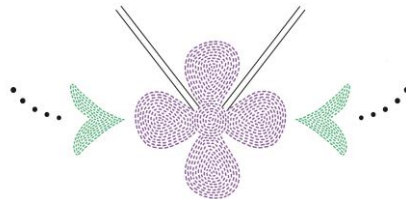


National Inquiry into  
Missing and Murdered  
Indigenous Women and Girls



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

**National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered  
Indigenous Women and Girls  
Truth-Gathering Process  
Part I: Families and Survivors of Violence  
Yellowknife, Northwest Territories  
Explorer Hotel Ballroom**



**PUBLIC**

**Wednesday January 24, 2018**

**Public Volume 42:**

**Ruby Firth & Irene Firth, In Relation to Linda Firth;**

**Angie Sabourin, Grace Sabourin & Violet Sabourin,  
In relation to Roberta Lynn Sabourin**

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**II**  
**APPEARANCES**

Assembly of First Nations	Julie McGregor (Legal counsel)
Government of Northwest Territories	Jana Shoemaker (Legal counsel)
Government of Canada	Anne McConville (Legal counsel) Jennifer Clarke (Paralegal)

Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, Saturvit Inuit Women's Association of Nunavik, AnânuKatiget Tumingit Regional Inuit Women's Association Inc., Ottawa Inuit Children's Centre, Manitoba Inuit Association	No appearances
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Native Women's Association of The Northwest Territories	No appearances
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**Note:** For the purpose of establishing this record of attendance, counsel are considered present whether they attended one or all of the hearings held over the course of the day at the Explorer Hotel.

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Angie Sabourin, Grace Sabourin and Violet Sabourin  
In relation to Roberta Lynn Sabourin

1 Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

2 --- Upon commencing on Wednesday, January 24, 2018

3 at 9:21 a.m.

4 **Hearing # 1**

5 **Witnesses: Ruby Firth, Irene Firth**

6 **In relation to Linda Firth**

7 **Commission Counsel: Wendy van Tongeren**

8

9 MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Good  
10 morning everyone, my name is Wendy van Tongeren.  
11 Welcome to the first hearing that's taking place  
12 this day, on January 24th, 2018. We're in the  
13 Hotel Explorer in Yellowknife.

14 It's my pleasure to introduce the  
15 first family that is scheduled to speak, and that  
16 is Ruby Firth. Her sister is here as support, and  
17 that is Irene Firth.

18 So I'm just going to have them  
19 actually put their names on the record as well as  
20 the others who are sitting in support. So we'll  
21 start with Ruby.

22 MS. RUBY FIRTH: Ruby Firth, and I  
23 live in Inuvik, Northwest Territories.

24 MS. IRENE FIRTH: Irene Firth,  
25 Ruby's sister.

26 MS. MABEL BROWN: Mabel Brown,  
27 support, from Inuvik.

28 MS. LILLIAN ELIAS: Lillian Elias,

Angie Sabourin, Grace Sabourin and Violet Sabourin  
In relation to Roberta Lynn Sabourin

1 Elder Support Worker.

2 MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Thank you  
3 very much. Welcome, everybody.

4 The first matter then is an  
5 affirmation, and the two women are going to affirm  
6 and the sacred objects that they would like to have  
7 presented to them are the sweetgrass and the eagle  
8 feather.

9 THE REGISTRAR: Good morning,  
10 Ruby.

11 MS. RUBY FIRTH: Good morning.

12 THE REGISTRAR: My name is Gladys,  
13 I'm the Registrar.

14 Do you solemnly affirm that the  
15 evidence you will give today will be the truth, the  
16 whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

17 MS. RUBY FIRTH: Yes, I do.

18 AFFIRMED: RUBY FIRTH

19 THE REGISTRAR: Thank you.

20 MS. RUBY FIRTH: Thank you.

21 THE REGISTRAR: Irene, will you be  
22 affirming as well?

23 MS. IRENE FIRTH: Yes.

24 THE REGISTRAR: Irene, do you  
25 solemnly affirm that the evidence you give today  
26 will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but  
27 the truth?

28 MS. IRENE FIRTH: Yes.

Angie Sabourin, Grace Sabourin and Violet Sabourin  
In relation to Roberta Lynn Sabourin

1 AFFIRMED: IRENE FIRTH

2 THE REGISTRAR: Thank you.

3 MS. RUBY FIRTH: Can we just have  
4 a little opening prayer please --

5 MS VON TONGEREN: Yes.

6 MS. RUBY FIRTH: -- Mable? Okay.

7 MS. MABEL BROWN: Good morning.  
8 I'll say the opening prayer.

9 --- OPENING PRAYER

10 PRESENTATION BY RUBY FIRTH:

11 MS. RUBY FIRTH: Good morning. My  
12 name is Ruby Firth. I was born in the bush. My  
13 father delivered me from my mother December 19th,  
14 1960. I lived out there at our cabin for the first  
15 four years of my life, so it was a wonderful  
16 wonderful time out there.

17 I still could picture it today  
18 just like it was yesterday, how our cabin was  
19 situated and what a good time we used to always  
20 have at East Branch(ph), at our cabin. It was the  
21 most lovely time, the most peaceful time, most  
22 serene time of my life.

23 But they put me in residential  
24 school when I was four years old. When I got to  
25 residential school when I was four years old they  
26 registered me as five years old. So all of these  
27 years I thought -- I always thought I was one year  
28 older than I actually was because of what they told

1 me and how they registered me in residential  
2 school.

3                   While I was in residential school  
4 I went through really really lots of abuse in  
5 Stringer Hall. I was in residential school in  
6 Flemming Hall, Fort McPherson, Northwest  
7 Territories; I was in residential school in Inuvik,  
8 Stringer Hall, Anglican Residential School; I was  
9 in residential school in Inuvik, Grollier Hall  
10 Roman Catholic Residential School; and I also was  
11 in residential school in Yellowknife called  
12 Akaitcho Hall, which I think was nondenominational  
13 because in Akaitcho Hall I didn't have to go to  
14 church.

15                   But in Flemming Hall, Stringer  
16 Hall, and Grollier Hall it was -- I had to go to  
17 church in those residential schools. But I myself  
18 was in residential school for 14 years because they  
19 failed me in grade 9 and the next year I had to do  
20 that again, and they failed me in grade 10 which  
21 the year after that I had to do again. So I  
22 actually graduated from residential school -- I  
23 graduated from Samuel Hearne Secondary School in  
24 Yellowknife in 1982, so I graduated from there.

25                   But in those younger years in  
26 Stringer Hall I got really really lots of abuse. I  
27 had chicken pox, which was really painful because  
28 they -- when I used to get dried up scabs on my



1 face they used to rip it off like this, all the  
2 time, and I have really lots of scars on my face  
3 from leftover chicken pox.

4 I had a lot of -- I have scabies  
5 scars from my waist down to my ankles, because I  
6 had scabies for so long in Stringer Hall. They  
7 never put me in the hospital until it got really  
8 really bad, until I couldn't even stand up. When it  
9 got so physically bad where I couldn't do my daily  
10 activity, that's only when they put me in the  
11 Inuvik General Hospital, because I couldn't even  
12 stand up anymore.

13 I had several boils under my arms  
14 that they didn't take care of right away, and those  
15 boils got really big. I don't know what a boil is  
16 from, but I got boils under here. When they got so  
17 bad they put me in the hospital then too.

18 So in my little tiny years growing  
19 up in Stringer Hall Residential School I was in the  
20 hospital quite often. In those years, my young  
21 years, I pneumonia every single year from six,  
22 seven, eight, nine, 10, 11 and 12. Every year at  
23 Stringer Hall I got pneumonia and ended up in the  
24 Inuvik General Hospital. From having pneumonia for  
25 all those years, my lungs -- both my lungs are 60  
26 per cent scarred up, and I have COPD and I'm always  
27 going to be on an orange puffer and a blue puffer  
28 for the rest of my life.

1                   Also, I was sexually abused in  
2 Stringer Hall for seven years straight, and I -- I  
3 don't talk about that much. I hardly talk about  
4 that and I need to start talking about that so I  
5 can recover my -- recover my spirit. It felt like  
6 my spirit was ripped out of me and it took me many  
7 many years to heal sort of like myself again.

8                   Being Inuvialuit I was born a  
9 Métis, and in 1986 the Inuvialuit people fight for  
10 my rights, so I was able to get my rights back in  
11 1986. So I finally became Inuvialuit after being a  
12 Métis all my life.

13                   Being a Métis, I had to pay for my  
14 own dental work, my own prescriptions, my own  
15 education. So when I went to college I paid for  
16 all that by myself because I was a Métis. In those  
17 days no Métis ever got any help such as Inuvialuit  
18 people or Gwich'in or Indians from around. Métis  
19 never got that sort of help, so I was -- I worked  
20 for Dome Petroleum for many years so I could save  
21 up all my money and go to college.

22                   I went to Nechi Institute on  
23 alcohol and drug counselling, and I took it for  
24 four years and I became an alcohol and drug  
25 counsellor because I had this yearning in my heart  
26 to help my people. I always always wanted to help  
27 my people. Even though I was suffering from a lot  
28 of personal issues, my heart still went out to my

1 people first and I really wanted to help them  
2 recover.

3                                 There was a lot happened to me in  
4 Stringer Hall: I had seven different broken bones;  
5 I had pneumonia for eight years in a row; I had  
6 scabies; chicken pox; boils; sexually abused for  
7 seven years; and all of -- like being hit with a  
8 ping pong racket on the side. Ms Skelton(ph), our  
9 supervisor, used to carry around a ping pong  
10 racket.

11                                 We used to have to line-up to go  
12 downstairs to eat breakfast, line-up to go  
13 downstairs to eat lunch, line-up at suppertime. We  
14 all had to stand in a straight line. If you looked  
15 this way or if your foot was out of place, she used  
16 to come up to me and hit me on the side with a ping  
17 pong racket. The ping pong racket is made out of  
18 wood. I mean, the flat part itself has got some  
19 rubber on it, but the side of the racket is  
20 straight wood, and that's what she used to hit me  
21 with all the time.

22                                 I have a lot of lacerations on my  
23 head. I have a lot of scars on my face and on my  
24 body from that ping pong racket that she used to  
25 hit us with all the time.

