -- you have to do this the right
8 way." And then I listen to the grandmothers and they say,
9 "There's no right way. You have to find the way and find
10 it together and go."

11 (LAUGHTER/RIRES)

12 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** So I'm going
13 to assume that that is a teaching in and of itself that I
14 hear one thing and then another thing so we have to go and
15 we have to do and we have to try.

16 And I look forward to being back here and I
17 look forward to hearing from the families. And I look
18 forward to our team building with you, this community, the
19 right space for that to happen in the way it's supposed to
20 happen. So I say that to you as I say it to my colleagues
21 and I say it to our team. And I know they feel it and I
22 guess I'm saying it to the country. There we go.

23 (LAUGHTER/RIRES)

24 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** I forget that
25 moment sometimes.

1 But I think that's important because we need
2 to bring this country, this entire country on this journey,
3 all the nations in this country, Indigenous and non-
4 Indigenous. And this is a turning point and there are big
5 choices to be made individually and collectively. It has
6 to be an informed choice here and here and in every way
7 that we make our decisions. We have to make those
8 decisions for our babies and our grandbabies and for those
9 that came before us.

10 So I'll keep making my step-by-step
11 decisions hoping for them to be good decisions and the
12 right decisions. (Speaking in Native Language).

13 I also want to say how proud I was that
14 yesterday as we learned about Inuit laws it was all in
15 Inuktitut. Lillian Aq'luqa (ph), our lawyer, she speaks
16 English. I speak English. Sandra Omik (ph) speaks
17 English. That was not the language to speak about that.
18 And it all happened in Inuktitut and that was very
19 powerful.

20 And I want to thank Elizabeth Zarpa. You're
21 right. We need more, more of those moments, for them not
22 to be one-offs, for it to be what we do. But I want to
23 acknowledge it because I am very proud of that that as the
24 parties, as the witnesses, as the person who is to listen
25 and learn, it was all spoken and understood without devices

1 between us, and that was really cool. I'm proud of that.
2 I hope my son will be one day too. He's six right now.
3 It's just Star Wars and Lego.

4 (LAUGHTER/RIRES)

5 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** And hockey.
6 And he has Jordon so, yeah, there we go. (Speaking in
7 Native Language).

8 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** Merci Qajaq.
9 Merci beaucoup. I love when Qajaq speak with the heart or
10 from the heart, sorry.

11 I want to acknowledge the people of this
12 land before I say something and I want to acknowledge all
13 the beauty who are surrounding us and the beauty, spirit,
14 plant and all of that; mostly, the people who share their
15 truth also. Not only yesterday, today or the day before,
16 but I was away last week. I was away with my kids. I have
17 two beautiful twins, Sheshka (ph) and Awesiya (ph).
18 They're 10 years old. They're stronger than me, louder
19 than me, so I'm proud of them. And my son Yoquesi (ph) and
20 husband-to-be when he sees me. So, we were away.

21 (LAUGHTER/RIRES)

22 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** We were away.
23 And I promised that I was going to look my emails. I lied.
24 I looked every morning. But I'm a Facebook person. I'm a
25 Twitter person because we connect with families through

1 that social media since 2009. So now you know. And one
2 woman asked me what's going on. Why this place? And it
3 was your daughter. So when she wrote to me I said, "I have
4 to honour this." So I ask. I was wondering why we're
5 here. We got some answered but we're not coming back;
6 okay?

7 (APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENT)

8 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** So some
9 people like the place. That's their right. But some
10 people doesn't want to come, so I have to acknowledge that
11 and my colleagues too did when we found out so.

12 What is important also is that every time
13 that we receive, or I, through social media, a call, a text
14 or an email from people that I don't really know or really
15 know, it's always important. Always. Always. Doesn't
16 matter the way they say it. Ouch sometimes and sometimes
17 wow. But they're telling us something. They're teaching
18 us something. And that's my world. This is where I grow
19 up with organization, with women, with children, with
20 people who wants justice. And I'm surrounded by people who
21 wants to do the same but differently because they were
22 coming from another world, but they're respecting me, my
23 colleagues. And I'm impressed by that. I was afraid that
24 they would say, "Oh my god. Who is she?" But they still
25 respecting me, so merci beaucoup.

1 And it is clear for me that you, the women
2 and the men, did something historical yesterday.
3 Yesterday. Because last fall I asked our lawyers, because
4 I never did an inquiry, I never did a Commission -- sorry,
5 my dress is falling.

6 (LAUGHTER/RIRES)

7 **COMMISSIONER MICHELE AUDETTE:** It's my man
8 side.