26                                 I also used to -- being so young,  
27 four years old, I also used to pee in bed a lot.  
28 She used to always humiliate me by opening the

1 sheets up and showing my big pee spot on the bed  
2 and make me stand beside that bed when all the  
3 other girls would go to the sink room to wash their  
4 face and get ready for the day, brush their teeth.  
5 She used to make me stand beside my bed and let all  
6 the girls walking by look at me and look at the big  
7 pee spot on my bed, and that was like humiliation  
8 at the best.

9                                 So I was always -- all my life I  
10 was always feeling guilty and feeling -- like that  
11 feeling they put in place, being assimilated --  
12 that assimilation feeling rather than this... When  
13 I was at East Branch(ph) in the bush I had this  
14 awesome feeling of being loved and being cared for  
15 -- and being a part of the family. But when I  
16 moved into residential school there was none of  
17 that.

18                                 They assigned me a big girl so  
19 that every morning she would braid my hair and  
20 she'd pull and yank, and pull my hair and braid it.  
21 After how many years of pulling and yanking on my  
22 hair, my hair doesn't hurt anymore. You could pull  
23 it out and it won't even hurt.

24                                 My pain threshold, I can go  
25 through a lot and lot and lot of pain and I won't  
26 feel it. I have a scenario. I could be laying on  
27 the side of the road and I'd be asking people, can  
28 I help you? You know, sort of like that's how much

1 I can take the pain.

2                               But the pain in my heart just like  
3 never subsides and it never goes away. So in  
4 residential school it was really really bad for me.  
5 I still have unresolved issues from that. I mean,  
6 I've talked about -- a lot about my issues, but  
7 that was with the physical abuse and ending up in  
8 the hospital with these kind of conditions. But I  
9 never really talked about the sexual abuse that I  
10 went through. So I need a lot of work in that  
11 area.

12                               I still have to share the story  
13 about when I was being sexually abused. I find  
14 that a problem, because I have a vague memory of  
15 who was sexually abusing me, but I can't really put  
16 a finger on it, so I don't want to name nobody  
17 because I don't know who actually sexually abused  
18 me.

19                               There was many different people  
20 that sexually abused me, so I'm afraid to call out  
21 a name because what if it was a mistake and what if  
22 that...? I have a hard time with it because I  
23 don't remember their names, but I still went  
24 through that experience.

25                               I had a first husband and a second  
26 husband, and it was very hard with intimacy with  
27 them because of that experience in residential  
28 school, and it caused me some trouble in my

Angie Sabourin, Grace Sabourin and Violet Sabourin  
In relation to Roberta Lynn Sabourin

1 marriages because of that intimacy, I couldn't know  
2 how to do it, you know. All I knew how to be was a  
3 supervisor, because that was all that I had as a  
4 teacher was a supervisor and stuff.

5 I myself had four children. In my  
6 younger life I never drank and I never smoked dope  
7 all those years, because my mom and dad were really  
8 strong individuals, and my dad talked to me and my  
9 brothers and sister really lots about education,  
10 about prejudism(sic) and about life and he really  
11 talked to us good and strong.

12 So all me and my brothers and  
13 sisters have a really strong family connection  
14 because of my mom and dad, were so -- such strong  
15 individuals, even though my dad went through  
16 residential school in Hay River and my mom was in  
17 residential school in Aklavik, they were both  
18 residential school survivors and then they had to  
19 send all their 12 kids to residential school as  
20 well.

21 So that was a very very difficult  
22 time in my life, and it caused my adult life to  
23 have difficult times in it too. I ended up -- six  
24 times in my adult life I ended up in a psychiatric  
25 ward for having a nervous breakdown and can't even  
26 stop crying, and this was the time I had my  
27 children.

28 When my daughter -- I have Morgan,

1 Linda, Vanessa and Leon. When Linda was two years  
2 old I was working at the Action North Recovery  
3 Centre in High Level, Alberta. Because when I went  
4 to college I went to become an alcohol and drug  
5 counsellor to help my people, to help the native  
6 people. When I was at work and my children were at  
7 daycare, and my whole life was going really really  
8 good and just like I had a grasp on everything,  
9 even though I wasn't really talking about my sexual  
10 abuse, I'd talk about the physical abuse that  
11 happened to me because it's evident on my face and  
12 I'd share a lot about that.

13                                 But one time a big giant TV fell  
14 on my daughter and she was only two years old, that  
15 I think opened up a big can of worms, and after  
16 that I became hypervigilant over my children and I  
17 couldn't even let them out of my sight or anything  
18 like that.

19                                 So after that happened to my  
20 daughter, Linda, I became very -- all my  
21 dysfunctions came back but I didn't know that that  
22 was happening to me and it just like kind of  
23 spiralled out of -- spiralled down into a circle.  
24 But even though I was always depressed -- because  
25 I'm on medication for depression and post-traumatic  
26 disorder, I'm on medication for my heart, I'm on  
27 two puffers for my lungs, and one other medication  
28 I'm on every day for my allergies because I'm

1 allergic -- me and my sister and -- like a lot in  
2 our family are really allergic to everything, just  
3 like every-day allergies. So I take one of those  
4 allergy pills every day.

5                   So after I found the right  
6 medication for my post-traumatic stress and my  
7 depression, it finally levelled off like this.  
8 Whereas I used to be like happy/sad, happy/sad, now  
9 it's just like -- just like this every day where I  
10 don't have to emotionally react to everything, I  
11 just could react -- or act instead of react. So  
12 that, I'm grateful for that.

13                   But we had a sister, Linda. This  
14 is my sister Linda.

15                   She passed away when she was 17  
16 years old. She died, she died of hepatitis and she  
17 died in Inuvik, Northwest Territories of this  
18 disease called hepatitis. At the time, it was  
19 called yellow jaundice. So when me and my older  
20 sister talk about it we still say she died of  
21 yellow jaundice. But today, it's called hepatitis.

22                   I don't know if she passed from  
23 hepatitis A, B or C, and all I know is that she  
24 passed away.

25                   When I was very young we used to  
26 live in Inuvik down by the river in a little shack,  
27 all of us were in there, and it was really cozy.  
28 But we lived in there and my sister Linda was sent



Angie Sabourin, Grace Sabourin and Violet Sabourin  
In relation to Roberta Lynn Sabourin

1 away from Stringer Hall, she was sent to Breynat  
2 Hall in Fort Smith and that.

3 Breynat Hall was a juvenile  
4 delinquent centre for juvenile delinquents, which  
5 is just saying a young offender I guess in those  
6 days when they called it juvenile delinquency.

7 She was sent there from Inuvik,  
8 Stringer Hall, to Breynat Hall in Fort Smith over  
9 several years because they said she was bad, she  
10 was not following direction, she was being bad.  
11 But they've never charged her with any kind of  
12 criminal activity. They never -- she never went to  
13 court for being bad, they just automatically sent  
14 her to Breynat Hall. I don't know if it was called  
15 that, but it just comes to mind that it is Breynat  
16 Hall in Fort Smith for juvenile delinquent kids.

17 So she was sent there over several  
18 years. But one of these years that she was sent  
19 there she actually ran away from Breynat Hall and  
20 somehow she ended up in Edmonton. But prior to  
21 being sent to Breynat Hall, I remember being that  
22 little kid in our little shack beside the river.  
23 We have a 45 barrel -- drum barrel for a stove, and  
24 we used to live in that little shack.

25 But she used to bring us paddling  
26 on the lake behind our house. Every time I was with  
27 her paddling on that lake I would just stare at her  
28 all the time. To me, she seemed so pure, so

Angie Sabourin, Grace Sabourin and Violet Sabourin  
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1 beautiful and so lovely.

2                   Every time I used to stare at her  
3 it remind -- it felt like it reminded me of staring  
4 at an angel, and that angel was just full of love  
5 for us, full of kindness, and just a real  
6 sweetheart towards me, and I just really loved that  
7 about her. I really really loved that about her.

8                   When I think of her, that's what I  
9 choose to think of, is that angel, and me and her  
10 were just staring at one another with admiration  
11 and I loved her so much and that. When I think  
12 about her, my sister Linda, that's what I think  
13 about, and I don't think about that -- when she was  
14 ill in Inuvik.

15                   But after she was ill, she must  
16 have been ill for quite a long time before she was  
17 admitted to the Edmonton Hospital, because when she  
18 ran away from Breynat Hall she ran to Edmonton. I  
19 don't know how, she got a ride or how she ended up  
20 in Edmonton, but we heard, so all of the family  
21 heard she was living with a doctor, and that doctor  
22 was not doing the right thing, and using  
23 intravenous drugs. Linda was using intravenous  
24 drugs and that way, by using intravenous drugs, she  
25 contracted hepatitis. Probably -- maybe she didn't  
26 know she had hepatitis, but when she was sick in  
27 Edmonton hospital and they couldn't do nothing for  
28 her anymore they sent her back to Inuvik into the

Angie Sabourin, Grace Sabourin and Violet Sabourin  
In relation to Roberta Lynn Sabourin

1 hospital in Inuvik, and in that hospital she died.

2                                 But I remember prior to her death  
3 we, the family, would go visit her. The family had  
4 to put on slippers, gowns, masks, hats, just to go  
5 into her room to visit her. I remember staring at  
6 her and with hepatitis I remember her being really  
7 puffed up, like swollen eyes and really really  
8 looking sick and having a hard time to speak and  
9 that.

10                                 Just by looking in her eyes in the  
11 hospital, just like I knew what she was saying and  
12 what she was feeling to me, and I'd take that look,  
13 that look as a positive thing, just like love going  
14 back and forth between me and my sister Linda.

15                                 Then prior to her death the RCMP  
16 officers and the medical person would come down to  
17 our little shack and told my mom and dad, "Mabel  
18 and Malcolm(ph), you'd better come up right away,  
19 come to the hospital right away." At that time I  
20 went everywhere with my dad. Me and my dad were  
21 really really close like this, so I went everywhere  
22 with him. When the RCMP came down and said, "Mabel  
23 and Malcolm, we've got to go to the hospital right  
24 away."

25                                 So I started getting dressed so I  
26 could go with my mom and dad to the hospital. The  
27 RCMP stopped me from getting dressed. He told my  
28 mom and dad, "I don't think she could -- I don't

1 think she should come. I think she's too young to  
2 understand."