9 So but I wasn't afraid to ask question. How
10 is the setup for the room? How is the setup? Some of us
11 it's wigwam. Some of us it's igloo. Some of us it's
12 tepee, metashan (ph) and so on or buildings. And I saw the
13 uncomfortable. I saw it. I acknowledge that. But I said,
14 "How can we make it a place where it's safe?" Culturally
15 is that what we say appropriate and respectful? How?

16 We did a hearing where the roof was falling
17 so we have to find a place so we ended in a tent. It
18 wasn't a circus. It's just because we respect the
19 commitment so we went in white horse in that tent. But
20 still, it wasn't enough for me.

21 I was praying. And yesterday a woman --
22 another woman, another woman, family members, an Elder
23 said, "This is not our way." And look what you did. Can
24 you imagine the parties, most of them are Canadian, the
25 lawyers. They see Commissioner and -- having coffee with

1 families or with government or with other parties having
2 fun, hugging. They never saw that. Usually Commissioner
3 don't speak to media, don't speak to families, don't speak
4 to any party. We need to be pure, apparently. Well, we
5 changed that rule. We changed it. But it wasn't clear
6 enough for anybody or for everybody. That's -- I take that
7 responsibility. But you made us change the way we have to
8 conduct the hearings with the families or the institutions
9 or people that we need to ask question or listen. So merci
10 beaucoup (speaking in Native language). You did something
11 amazing.

12 So for that, for me, the recommendation that
13 I listen, like taking care of families when they come,
14 believe me, I'll fight from inside -- they know me -- to
15 make sure that the next one, Montreal, Rankin Inlet,
16 doesn't matter where we go where the land is welcoming us.
17 The spirit is welcoming us. We will make sure and I will
18 fight that families are respected. Believe me.

19 (APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENT)

20 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** And it's not
21 something we did on purpose, not at all. We're human.
22 "Perfectly non-perfect," we say in French. I don't know in
23 English.

24 Another thing that is very, very important
25 for me is I had another prayer. I was wondering, how come

1 they say it's too legalistic when I fought for this inquiry
2 so Canada, Ontario, Quebec, any province, can be
3 accountable? They have their laws so how can we say to
4 their laws this is what went wrong but let us do our way
5 also with our laws? So, yes, I need that legal aspect and
6 I'm not a lawyer.

7 Boom. You arrive. Your oath. So I'm
8 asking the -- I'm asking you humbly if we can use your oath
9 for the next hearings. And I'll give you the backhoe for
10 that.

11 (APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENT)

12 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** Merci.

13 I will conclude to say it is clear for me
14 Inuit is very, very dear for me. I see them in Montreal.
15 I see them when I travel and I didn't know there were a lot
16 also in Winnipeg, Edmonton and they deserve their space.
17 So, we should have more time and more people to teach us.

18 Often I heard -- and it's true. It's our
19 responsibility. We don't tell you the good stuff also.
20 We're too quiet. I'm learning English so I'm loud in
21 English now, not only in French.

22 (APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENT)

23 **COMMISSIONER MICHÈLE AUDETTE:** To say that
24 policing, justice system, criminal system, trafficking,
25 child welfare and all the impact of colonization -- woof, I

1 tried -- it is a top priority for the four Commissioner
2 that you have in front of you. I'm telling you it is and
3 we will not give up. You have some strong warriors inside
4 the Inquiry. Strong women coming from your communities,
5 your territories, well-educated or educated like me with
6 university of life but we're there fighting for us and for
7 you. When I say "us", I'm a family also.

8 So this is my commitment as a mother, a
9 stubborn mother, a grandmother, and also a human being. I
10 will fight with you and for you.

11 (APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENT)

12 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** Pardon
13 me. Oh, thank you. I finally get to see the stone -- the
14 rock because it's beautiful. I've never seen one like this
15 before.

16 I want to start by thanking the families and
17 survivors for being here and sharing. And I have -- I
18 don't have to -- I want to thank the grandmothers for
19 setting us straight again because that's what grandmothers
20 do.

21 I'm a grandmother, not -- well, I have
22 grandchildren but I'm not a grandmother yet. It's
23 something to -- that I aspire to.

24 I'm going to part with a story about my
25 grandmother. I don't have the last word. My grandmother

1 always did. She was a beautiful Métis woman. Tough, tough
2 as nails but soft and full of love for everyone regardless.

3 I had the great gift of my grandmother when
4 I was growing up and I learned a lot from her. I think the
5 most important thing I learned was from my grandmother,
6 other than how to make bannock, was to -- not to be afraid
7 to fall down because I knew she'd be there to pick me up
8 and she always was. And so I'm not afraid to fall down
9 because of my grandma. She picks me up. Even today my
10 grandma picked me up.

11 So my last word is my grandma. Thank you.

12 (APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENT)

13 --- CLOSING CEREMONY/CÉRÉMONIE DE CLÔTURE :

14 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** As we wrap up,
15 Elder Annie wants to close the fire, the Qulliq. (Speaking
16 in Native Language).