3                               That really broke my heart,  
4 because I wasn't too young to understand, I was  
5 understanding what was going on and I wanted to see  
6 my sister before she died, and I couldn't because  
7 the RCMP told my dad, "You should leave her at home  
8 because she's too young to understand."

9                               When they left all I could do is  
10 cry and cry and cry and cry. Because when I'm not  
11 with my dad I really could cry hard and -- because  
12 we were so close.

13                              After they got back from the  
14 hospital they were crying themselves and they said,  
15 "Linda passed away. Linda died." Then after that,  
16 she is buried in the cemetery in Inuvik, we all  
17 went to her funeral and her -- the feast and all of  
18 that. But, yeah, she is buried in Inuvik, whereas  
19 my mom and dad are buried in Aklavik.

20                              I always have a kind of sorrowful  
21 feeling for that fact, that Linda's buried in  
22 Inuvik and my mom and dad are buried in Aklavik.  
23 Like, just because of that fact I always feel like  
24 they're so far apart, and that gives me some sorrow  
25 in my heart; to think that she's alone in that  
26 graveyard and my mom and dad are in the Aklavik  
27 graveyard. That always gives me some kind of  
28 sorrow for that fact.

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1                                   But me and my family all remember  
2 Linda. We all remember her just like it was  
3 yesterday. We don't talk about the hepatitis and  
4 how she passed, but we talk -- always talk about  
5 the good times, the good memories. My sister Linda  
6 had so many friends right across the north that  
7 anywhere we go they'd mention, "Oh, are you Linda's  
8 sister?"

9                                   Even today people still remember  
10 her as that person, because she was so beautiful,  
11 she was so kind-hearted, she was so giving that  
12 people from right across the north always always  
13 mention her name. Even today they still remember  
14 our sister Linda and I'm really grateful about  
15 that. So I choose to have these positive memories  
16 of her, instead of these ones where she was dying  
17 of hepatitis.

18                                  When I think about her I always  
19 think about that lovely time in the canoe and we're  
20 paddling around and... Yeah, that was so good.

21                                  So when we first went to  
22 residential school we were put in Flemming Hall  
23 Residential School in Fort McPherson because our  
24 bush cabin was on the east branch, not far from  
25 Fort McPherson, in Tsiigehtchic. So when we were  
26 first put in residential school they put us in  
27 Flemming Hall. On one side of the hallway the big  
28 girls slept on this side of the dormitory, and on

Angie Sabourin, Grace Sabourin and Violet Sabourin  
In relation to Roberta Lynn Sabourin

1 the other side of the hallway the little tiny girls  
2 slept on that side.

3 Me and my sister Eliza(ph) and  
4 Linda were in residential school in Flemming Hall.  
5 Linda was older, so she stayed on that side with  
6 the big girls, and me and Eliza were younger so we  
7 stayed on this side of the little girls'. But  
8 every time the lights went out me and Eliza would  
9 get out of bed and we'd go sleep with Linda, and  
10 before the lights came on my sister Linda used to  
11 wake us up and say, "Go back to your own bed," so  
12 we didn't have to get caught.

13 Because in Indigenous families the  
14 cohesion is much different than a Caucasian family.  
15 In an Indigenous family we could -- we all sleep  
16 together and we'd sleep with mom and dad for as  
17 long as we could. Then all the brothers and  
18 sisters -- all the sisters sleep together and all  
19 the brothers sleep together. So we're like that  
20 closeness of that.

21 But in a Caucasian family I only  
22 can imagine they put their baby in the crib right  
23 until they -- like, when they first come home that  
24 baby is put in a crib and not to sleep with anybody  
25 else. So the cohesion, to me, is very very very  
26 different.

27 So when we were all young we were  
28 all so close because we all slept together and

1 comforted one another at night time and stuff. But  
2 when I got to residential school I was put in my  
3 own bed and from there the separate anxiety, away  
4 from my mom and dad and my brothers and sisters,  
5 and the assimilation process just really...

6                   You know, sometimes I wish today  
7 that I could -- I'm 57 years old and I'm still  
8 struggling with this, being assimilated. Before we  
9 went into residential school we had the Inuvialuit  
10 language, the Gwich'in language, and our  
11 grandfather was Scottish so we had a Gaelic  
12 language, and the English language. So all of us,  
13 prior to going into residential school, we had four  
14 languages. Those three other languages were beaten  
15 out of us and we were only left with English.

16                   So that's a sad fact too. Sad sad  
17 fact that out of four languages now we only have  
18 one, and that assimilation process just beat the  
19 other languages right out of me, right out of my  
20 brothers and sisters. They even beat that language  
21 right out of my mother, and my father was luckily  
22 strong enough where he kept his Gwich'in language  
23 and every time he sat with his sister and his other  
24 brothers they spoke Gwich'in together and they  
25 never spoke English.

26                   So that language being beaten out  
27 of us, being sexually abused, being majorly majorly  
28 physically abused just left a big hurt on my heart,

1 it ripped my spirit out and I'm still trying to get  
2 that -- I'm still struggling to get it back. I'm  
3 still struggling to deal with some issues that I've  
4 never ever dealt with before, never ever spoke with  
5 anybody about it.

6 Just recently in Inuvik at the  
7 warming shelter for the homeless -- if they don't  
8 have any place to stay they could go at the warming  
9 shelter -- but the warming shelter in Inuvik  
10 started talking circles about residential school  
11 survivors and these kind of different meetings.

12 I just started attending them for  
13 the past couple of months and I'm just starting to  
14 realize even in this residential school experience  
15 I always felt like I was alone, but going to those  
16 meetings it opened my eyes to know that -- even  
17 though I shared the residential dormitory with like  
18 six hundred other girls, it still felt like I was  
19 alone -- but when I started going to those meetings  
20 and hearing other residential school survivors'  
21 stories, it really put it in perspective that I'm  
22 not alone anymore. It happened to others and I can  
23 look at others now.

24 I know they've been in residential  
25 school just like me, like all my brothers and  
26 sisters. I know they were there. Now I could feel  
27 that, yeah, I'm not alone, they were there too.  
28 That made a great difference in my recovery.



1 Feeling alone and finding out, no, I'm not alone.  
2 Being here at this Inquiry, our family feeling  
3 isolated that we lost our sister and it was so hard  
4 to live with that sorrow within us for her, but  
5 coming to this Inquiry knowing how many other  
6 missing and murdered Indigenous women there are in  
7 Canada, again that reinforced me, I'm not alone and  
8 I don't have to act like I'm alone anymore. I can  
9 go seek help, talk to people.

10 I found out those support workers  
11 are really there to support you. Whereas back in  
12 the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s it felt like even though  
13 they were support workers, you were still separated  
14 from them. But now, today, so much has changed,  
15 people got so much educated -- more education and  
16 more in touch with our feelings and our culture.  
17 It feels like now when I go get support, that's  
18 really support and I'm really grateful for that.

19 I was going to college and I was  
20 living in Calgary, and I did my practicum work at  
21 Sunrise Residence Treatment Centre. Sometimes I  
22 would be on the 8:00 to 4:00 shift, but this time  
23 they put me on the 4:00 to midnight shift. So I  
24 used to get off at midnight and there was the very  
25 last bus, I talked to the bus driver and I'm like  
26 -- I get off at work right at midnight, but his bus  
27 leaves that station right at midnight, so I asked  
28 him to please wait one or two minutes for me.

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1 I always ran to the bus really  
2 fast because I didn't want to keep him waiting.  
3 Right at midnight I used to punch out and then run  
4 to the bus as fast as I could, and then he'd get me  
5 on the bus and then close the door. My house -- my  
6 apartment was downtown, so the bus used to take me  
7 downtown and I used to get off at the last stop.  
8 But my apartment was still three or four blocks  
9 that way, and I used to always have to walk to my  
10 apartment at night after midnight.

11 This one particular time I got off  
12 the bus downtown Calgary and I was walking home,  
13 and there was this carload of boys, I don't know if  
14 they were men, I could say they were male occupants  
15 in that car. From where I was standing I could see  
16 that there were six Caucasian guys in that car.

17 I was walking down the road to go  
18 to my apartment and this car came by, and I looked  
19 and there were six white boys in there. Those six  
20 white boys were like, "There's one! There's one!"  
21 They were pointing at me. "There's one! Go get  
22 her! Go get her!" They were saying to -- pointing  
23 at me and they were all in this car.

24 But fortunately, by the grace of  
25 God, their light was green and then there was  
26 another car behind them, so they had to go around  
27 the corner because the light was green and this guy  
28 behind them was parked -- honking, go, go, because

1 it's green.

2                                 So they had to go around the block  
3 and come around the block. When they came around  
4 the block, their car was driving as fast as they  
5 can squealing around the corner. I was looking  
6 back and forth to where I could hide.

7                                 All of sudden there was this  
8 little cubbyhole, and this little cubbyhole was a  
9 doorway, but no door on it. An inside door was  
10 there. But that little cubbyhole, I managed to go  
11 hide behind there. They couldn't see me from the  
12 street, they didn't know where I ran.

13                                But when they came and they  
14 screeched on their brakes and all of them jumped  
15 back out of the car saying, "Look for her! Go get  
16 her! Go get her!" I was hiding, I wouldn't say a  
17 word or a peep, and I was really praying don't find  
18 me, don't find me.

19                                That one guy was really cursing at  
20 his friends, "Darn you..." you know, using the F-  
21 word and everything, "...you let her get away! You  
22 let her get away!" He was really mad at his  
23 friends and saying to his friends, "You shouldn't  
24 have let her got away! We could have had one  
25 tonight! We could have had one tonight! You  
26 shouldn't have let her get away!"

27                                That memory always sticks in my  
28 head, when I was a young student in Calgary, that

1 that happened to me. Imagine if those six  
2 Caucasian boys caught me. Imagine what they would  
3 have done. When I think of missing and murdered  
4 Indigenous women my head goes right back to that  
5 experience in Calgary, my feelings go right back to  
6 that feeling of desperation, of hide me, hide me.

7 I'm like God must have provided me  
8 that little cubbyhole so they lost me. I was in  
9 that little hole and they lost me and that guy was  
10 really mad at his friends, using the F-word, "F  
11 this, you lost her, you F'in..." this and that.  
12 "We could have had one tonight! We could have had  
13 one tonight!" They just kept saying that.