17 Annie would like (speaking in Native
18 language). Annie would like her fellow Inuit with her and
19 she's invited some other people to join her as she
20 extinguishes the flame of the Qulliq to signify the end of
21 our work this week. And I believe she's going to ask the
22 Commissioners -- and I'll give you a heads up -- that
23 she'll want you to help put out the flame.

24 Marion, she would like you to sit with her.

25 **ELDER ANNIE BOUQUETTE:** And you too.

1 **COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** And me too.

2 **ELDER ANNIE BOUQUETTE:** Both of you. Both
3 of you. Okay.

4 There's so much honour that I want to thank
5 you to all of you. This is a beautiful honour that we
6 Inuit have been accepted to this group and the family and
7 friends here and from other countries. And this is
8 learning experience for me to get out for the first time in
9 my life to be among you. I'm so honoured. I'm so
10 speechless. I get scared so easily. I get scared to talk
11 but inside of me I talk to myself because in residential
12 school we were not allowed to say anything. We were
13 slapped with belts in our mouth if we say anything. But
14 today I'm so grateful. Little bit by bit, I'm able to say
15 at least few words.

16 Right now at this moment I ask Qajaq and --
17 your name --

18 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** Marion.

19 **ELDER ANNIE BOUQUETTE:** -- Marion to come to
20 be with us and to say thank you for letting us Inuit to be
21 involved, to be with you and these other Inuit people too
22 here. And I feel so blessed as Inuit people even though I
23 don't have much of my own Inuit culture and I have a long
24 way to learn about our Inuit way of life because of the
25 lost I had in my past. This is so wonderful.

1 I want to ask one question if we can have
2 this kind of ceremony in Nunavut because my people are
3 really hurting as well like anybody. Something can stop
4 too. They're -- mainly my people were moved from their
5 community by the federal government because their children
6 were taken away to go to school, day school, and being sent
7 away to other places to go to school. And they're hurting.
8 We don't have this kind of ceremony, gatherings, like this.
9 I fear for my own people.

10 And we're the only younger generations we
11 have. Our so many Elders have passed away and where are we
12 going to go to heal, to get help, us Inuit people? There
13 got to be something to start up there sometime. It doesn't
14 have to be right away but somewhere to start, to start
15 helping our people.

16 As for me, who I was lost in my life,
17 there's so much violence around me, inside of me because
18 the way I was treated where I went to school. That's all I
19 grew up with. That's all I knew. And it's so hard for me
20 to stop the violence that I'm affected inside.

21 The death -- near death, sexual abuse,
22 raped, until a few years later I was able to stop it
23 myself. The strapping. My body's full of scars. Being
24 strapped in residential school.

25 I have to say this. That's been living

1 inside of me for so long. I grew with Cree people, Indian
2 people like you are, in Moose Factory, Moosonee. I never
3 even seen Inuit people going to school there. And why me?
4 Why was I put there?

5 One night we used to pretend sleeping. I
6 think it was one night. If it was a dream, let it be a
7 dream. If it wasn't, let it be truth. One night, I don't
8 know, something woke me up. I saw these nuns coming to the
9 room or they didn't -- were there. This nun thing all the
10 time but mainly on Sundays they did. I saw them coming in.
11 I didn't know these girls, who they were. I only knew one
12 friend, Elizabeth. She was Cree. If it was a dream, I saw
13 them coming to pick this Indian girl. I think she was
14 dead. They carry her inside this sheet, in a sheet. I
15 think she was dead.

16 I've seen your people get so beaten up. I
17 used to see them taking these girls to a room. I don't
18 know what they were doing in the rooms. And one day we
19 were off to bed. We were supposed to go to bed 8:00 every
20 night. I could hear the drum outside. The drum. And all
21 these girls ran to the window. And I was the last one
22 because I couldn't understand. And I finally went to them
23 to look through the window and I asked Elizabeth, "What's
24 that drum? How come everybody ran to the window?" And she
25 said, "My parents are calling us to go home." And I said

1 to her, "How come I can't go home? Will I go home too?"

2 It was a big, soundiful [sic] drum. That's always in me.

3 Every time you people play drum I get right
4 through it. It's beautiful but it's scary because of what
5 those girls did running to the window. But there was
6 nobody out there. They were in the bush. The sod houses,
7 10 hiding in the bushes, following their children taken
8 away.

9 There are a lot of me to tell a story but
10 this is only the beginning of my violency [sic] that's
11 living around me every single day. But I'm Inuk. I'm
12 Eskimo. People can call me "Eskimo." That doesn't hurt
13 me. But I have a hard time who really I am. Who am I?
14 Where did I came [sic] from? The only place I can say is
15 that I grew up where the Inuit never gone there to Moose
16 Factory and Moosonee to go to school, residential school.

17 And I'm so grateful for all of you, all of
18 you, who can listen to me. Please listen to my people too,
19 my Inuit, Inuktitut, Inuit in Nunavut sometime in the newer
20 future. Please.

21 I'm so -- thank you. My throat is so dry.

22 (LAUGHTER/RIRES)

23 **ELDER ANNIE BOUQUETTE:** I didn't even know
24 water in my whole life. I was taught how to drink water.

25 And I believe right now at this time the

1 Qulliq is my -- directing me to share this with you. I had
2 no idea. I don't know nobody. I don't get to know
3 anybody. I'm always alone at home with my family, my
4 husband. And I thank you to my husband who have been
5 supporting me over the years, looking at -- raising my kids
6 while I travel, while I -- right now too. So thank you for
7 this story I just told you. Thank you.

8 Now I'm moving on to the Qulliq. Excuse me.
9 Thank you.

10 I ask Marion for accepting us Inuit to be
11 part of this right now and for the past three days or --
12 yeah. So if I can get you to unlit one flame and she will
13 help you?

14 (LAUGHTER/RIRES)

15 **ELDER ANNIE BOUQUETTE:** This Qulliq is the
16 sign -- no, you have to get oil on it and take the -- yeah.
17 Yeah. You got it.

18 (APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENT)

19 **ELDER ANNIE BOUQUETTE:** And here's the
20 little -- hold this. Okay. Yeah. Oil it. Oil it. And
21 one more little one in that corner. Yeah. Good. And your
22 -- yeah. Your turn. (Speaking in Native Language). Yeah,
23 this is -- yeah. (Speaking in Native Language) Excuse me.
24 One of my kids wrote something on my (speaking in Native
25 language).

1 So I would love to start off where
2 Commissioner -- where's the Commission? Okay. You want to
3 come? You can. And maybe you can help him. Now (speaking
4 in Native language). Oh, okay. Yeah. One, one corner
5 like this. Yeah, right there. Good. You did good. Yeah,
6 you're professional.

7 (APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENT)

8 **ELDER ANNIE BOUQUETTE:** Here's a wet cloth
9 too. Yeah.

10 **UNIDENTIFIED VOICE:** She wants pictures.

11 (LAUGHTER/RIRES)

12 **ELDER ANNIE BOUQUETTE:** That one over here.

13 **UNIDENTIFIED VOICE:** That one?

14 **ELDER ANNIE BOUQUETTE:** Yeah. Yeah. Just
15 that one. Okay. Yeah, okay.

16 (APPLAUSE/APPLAUDISSEMENT)

17 **ELDER ANNIE BOUQUETTE:** Now, maybe start off
18 with Jade. Yeah, come forward and do the same thing as you
19 did. This is the honorarium of for you accepting the Inuit
20 people to be in part of you. Yeah, good. Thank you.
21 Here's a little -- yeah, yeah. And (speaking in Native
22 language). Okay. Thank you. (Speaking in Native
23 language). My friend. Yeah. (Speaking in Native
24 language).

25 Yeah, Barbara's been helping me a lot and

1 when I was so scared to come down to look after the Qulliq
2 she came. I ask her, "Can you come down and be with me?
3 I'm so scared in front of the people." But I was -- I
4 managed to do it on my own. Thank you.

5 I'll do the last to remember the Qulliq that
6 kept us warm in the cold, cold igloo travelling, our
7 parents. Can we be silent for a few seconds just to say
8 thank you?

9 Thank you. Thank you to all of you.

10 **MS. JADE HARPER:** I can make the
11 announcement. Hi, everyone. I don't know whose phone this
12 is but -- I just wanted -- I realize -- that was really
13 special and special miigwech to Annie.

14 We do have one more fire. It happens to not
15 be here. It's at the Oodena circle. So that's where we're
16 travelling to right now. We're all walking over to do our
17 closing ceremonies -- to finish our closing ceremonies off
18 at the sacred fire at the Oodena circle. We do have some
19 food and coffee and tea there for anyone who'd like to join
20 us. And we will be doing a pipe ceremony.

21 --- Upon adjourning at 4:37 p.m.

22 La séance est ajournée à 16h37

23

24

1 LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST'S CERTIFICATE

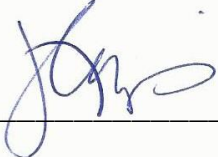
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3

I, Janice Gingras, Court Transcriber, hereby certify that I
4 have transcribed the foregoing and it is a true and
5 accurate transcript of the digital audio provided in this
6 matter.

7

8



9

Janice Gingras

10

September 6, 2017