14 When I think of missing and  
15 murdered Aboriginal women, I go right back to that  
16 moment when I was being chased by six Caucasian  
17 boys trying to get me, a native girl, and being  
18 really mad at his friends because they lost me.  
19 I'm so grateful that they lost me because, you  
20 know, what would have happened? Who knows, who  
21 knows? Only speculation, but... Yeah, who knows  
22 what could have happened?

23 But I was really happy, given the  
24 opportunity to speak about my sister Linda Firth,  
25 because all my life it felt like I needed somebody  
26 to know something about my sister. When the  
27 Inquiry came to Inuvik and I got registered and  
28 there was lots of really good support there.

1                   When I got to the support, after  
2 they finished asking me all these questions and  
3 said I could come to Yellowknife and talk about my  
4 sister Linda, and I was so grateful, saying she's  
5 finally going to be registered in some kind of  
6 statistic in this way that she can be recognized.  
7 Not -- never more being forgotten.

8                   Like, who would think her picture  
9 would be on TV looking at everybody in public? Who  
10 would think that she would come this far and could  
11 talk about her in a public form, openly and  
12 honestly. I would never think that would have been  
13 possible to happen. But now that I'm here and I'm  
14 talking about her, I'm so grateful for the Missing  
15 and Murdered Indigenous Women's Inquiry in Canada.  
16 I'm so grateful that they're finally talking over  
17 and above the board about Indigenous plights in  
18 Canada.

19                   There was a little statement that  
20 I wanted to read that when I was a student studying  
21 and I found in the archives. This statement, I  
22 mean I wrote it down very quickly and it might not  
23 be word for word, but it was written in 1860. So  
24 what I found is that:

25                   "The Canadian Government uses  
26 antisemitism, false racial theories and, with that,  
27 and exploited the frustrations and the resentment  
28 of the Caucasian race of Canada; telling the

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1 Caucasian race of Canada, "Tolerate no opposition  
2 from these natives, and demand complete obedience  
3 from these natives."" (As Read)

4                               So, in doing that, the Caucasian  
5 race of Canada was using antisemitism and false  
6 racial theory, such as all Indians are drunks or  
7 all Indians are on Welfare. Indians get this  
8 handed to them, they get their Medicare, their  
9 dental and their education handed to them. But  
10 they forgot that the Caucasian race of people got  
11 the land and we got put off our land into reserves,  
12 and for that we get a dental appointment and  
13 medication for our illness and education paid for.

14                              But prior to that I was a Métis,  
15 so I paid for all my own education, becoming an  
16 alcohol and drug counsellor. They said, tolerate  
17 to the Caucasian people. Tolerate no opposition  
18 and demand complete obedience. So this, allowing  
19 Canadian Government to dominate individual  
20 Aborigines and whole Aboriginal communities and  
21 the whole of Aboriginal cultures by terrorism on  
22 Aboriginal opponent.

23                              So if we are the opponent, we are  
24 not on the same team. So two teams is opponent to  
25 one another. So it's like the Caucasian were on  
26 one team and the Aboriginal was on one team, and  
27 Caucasian were told, demand complete obedience from  
28 your opponent.

1                   So by terrorism on the Aboriginal  
2 opponent, so assimilate at all costs. I always  
3 wondered, if the Canadian Government has to  
4 assimilate at all costs, then why wasn't all  
5 monetary costs put in to assimilate us? Whereas  
6 when I was in residential school I was on a  
7 starvation diet all my life, wore second-hand  
8 closed all my life in residential school. When I  
9 didn't want to eat my corn, they force-fed it to me  
10 in residential school.

11                   So it says, assimilate all costs.  
12 So why was not all costs put towards assimilation  
13 and no costs -- and because they tried to save as  
14 much money as they can on the individual. We lived  
15 on a starvation diet. So I always wondered  
16 assimilate at all costs, whereas we were  
17 assimilated at no cost.

18                   So there was some statistics that  
19 Statistics Canada put out every year, and  
20 Statistics Canada said, Aboriginal women die 14  
21 years older than Caucasian women. Aboriginal women  
22 died of hardship and poverty. Aboriginal women  
23 died of hardship in their life and poverty because  
24 of that. The Caucasian women lived in relative  
25 peace and always always had their needs taken care  
26 of.

27                   When your needs are always taken  
28 care of you're calm and you have good attitude, but

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1 when you live in poverty and that, so you're mostly  
2 like mad and, you know, hungry and always on the  
3 edge of something, and so they see us as -- like  
4 not on the same level, marginalized.

5                   So there was another, native women  
6 are more likely to suffer violence towards native  
7 women. Caucasian women hardly receive any violence  
8 in their life and live in relative peace in their  
9 households.

10                   Also, there was this saying,  
11 traumatic events stopped the normal growth of a  
12 child. So when I was in residential school all of  
13 these traumatic events stopped me from growing  
14 emotionally, mentally, and even physically; on the  
15 starvation diet I wouldn't have grown as tall as I  
16 was and stuff.

17                   Traumatic events stopped the  
18 normal growth of a child. Terrorism is traumatic.  
19 Whole Aboriginal communities have been assimilated  
20 by terrorism, thus suffer post-traumatic stress  
21 disorder, depression, an all of these other  
22 symptoms of a traumatic upbringing.

23                   Also, I would like to -- the  
24 establishment must abolish this style and type of  
25 governance over the Aboriginal First Nations, the  
26 natives, the Inuit, and the Métis race of people in  
27 Canada, in North America.

28                   The government must start



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1 abolishing these kind of -- you know, when you have  
2 Indian and Northern Affairs and they have all these  
3 policies to that, the government must start to  
4 abolish this old way of thinking. They must start  
5 adopting these new ways of thinking and abolish  
6 these terms and stuff with the Indian and Northern  
7 Affairs and stuff like that.

8 Democracy is supposed to be like  
9 with all the people, and we are not -- how they  
10 democratically work with their Caucasian people,  
11 they should democratically work with the native  
12 people and like that.

13 The Caucasians have in Parliament  
14 caucus -- the Caucasian people have in their  
15 Parliament building and in the Senate, they call it  
16 the caucus. So that wordage, that Caucasian people  
17 have their caucus, where is the Aboriginals'  
18 caucus?

19 So there is a lack of enforcement  
20 because there is a fiduciary process involved with  
21 the Aboriginal people. The word fiduciary means  
22 take care of the Aboriginal people the same as the  
23 would their Caucasian race of people. But their  
24 fiduciary process is very lax, they are not  
25 following this fiduciary process with their native  
26 opponents on that level. They have made Indigenous  
27 people of the world extremely and most compromised  
28 of the world and in Canada.

1                   The fiduciary process is not being  
2 followed, so the native people of Canada are very  
3 very compromised and very very -- it's like  
4 marginalized. So the native people in Canada are  
5 1.1 per cent of 100 per cent of the population.  
6 Recent immigrants are 8.8 per cent of the Canadian  
7 population. Caucasian people are 87 or 88 per cent  
8 of the whole population of Canada. So being 1.1  
9 per cent of the people of Canada, even that small  
10 number, we are always marginalized.

11                   So with the fiduciary process,  
12 they should -- when you cut up the pie and only  
13 find us 1.1 per cent of the population, and  
14 marginalized, they should do some equalization and  
15 make it more equal by some action that 1.1 per  
16 cent of the population are Aboriginal, 87.something  
17 of the population are Canada(sic). They should  
18 make an equalization chart where it would bring us  
19 in line with the Caucasian people and in line with  
20 the recent immigrants of Canada.

21                   Because the recent immigrants get  
22 more benefits than the Aboriginal people of Canada.  
23 They get money to learn how to speak English, and  
24 we get nothing for being assimilated and these  
25 languages beaten out of us and only have English  
26 language. So I'm asking the Canadian Government  
27 and the Justice Department of Canada to really  
28 seriously look at their fiduciary process and

1 really bring us in line with every other ethnic  
2 group in Canada.

3                               Because, up until recently, being  
4 Inuvialuit -- the Inuvialuit people didn't have an  
5 ethnic group in the Parliament building. We  
6 weren't even on the shelf as an ethnic group.  
7 Italians, Greeks, and all those other cultures are  
8 on -- they're acknowledged as an ethnic group.  
9 Where as Inuvialuit people have never been  
10 acknowledged in the Parliament building or in the  
11 Senate as a specific ethnic group in Canada. All  
12 these things need to be changed.

13                              So, with that, I'd like to thank  
14 you for listening to my story, and thank my sister  
15 Irene for being a support. I do have six sisters  
16 and four brothers, and they're all behind me  
17 saying: I support you when you go talk about  
18 Linda; I support you when you tell them the story  
19 that you remember; go do it, go do it.

20                              So I'm really grateful for the  
21 Inquiry, for sending me and my sister to  
22 Yellowknife from Inuvik to speak on my sister's  
23 behalf, to let people of Canada know that she did  
24 exist, she was a person, she belonged to a family,  
25 she was loved and she gave love. Just the  
26 acknowledgement of her can -- probably after this,  
27 I can grow more in a healthy manner, I can come out  
28 of my shell more and, with the help of my brothers

1 and sisters, we can move on in a positive way.

2 So I thank you very much for  
3 letting me speak. That's all I've got to say.

4 MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Thank  
5 you, Ruby.

6 Irene, is there anything you'd  
7 like to say or add?

8 PRESENTATION BY IRENE FIRTH:

9 MS. IRENE FIRTH: My name is Irene  
10 Firth, I'm from Aklavik, Northwest Territories.

11 I wasn't born when my sister  
12 passed, my mother was pregnant with me. One of my  
13 very first memories is of my parents arguing as to  
14 who's going to take responsibility for the way she  
15 passed; would it be my mother or my father?

16 This Inquiry is a good thing,  
17 because we're only two of the thousands that were  
18 affected. There are so many more thousands of  
19 families that are going through this thing, so this  
20 is the beginning of a healing journey for most of  
21 us.

22 But it also angers me that so many  
23 had to pass for this to happen. You know, like why  
24 does it always have to happen this way? Why does  
25 it always have to take a tragedy for something good  
26 to come out of it? So I'm just hoping that people  
27 learn from this.

28 You know, as Ruby said, we grew up

1 in residential school. I was born and raised on  
2 the land. My birth certificate says Arctic Red  
3 River on it, because that was the closest community  
4 to where I was born. Would we have been left to  
5 our own devices and left on the land, it would have  
6 been so much better for us.

7 My Parents were ripped away from  
8 their families to go to residential school and, in  
9 turn, we were ripped away from them. My father  
10 tried to renounce his being native so we didn't  
11 have to go to residential school, but they said my  
12 mother was Inuit, we have to go anyways.

13 There's a lot of sadness and anger  
14 that's in me. This came up all of a sudden. I  
15 went back to Inuvik on December 23rd, her son was  
16 supposed to come out and be support for her, he  
17 didn't want to come. So she asked me, and I  
18 immediately said yes.

19 So this is -- I didn't have a lot  
20 of time to process all of this that's going on now.  
21 So, for me, it's very overwhelming. All of my life  
22 I get, "You're Linda's sister, you look exactly  
23 like her."

24 When the TRC was happening in  
25 Inuvik, in I think it was 2011, I went and there  
26 was several people that actually went to me and  
27 grabbed and said, "Oh my God, Linda, Linda, Linda!"  
28 Then they look at me and say, "I'm so sorry, I

1 forgot she passed. I thought you were her."

2                                 So to have this story all of my  
3 life, I never met my sister, I never knew my  
4 sister, I knew of her, but... It's -- I can't  
5 explain it, it's like -- the rest of my family had  
6 this hurt that they're carrying around with them,  
7 and I never understood it until I lost my own  
8 child. That was the only time that I realized, oh  
9 my God, I know my parents paid. It's a thing you  
10 live with everyday.

11                                 I'm hoping, like I said, that  
12 this, what's happening here now, gets something  
13 done. I know it's a long process and stuff, and I'm  
14 a very impatient person, and I just would like to  
15 see something good come out of it.

16                                 Thank you.

17                                 MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Thank  
18 you, Ruby, and thank you, Irene.

19                                 Madam Commissioner, do you have  
20 any questions?

21                                 QUESTIONS BY THE COMMISSIONER:

22                                 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Thank you,  
23 both of you, so much.

24                                 I do have a couple of questions  
25 and I guess some comments too. I have an idea,  
26 sort of the geography between where the residential  
27 school were in Aklavik and in the Inuvialuit and  
28 Delta region.

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1                                   But for those who are listening  
2 that might not be so aware, where you guys were  
3 sent that meant you were there all year. Like,  
4 there was no way for your parents to ever see you  
5 or for your siblings to see you.

6                                   MS. IRENE FIRTH: We went home  
7 Easter, Christmas, and summertime.

8                                   COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Okay. So  
9 for 14 years, especially for you, Ruby, that was  
10 the only time you got to see your parents and most  
11 of your siblings?

12                                  MS. RUBY FIRTH: At Christmastime  
13 and summertime is when I remember being at home,  
14 and that's how come I like Christmastime and  
15 summertime so much. Those other times, I don't  
16 care for those other parts of the year because it  
17 was so hard. But Christmas and summertime are  
18 actually my favourite times of the year, because  
19 that's when we actually went home and spent time  
20 together with the family.

21                                  COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Your  
22 parents and you guys and Linda, you had no choice.

23                                  MS. RUBY FIRTH: There was a law  
24 in place that said, if you don't give up your child  
25 to residential school that the parents would go to  
26 jail themselves until the time as you gave up your  
27 child to residential school. So there was no  
28 choice, no choice, just one way.

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1 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: This I  
2 don't know if you know it, because when Linda was  
3 sent to residential school and then they decided to  
4 send her to was it -- it's in Hay River that --

5 MS. RUBY FIRTH: Fort Smith.

6 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Fort  
7 Smith, okay. That again is -- we're talking  
8 hundreds of miles away from your parents, even  
9 further than residential school.

10 MS. RUBY FIRTH: M'hmm, yeah.

11 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Was it  
12 year-round, was it like jail or would they --

13 MS. RUBY FIRTH: Yeah, it was --

14 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: -- would  
15 she ever get to go home?

16 MS. RUBY FIRTH: -- jail.

17 MS. IRENE FIRTH: Yeah.

18 MS. RUBY FIRTH: It's jail.

19 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: It was  
20 jail.

21 MS. IRENE FIRTH: It's like a  
22 place for young offenders today.

23 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Okay.  
24 What years was this? So this was in the 1970s,  
25 1960s?

26 MS. RUBY FIRTH: Prior to that, it  
27 was in like 1967, 1968 --

28 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Okay.



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1 MS. RUBY FIRTH: -- and 1969,  
2 yeah, 1970s.

3 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Your  
4 parents had no say in Linda being sent to this  
5 place?

6 MS. RUBY FIRTH: No, no. They  
7 only found out after the fact --

8 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Any idea  
9 why they characterized her as a delinquent?

10 MS. RUBY FIRTH: No, no idea at  
11 all.

12 MS. IRENE FIRTH: No. But in the  
13 stories I hear, she's -- says what she says when  
14 she needs to say it, and it was probably in the  
15 manner that she was saying it, right?

16 MS. RUBY FIRTH: M'hmm.

17 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: She  
18 resisted --

19 MS. RUBY FIRTH: Yeah.

20 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: -- the  
21 assimilation --

22 MS. IRENE FIRTH: Yes.

23 MS. RUBY FIRTH: M'hmm.

24 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: -- the  
25 oppression?

26 MS. IRENE FIRTH: Yes.

27 MS. RUBY FIRTH: Yeah.

28 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: I want to

1 thank you for the experiences and the knowledge  
2 you've shared, and the wisdom. A lot of people  
3 sort of get confused that the Inquiry is only about  
4 murder and disappearance.

5 MS. RUBY FIRTH: M'hmm.

6 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: You've  
7 shared with us violence of all kinds. Denying your  
8 parents their rights as parents, and denying your  
9 rights as children to have parents, that's  
10 violence. Denying you your rights as an Indigenous  
11 woman, that's violence, you know?

12 MS. RUBY FIRTH: I agree with  
13 that, yeah.

14 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Denying  
15 you medical care, the fundamental rights as a human  
16 being, that's violence.

17 I want to acknowledge that,  
18 because this is what we need to be talking about.  
19 I think I've said it before, it's not just about  
20 bruises.

21 So thank you, thank you for  
22 sharing that and teaching us about this.

23 MS. RUBY FIRTH: Yeah.

24 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: I'm  
25 trained as a lawyer, so when you start talking  
26 about fiduciary obligations and policies, it gets  
27 me all excited. You're speaking a language I know  
28 quite well. The 1860 quote or -- where is that

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1 from? Do you remember what document?

2 MS. RUBY FIRTH: I remember I used  
3 to always listen to CBC Radio, and on CBC Radio  
4 they had a lawyer on there, and she started talking  
5 about the Canadian assimilation process.

6 I'm a real writer, I write  
7 everything down and I write -- I've got journals  
8 from when I was young until today. So I really  
9 love writing everything down.

10 When I heard this, I just grabbed  
11 a pen and I wrote word for word what she said  
12 really fast. I even forget her name, because I  
13 even wrote it down in one of my books, that if I  
14 need to reference her I could like call her up and  
15 say this. But I forgot her name and this, but this  
16 was way back in the 1980s that I heard this about  
17 that.

18 It's either in the archives of  
19 1860 or 1868. It's more likely 1868.

20 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: From what  
21 you've experienced in your life, that made sense,  
22 that that was what the government was trying to do.

23 MS. RUBY FIRTH: M'hmm.

24 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: I want to  
25 talk a little bit and ask you a couple of questions  
26 about what the establishment needs to do, what  
27 government needs to do in abolishing this style of  
28 governance over Indigenous people. A need to adopt

1 a new style of thinking where the obligations of  
2 fiduciary process has to be honoured.

3 If you could take Parliament, the  
4 way the government is in this country right now and  
5 change it, do you have ideas on --

6 MS. RUBY FIRTH: Yeah.

7 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: I thought  
8 so.

9 MS. RUBY FIRTH: You have to go to  
10 the archives, go into the archives and take out the  
11 file, the actual first file of Indian and Northern  
12 Affairs, take out this file on assimilation and  
13 take out this file on the fiduciary process of the  
14 government. Go right back into the archives and  
15 pull out this file. Just like any other office in  
16 Canada, when you are progressing something you go  
17 back to the file and you pull out the file and you  
18 open the file, and you read what is in the file.  
19 Then keep it in the file, but also change the file,  
20 update the files to this time and this generation.

21 Go back to that file that says  
22 assimilate at all costs, and then change that  
23 Aboriginal opponent to the Aboriginal people, not  
24 -- change the wording. We are still their  
25 opponent. They are still treating us like we are  
26 their opponent, and it's across the board, it came  
27 from abroad. Abroad, meaning the Queen over there  
28 in England started this process, it's abroad, it's

1 across the board, meaning it's all over Canada,  
2 across the same board, the same platform they're  
3 playing with, the same dual action lawyers fight  
4 against, like dual action in court.

5 We need that dual action to be on  
6 the same playing level, on the same board, because  
7 we are no on the same board, we are not on the same  
8 playing level. Go back to the archives, pull out  
9 these files that state these statements, and then  
10 change the wording in those statements.

11 We're not your opponents, we're  
12 not -- and take care of your fiduciary process,  
13 take care of it open and honestly, not this old  
14 John A. MacDonald stuff, bring it down to Justin  
15 Trudeau stuff. You know, because it's 2018, just  
16 like Trudeau said it, because it's 2017. Change it  
17 because of that, because it's 2018.

18 Update your files, tell all your  
19 lawyers in the government to go into the files,  
20 update them, and then give it to the Justice  
21 Department. Give it to the Justice Department,  
22 because there's a Canadian department, Canadian  
23 Government department, and then there's a Justice  
24 Department. Give it to the Justice and let Justice  
25 workout this board. We need to be on the same  
26 playing level, be on the same board, not it came  
27 form abroad. It came from a board.

28 Let us be on the same playing

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1 field. That's all we're asking for.

2 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Thank you.

3 Thank you both so much.

4 MS. IRENE FIRTH: Have to start  
5 with the basics.

6 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Yeah.

7 MS. RUBY FIRTH: Yeah.

8 MS. IRENE FIRTH: In everything,  
9 we need a starting point. Who knows where the end  
10 point will end up, but you need a starting point.  
11 You need to start with things people worry about,  
12 basic --

13 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Needs.

14 MS. IRENE FIRTH: -- housing,  
15 living conditions --

16 MS. RUBY FIRTH: Food and  
17 security.

18 MS. IRENE FIRTH: Healthcare, that  
19 is at par with the rest of Canada. You know, it's  
20 having -- you walk into a health centre and they  
21 say, oh, there's nothing wrong with you, here's  
22 some Tylenol, go home. Then months later you're  
23 diagnosed with cancer sort of thing.

24 We need things that are at par  
25 with the rest of Canada. Start with the basics,  
26 housing and healthcare.

27 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Yeah.

28 MS. IRENE FIRTH: You know, that

1 in itself would take a lot of worries away from  
2 people, then they can begin to focus on other  
3 things as their healing journey and how to break  
4 this circle of violence and alcoholism and  
5 everything else that comes along with residential  
6 schools, missing and murdered, and these belief  
7 systems that we were taught when we were in  
8 residential school, how to break all of that.

9 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Yeah.

10 MS. IRENE FIRTH: Start with the  
11 basics. That's it.

12 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Thank you.  
13 Unless you have anything else you  
14 want to add?

15 MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN: No, thank  
16 you, Madam Commissioner. I believe that we're  
17 ready for the next stage, because we've finished  
18 the dialogue aspect of the hearing.

19 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Okay.

20 MS. WENDY VAN TONGEREN: So the  
21 gift giving.

22 PRESENTATION OF GIFTS:

23 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Ah, I get  
24 to give presents. We have a number of gifts for  
25 you, little gifts.

26 One of the things that we were  
27 taught early on is the importance of exchanging  
28 gifts to acknowledge. You've give us a huge gift;

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1 you've given us knowledge, you've given us wisdom,  
2 you've given us recommendations.

3                   We've got little gifts that are  
4 from the Inquiry. We have some Arctic cotton  
5 gathered, I believe this one is from Nunavut, and  
6 then some Labrador tea that was gathered in  
7 Nunavik. This is a small gift from the Inquiry.

8                   There is also, as this work has  
9 started, the relationships from community to  
10 community have grown, and communities we've been to  
11 want to give gifts to the communities we're going  
12 to and to the families and to survivors, and to  
13 acknowledge you, the matriarchs, the strong women  
14 of the Haida Gwaii Nation want to gift you eagle  
15 feathers from their territory.

16                   The families in Thunder Bay and  
17 the people of the Thunder Bay area made little  
18 beaded red dresses as pins.

19                   Then the Native Women's  
20 Association of the Northwest Territories is giving  
21 a little blanket to each family.

22                   So I get to hand these gifts off  
23 to you, but they're gifts from many different  
24 places acknowledging your connection, honouring  
25 you, honouring Linda. So I'm going to put the mic  
26 down and come see you guys with these gifts.

27                   MS. RUBY FIRTH: Okay, thank you.

28                   MS. IRENE FIRTH: Thank you.



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1 Thank you for having us. I believe things happen  
2 for a reason. Like I said earlier, this just came  
3 up all of a sudden. Something will come of it.

4 --- Exhibits (code: P01P09P0205)

5 Exhibit 1: Single digital  
6 image of Linda Firth

7 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Thank you.

8 **Hearing # 2**

9 **Witnesses: Angie Sabourin, Grace Sabourin and Violet**  
10 **Sabourin.**

11 **In relation to Roberta Lynn Sabourin**

12 **Commission Counsel: Christa Big Canoe**

13 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Good  
14 afternoon, Commissioner Eyolfson. I'd like to  
15 introduce the next family that will be sharing  
16 their story of Roberta Lynn Sabourin. Immediately  
17 beside me is Angie Sabourin. I'm saying it wrong.  
18 Can you say it once for me? Sabourin, is it?

19 MS. ANGIE SABOURIN: Sabourin.

20 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Sabourin.

21 I apologize, I'm wanting to over-pronounce  
22 something, Sabourin. Right beside her is Grace  
23 Sabourin, and then we have Violet Fabian(ph).

24 In support is Laureen "Blu" Waters  
25 Gaudio, Max Mahoney, and we also have Cindy Harris.

26 We may be joined by Janice  
27 Sabourin, but she just needed to step out. She may  
28 come back, and if she does she'll sit beside

Angie Sabourin, Grace Sabourin and Violet Sabourin  
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1 Violet.

2 Before we get started, the witness  
3 in the front row here would like to promise --

4 THE REGISTRAR: Hi. My name's  
5 Gladys, I'm the Registrar. So, Angie, Grace and  
6 Violet, do you promise to tell your truth in a good  
7 way to day?

8 MS. ANGIE SABOURIN: Yes.

9 MS. GRACE SABOURIN: Yes.

10 MS. VIOLET SABOURIN: Yes.

11 PROMISED: ANGIE SABOURIN

12 PROMISED: GRACE SABOURIN

13 PROMISED: VIOLET SABOURIN

14 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you.

15 I anticipate the family will be sharing the story  
16 of Roberta Lynn. Roberta was a 42-year-old mother  
17 with five children, she had four daughters and one  
18 son. Roberta died from an apparent stab wound in  
19 the Mackenzie Place highrise in Hay River,  
20 Northwest Territories on April 8th, 2015.

21 We want to start with Angie, who  
22 is Roberta's mother. Angie was going to start by  
23 sharing some of Roberta's strengths and some fond  
24 memories. Do you want to tell us a little bit  
25 about Roberta?

26 PRESENTATION BY ANGIE SABOURIN:

27 MS. ANGIE SABOURIN: My name is  
28 Angie Sabourin and I'm from Hay River, NWT, and I

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1 have my supporters here with me, my daughter Grace,  
2 Violet, Cindy, Max and Laureen.

3 My daughter Roberta, she's a fifth  
4 child and she has a younger brother and a younger  
5 sister. Her younger brother's name is William and  
6 her younger sister is Nicole. As she's growing up  
7 she seems to be a very quiet girl, but she's the  
8 youngest of the other older ones and as she's  
9 growing up she's tried to be really protective of  
10 her family.

11 She loved her family, and as she's  
12 growing up she respected elders. That's the way I  
13 brought them up, to respect their elders, all my  
14 kids, and to be smart in school and respect their  
15 teachers and that.

16 She followed my discipline very  
17 well. As she grew older she had a daughter, her  
18 first daughter, her name Desirée(ph). She grew up  
19 to be a good mother to her daughter, but of course  
20 she's young, she's outgoing and she had a two-track  
21 mind at that time; she wanted to be a mother or she  
22 wanted to go back to school.

23 Anyways, she went to B.C. Anyways  
24 so she had Desirée then she had a boy, he was  
25 Tory(ph). At that time she left and she went to  
26 B.C. to go back to school and she wanted to be --  
27 Aboriginal law, so she did that. She want to B.C.  
28 then she got settled in, then she came back and got

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1 Desirée, she has her son with her, so she left and  
2 she moved.

3 About -- Desirée was four and Tory  
4 was about three, then I don't know what happened  
5 between her and B.C. My younger daughter, Nicole,  
6 had to go pick them up, but she stayed. Anyway, so  
7 after that she came back.

8 Like in her time, she did travel a  
9 little bit, like with her cousins. She went to  
10 Ontario and that, and from there she's been through  
11 to the States, out of Canada for a while, and then  
12 she came back home.

13 Then she met Mark, and they had a  
14 little girl, and then she left again, back to B.C.  
15 That guy, Mark, brought her to Peace River, from  
16 there she took a bus. Then she got lonely for the  
17 kids, so she came back to Hay River. Then she got  
18 settled with Mark. But there's so many powerful  
19 things out there that never works for you.

20 I like Mark, Mark's like her old  
21 man, like he's pretty good to her and they had a  
22 little girl, plus taking care of the two older  
23 ones. By then her daughter had her first baby, so  
24 she became a grandma. Then, as time goes on, she  
25 takes off, she goes on a trip or whatever. Then  
26 Mark didn't like that, Mark wanted a quiet woman to  
27 settle down with and take care of the kids. But  
28 Mark mostly took care of her kids while she did



1 with her kids, the two youngest ones, and did what  
2 she wanted to do, we took care of her kids. We  
3 tried not to get mad at her for doing what she's  
4 doing. Well, she's old enough, you know, like --  
5 you know, she'll come home and pick-up her kids,  
6 but -- she'll pick them up for a while and then it  
7 happens again.

8                                   Anyway, so one day Social Services  
9 brought them to us and asked if we could take care  
10 of them until she decides what she wants to do.

11                                   Anyway, so we had the kids, and I  
12 think they were four and two, four and three?

13                                   MS. GRACE SABOURIN: Three, four.

14                                   MS. ANGIE SABOURIN: Yeah.

15 Mykayla was four and Kerissa was three. Anyway, so  
16 about a few years later, just the year that she was  
17 going to get killed, we went to Edmonton. I told  
18 her, "You and the kids come with me and we'll take  
19 the kids for Easter break." Okay, so we left for  
20 Easter break to Edmonton to go see her daughter.

21                                   We got to Edmonton on Thursday,  
22 and then so it's Friday, Saturday, now she says she  
23 wants to go back to Hay River. I told her, I said,  
24 "We're supposed to stay for a week." "I'll take  
25 the kids back with me," she said, "I'll bring them  
26 to Grace." I said, "Why you refuse, you want to  
27 rush back for?" I said, you know, "We'll just  
28 visit for longer time."



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1 time, it was 6:00-7:00, about 6:00, we're just  
2 leaving High Level, and she called, and then my  
3 phone was dying.

4 "Well," I said, "make it fast  
5 because my phone is dying." She said, "Okay, mom."  
6 She said, "You're travelling with Auntie?" I said,  
7 "Yeah." She said, "Well, I'm going to be with you  
8 during this travel," she said "I'm going to be with  
9 you just so Auntie Clara gets home safe." I said,  
10 "Okay."

11 Anyways, so she said, "I won't  
12 phone again, you say your phone is dying." She  
13 started laughing and then she hung up. About 8:45  
14 we hit Hay River, turning off to the reserve, and  
15 my nephew Isaac got a phone call. She said, "Oh  
16 yeah, she's here," she says, and she handed me the  
17 phone. She said, "Auntie Roberta got stabbed." I  
18 thought it was just a minor, I took the phone and I  
19 answered it. I don't know who was phoning me, they  
20 said, "You'd better come to the hospital, Roberta  
21 got stabbed."

22 So I told Clara, we turned around  
23 by the -- one of the offices going to the reserve,  
24 and we got to the hospital and I seen -- I seen  
25 Elder Celine(ph) and her son George, I knew that it  
26 was more than a stab. I knew something happened.

27 Then when I walk into the hospital  
28 my sister Violet walked up to me and said, "She



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1 never made it." Three hours after she talked to me  
2 she was dead. Everybody was crying and... Then my  
3 daughter, she was behind us on the road, I guess  
4 her too she come walking into...

5 She was -- my daughter Roberta was  
6 -- she inspired a lot of people in her special way.  
7 She can be mean, she can be nice, she can respect  
8 you, and she can call you down. But best of all,  
9 she likes people. There's no reason to say  
10 anything to her, she's okay. But she had a lot of  
11 people I didn't know that was all there for her.  
12 They said she was rare, very rare lady. She didn't  
13 inspire only people in the community, but she  
14 inspired people all over the north that knew her.

15 Then she -- she's really  
16 protective. That night that we got there was on  
17 the 8th, and the word got around that she passed  
18 on. The next day my niece phoned, she messaged me.  
19 They may be cousins, but when they're younger than  
20 her they call her auntie. She said, "Auntie," she  
21 says, "Auntie Roberta told you not to cry for her,"  
22 she said. That was her last breath, that's the  
23 last words she said when they took her out of the  
24 highrise.

25 Anyway, so as time goes on -- that  
26 happened in April, yeah. April, May, June, July,  
27 August, September, October, November -- seven  
28 months later the -- was it the RCMP that called

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1 you?

2 MS. GRACE SABOURIN: Wasn't seven  
3 months, it was less than two months.

4 MS. ANGIE SABOURIN: Yeah.  
5 Anyway, so the RCMP had called, told us they were  
6 going to have a meeting with us. So my daughter  
7 Grace and her boyfriend Max, my sister Violet,  
8 myself, and my cousin Alex -- I just call him my  
9 brother -- he came with us. So we got to the  
10 police station and they put us in a room where  
11 there was an RCMP prosecutor for the Crown --

12 MS. GRACE SABOURIN: Investigators  
13 from Yellowknife. I can't remember the dates.

14 MS. ANGIE SABOURIN: There was a  
15 cop, the Crown, prosecutor, investigator --

16 MS. GRACE SABOURIN: And a social  
17 worker.

18 MS. ANGIE SABOURIN: -- and the --  
19 yeah.

20 MS. GRACE SABOURIN: And the  
21 investigative team.

22 MS. ANGIE SABOURIN: Anyway, so  
23 when we sat there, want to listen to what they're  
24 going to tell us about what happened to the girl  
25 that stabbed my daughter. They told us that -- was  
26 that she pleaded not guilty. She pleaded not  
27 guilty, because she said she did it in self-  
28 defence. Since Lori had no criminal records, so

1 she didn't get charged.

2                               When we went to talk to them the  
3 session didn't take long. Just like they wanted to  
4 get rid of us. None of us showed up in court, they  
5 never told us there was a court. We didn't know  
6 nothing about it. After it's over, then they tell  
7 us that the court was over.

8                               What did my daughter did to  
9 deserve this? She fought on behalf of her sisters  
10 and cousins and everything, but she never took a  
11 weapon to kill anybody. She never used a weapon  
12 against no one.

13                              While I sat there I heard  
14 different stories, three different stories from the  
15 law. While she was down bleeding, did she get up  
16 again to attack her? No, because Shayda(ph) told  
17 me the minute the ambulance came she said she never  
18 got up, she got stabbed and that was that. But the  
19 law said she gets up and she go and run against the  
20 knife or she was down bleeding already in self-  
21 defence. While she was down she still fought.  
22 That is bullshit. Because that's three different  
23 stories I heard while I was in that session.

24                              So until today, that's what really  
25 bothers me.

26                              MS. GRACE SABOURIN: We still  
27 can't get answers.

28                              MS. ANGIE SABOURIN: Nothing

1 happened to the person that killed her. Today  
2 she's still walking around free while my daughter  
3 is gone.

4                               That day before it happened she  
5 talked to a whole bunch of friend that were in Hay  
6 River. She told them that she got threat by her  
7 before and then she got threat again that day, and  
8 she wanted to approach her, talk to her and why,  
9 you know, why she wants to kill her.

10                              Anyway, so that was really  
11 bothering me, was that Lori didn't get charged  
12 because they said she had no criminal record. It's  
13 just -- that's when my daughter promised that she  
14 was going to change her life. She talked to me  
15 about it, and she was going to get her babies back  
16 and stuff like that.

17                              But until today we've still got  
18 the girls. They were too young anyway to think  
19 about what happened. Yeah, it was just -- it's the  
20 little girls that I'm really -- no more hugs from  
21 the mom or presents or anything. That is hard  
22 going through this life.

23                              Thank you.

24                              MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Grace, can  
25 I ask you a couple questions too? Did you want to  
26 start with sharing some of Roberta's strengths?  
27 Then maybe I can ask you some questions about what  
28 you remember from the hospital and after.

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1 PRESENTATION BY GRACE SABOURIN:

2 MS. GRACE SABOURIN: Okay. Her  
3 strongest strengths were her friendship. She got  
4 along with everybody and anybody. She made friends  
5 very easily. Every time you see her -- if we  
6 didn't see each other for two days we still got a  
7 hug, all the time. If we seen each other within 24  
8 hours, every time we seen each other it was always  
9 a hug, everybody, every family member got a hug  
10 regardless and a big smile and whatever kind of  
11 joke she wanted to tell, she always told us jokes.

12 So anyway, she was a strong people  
13 person, made friends very easily and she loved.  
14 She had a big heart. If some people had no place  
15 to stay, she opened up her home and her heart to  
16 them. That was just the way she was. Very  
17 friendly, laughed all the time, liked to smile.  
18 That's probably one of her strongest points. It's  
19 so hard to say. I try to think about it sometimes,  
20 I try not to, but once in a while it does hit.

21 Every time people seen her and I  
22 walking together, they always, "Oh, here come the  
23 Twisted Sisters." Like, we got along so well and  
24 we laughed a lot. We fought too once in a while,  
25 we argued, but we always became friends again  
26 within a short period of time. Never stayed mad at  
27 each other for long.

28 She loved every single one of us,

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1 some equally, some more. But it didn't matter, as  
2 long as she loved us, and we loved her.

3                               That's one of her strongest  
4 points, was her personality; strong, friendly. She  
5 had lots of friends. Everywhere we went she was  
6 always talking to somebody, I'm standing on the  
7 side waiting while she's always yapping and always  
8 greeting people, people I don't even know  
9 sometimes, so she'll introduce me to them. She's  
10 more outgoing than I am, so she was more of a  
11 people person.

12                              So that's one of her strongest was  
13 that, was her personality, her happiness. If she  
14 was down and out and whatever, she always gave me a  
15 phone call. It was so weird, because sometimes  
16 we'd look at the phone, either I would call or she  
17 would call, and we knew exactly who it was. I bet  
18 Roberta's going to call I'd be thinking, sure  
19 enough the phone would ring within seconds. I'd  
20 pick it up, "I knew it was you." I'd always say  
21 that. Or I'd call her, "I knew it was you."  
22 That's how close we were.

23                              So that's -- yeah, we had a big  
24 powerful relationship together.

25                              That day when that happened I was  
26 at my daughter Misty's because Misty and her  
27 common-law husband work at the mine, so I was  
28 watching my grandchildren, and also Roberta's two

1 daughters, her youngest ones. My granny, when she  
2 was alive, she was there with us too, and Max, and  
3 two of Sonia's friends. We had a whole trailer  
4 full.

5                                 Roberta and Brad showed up 2:00 in  
6 the afternoon, it was beautiful outside that day,  
7 April 8th. We were sitting outside just with t-  
8 shirts, no sweaters or anything, sitting around the  
9 -- well sitting outside on a deck anyway. We sat  
10 there for four hours, laughed and joked around and  
11 teased each other.

12                                 Then they decided to leave at  
13 6:00. So she left first and then Brad -- it was  
14 her and Brad showed up, her common-law. So after  
15 they left I got the first phone call at 9:00 at  
16 night, said Roberta was involved in a stabbing. Of  
17 course, I thought it was just a superficial one or  
18 maybe she's got a little bit of stitches and stuff  
19 like that. So I didn't take it seriously.

20                                 Then 11:00 I got a phone call  
21 again, and demanding that I go to the hospital, I  
22 don't think my sister's going to make it. Of  
23 course, again, I never thought to take it  
24 seriously, never thought anything that devastating  
25 or horrifying had happened.

26                                 So I got to the hospital and  
27 everybody was -- of course made sure the kids were  
28 -- because it was Easter long weekend, so there

1 were no school so the kids were still up when I  
2 left. So I walked in there, there was people all  
3 around, nobody even gave me any warning.

4                   So I walked into the emergency  
5 room and there was -- she was laying on the  
6 whatever you call it, the bed. There was a doctor  
7 in the middle and the two nurses standing on the  
8 side and they just looked at me, just shook their  
9 head. I understood what they meant and I collapsed  
10 on the floor and I took my parka(ph) and I covered  
11 myself with it. I just screamed out loud, as loud  
12 as I could. I still couldn't believe.

13                   That's when Max came in and he  
14 walked me out. As we were walking out my mom was  
15 coming in. I couldn't even face her, I couldn't  
16 even look at her, the hurt was -- I still couldn't  
17 believe it. So we walked outside, went to the  
18 truck and regrouped a little bit.

19                   Then I walked back in. By then my  
20 other auntie was there -- my auntie was there  
21 already, Auntie Violet. So I just stood there and  
22 I started rubbing her arm because she was still  
23 warm. So I was rubbing for as long as I can  
24 because she was still warm.

25                   Then I just went home, went back  
26 to my daughters. Brad didn't want to be by  
27 himself, so he came there and slept. My mom also  
28 didn't want to be by herself, so they joined us at



1 my daughter's trailer. So we had a trailer full of  
2 family.

3 Now try to explain that to her two  
4 youngest daughters that me and my mom were bringing  
5 up already. We already had them in custody with  
6 us. Still today, me and my mom are still bringing  
7 up her two youngest daughters, they're eight and  
8 nine now. Now they are starting to recognize and  
9 starting to try understand what happened to their  
10 mother.

11 I know it's going to affect them  
12 as they get older and older, because only now  
13 they're trying to comprehend what happened to her.  
14 That they realize that their mom's never going to  
15 come back. They really miss her. They still --  
16 they write little stories to her, they make cards  
17 for her and stuff for Mother's Day. They still do  
18 that. Once in a while I find little notes in their  
19 little notebooks, their little journals, about how  
20 they talk about their mom. They always call her,  
21 my mommy. Mommy did this or mommy told me this  
22 and...

23 So it's kind of hard bringing up  
24 two little girls who lost their mother. So I'm  
25 thankful me and my mom are there for them, and the  
26 rest of the family.

27 But after that when I first found  
28 out that Lori had got out on bail due to -- that

1 was the first session that we had with them was  
2 when they told us that she was going to get out on  
3 bail, due to because she had no prior charges or  
4 criminal history.

5 I can't remember if it was in May,  
6 but I think she went to court in June for bail, and  
7 then we found out after that, I don't know what day  
8 it was, because then it was a blur.

9 Then what I did was I turned to  
10 alcohol of course to try and kill the pain,  
11 grieving, and went through a couple panic attacks,  
12 anxiety attacks, crying and screaming for no reason  
13 at all. It's a good thing Max was there, because  
14 he grounded me. I didn't want to do it in front of  
15 my family, so I just mostly did it privately.

16 To me, justice was not done, she  
17 got away with murder. Just because my sister had  
18 - because of her lifestyle and her previous history  
19 of assault and stuff like that, but never once in  
20 those assaults has she ever used a weapon, which my  
21 mom said is true.

22 Still today I'm still grieving.  
23 It's not as hard as it used to be, but it's still  
24 there. I still breakdown and cry once in a while  
25 thinking about her. Her daughters too are getting  
26 closer and closer to me. I think it's because now  
27 they realize that their mom won't be here, so now I  
28 get the hugs and kisses that my sister should have

1 been getting. So it's a hard process to go  
2 through.

3                   The grieving is not as bad as the  
4 beginning, but it's still there. Sometimes I think  
5 she should have been here, she shouldn't be where  
6 she is right now. She's supposed to be here with  
7 us, not over there. It's just really hard to talk  
8 about sometimes, but I'm glad to bring it out.  
9 Still, it's a hard process to go through. I still  
10 believe that she should receive justice.

11                   What I really wish for is this  
12 case to be reopened and her to be retried, and to  
13 let her know that we did not forget what she did to  
14 our sister, my sister, grandmother -- she's also a  
15 grandmother, an auntie, daughter. Like, all that  
16 was taken away from all of us when she did that to  
17 my sister.

18                   To me, no justice has been served  
19 thanks to the prosecutors. Thanks to them, it's  
20 just like they wanted just to close the case as  
21 fast as they could and basically just forgot about  
22 her. It's like they didn't even try hard enough.  
23 Is it because she was an Aboriginal woman and her  
24 lifestyle? Just because she liked to party and  
25 drink? That was no reason for her to die and for  
26 them to just ignore her and close the case so  
27 quickly.

28                   Not even four months, and then she

1 got away with murder, she walked scot-free.

2 Meanwhile, my sister's six feet under.

3 I just want people to know that if  
4 other people are going through this, try fight for  
5 reopening the case if you know that what happened  
6 to your loved one was wrong. The court system, the  
7 criminal justice system, failed her and us.

8 Thank you.

9 QUESTIONS BY COMMISSION COUNSEL:

10 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Grace,  
11 before you pass the microphone, can I just ask you  
12 a couple quick questions just to clarify?

13 You've read this article?

14 MS. GRACE SABOURIN: Yeah.

15 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: In the  
16 article -- there's an article that I'll be passing  
17 up to you, Commissioner Eyolfson -- it's titled,  
18 "Murder Charge Stayed in Stabbing: Crown says it  
19 can't prove the accused did not act in self-  
20 defence." That's the title.

21 But the part I'm referring to,  
22 Grace, is closer to the end of the article, because  
23 what you've just shared with us is your  
24 frustrations at not understanding how they couldn't  
25 even call the evidence. They didn't even call  
26 evidence, it was a decision made, they brought you  
27 into a space and just told you there wasn't enough  
28 evidence.



1 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So when  
2 they announced the murder charge was being stayed,  
3 because that actually happened in court, and the  
4 media touched based with you, you spoke with some  
5 media to explain the family's frustrations?

6 MS. GRACE SABOURIN: That was over  
7 the phone, yeah.

8 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So you're  
9 the one that...? I just missed the last part of  
10 your answer.

11 MS. GRACE SABOURIN: Oh, they  
12 contacted me over the phone that time.

13 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So you  
14 were just responding to what happened in the news.  
15 But your mother had said that you guys didn't go  
16 to court, so you didn't even know that --

17 MS. GRACE SABOURIN: We knew when  
18 the court date was. You see, back then it was such  
19 a blur because I went on a -- I went on a... I  
20 don't know if it -- well, it's because the pain was  
21 still there and it's like we didn't really want to  
22 face it. Because to -- it was still too  
23 unbelievable and too fresh. Like, it was too soon,  
24 how fast the justice system went and dealt with it.

25 Like, you know, other trials go  
26 for like one or two years and stuff like that, but  
27 that one went just like that. It was too quick  
28 even for us even to -- to even try get beyond that.

1 She just died and then we have to go through the  
2 court process and stuff.

3                               So when we heard that stay  
4 charges, I know what that means, they wait for on  
5 year unless new -- new evidence -- unless they find  
6 new evidence. Nothing was forthcoming, waited a  
7 year and nothing. It's just -- it was just too  
8 fast, too quick. It's like they just, poof, let's  
9 get this over and done with and close it so we can  
10 move on to another case.

11                              They didn't treat her as a human  
12 being, as a person. Just like a case, that was it,  
13 a file.

14                              So thanks.

15                              MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: I know  
16 Violet was just about to add something.

17                              PRESENTATION BY VIOLET SABOURIN:

18                              MS. VIOLET SABOURIN: I just  
19 wanted to mention, on the day that the  
20 investigators had called in -- called us in for a  
21 meeting to discuss about the -- what was going to  
22 happen, what happened in court. So that was the  
23 day that Angie and I and Grace, and my cousin Alex  
24 and Max was there also. Anyway, the investigators  
25 had talked with us about what was going to happen  
26 to Lori. That's her name, right, Lori?

27                              They explained to us how she had  
28 pleaded not guilty because she claimed self-

1 defence. So then was there anything else that you  
2 guys -- was there anybody else that was interviewed  
3 at that time of the -- that -- when Lori killed  
4 Roberta? He told me this, that she -- she claimed  
5 not -- self-defence.

6                   Then the second time he -- they  
7 were -- continued talking and then -- and then they  
8 told me that -- they told us how Roberta had ran  
9 into the knife -- or the weapon. Then I said,  
10 "What?" I said, "I cannot see Roberta running into  
11 a knife." I said, "I cannot see her doing that."  
12 I said, you know, she can -- she will -- she can  
13 defend herself. But to run into a knife is -- is  
14 not what I see Roberta doing that at all.

15                   I said, "She had the knife on  
16 her." I said, "How in the world is Roberta  
17 supposed to run into a knife?" I said, "I cannot  
18 see it happening." I said, "You're saying she's  
19 pleading not guilty or she's pleading self-  
20 defence." I said, "Well, you guys, how do you know  
21 that it's a self-defence? Roberta's not here to  
22 defend herself. She's not here to speak. She's  
23 not here to tell us what happened. The only one  
24 who was also there was people that were in that  
25 same apartment."

26                   Her little cousin, who happens to  
27 be my granddaughter, was with her at that time.  
28 During that time I spoke to the RCMP, that if



1 they're to interview my granddaughter, I wanted to  
2 be there. Because at that time my granddaughter  
3 was going through a lot of things.

4                   When she turned 12 years old she  
5 started hallucinating and they said -- the doctor  
6 said that she was psychosis. This is why I asked  
7 the investigators that if they're to interview her,  
8 I wanted to be there with her when that happened, I  
9 said, because she's not well, and she's not going  
10 to remember a lot of things that happened.

11                   But anyway, they did interview her  
12 and they didn't -- they didn't even let me know or  
13 try to contact me until I heard someone saying that  
14 the cops had -- the RCMP had picked up my  
15 granddaughter. By that time they were -- I found  
16 out it was already too late, they had already  
17 spoken with her. I was really upset about that.

18                   I tried talking to my  
19 granddaughter and she wouldn't -- she wouldn't talk  
20 about it. I'm not sure what they said to her,  
21 because she was probably -- she was 15 that time, I  
22 believe she was 15 that time, and she's not going  
23 to remember anything. She's -- that's because she  
24 had mental problems.

25                   Then they interviewed her what,  
26 two days, maybe a couple days after that that  
27 Roberta passed away.

28                   When we were in the RCMP station

1 and it's like telling us what was going to happen  
2 and how the charges were going to be dropped,  
3 because she pleaded self-defence.

4 MS. GRACE SABOURIN: There was  
5 another thing too, was nowhere did we ever hear  
6 about, even from the investigators or for the RCMP,  
7 if Roberta had even laid a hand on her when -- that  
8 night when that happened. As far as I know, that  
9 they were having words. There's nowhere, come to  
10 think of it, that we heard about Roberta even  
11 touching her, laying a hand on Lori.

12 After that happened, my cousin  
13 that she's talking about, my Auntie Violet's  
14 granddaughter, she went -- because this happened on  
15 the 7th floor, and Shayda went -- went running down  
16 to -- through the stairs to the 4th floor where  
17 Roberta's common-law husband was, Brad, and told  
18 him that Roberta got stabbed. So he took off up  
19 the stairs to the 7th floor. She was laying in the  
20 hallway.

21 By the time he got there, because  
22 he -- she got her in the heart, by the time he got  
23 there the blood was pumping out of her heart, and  
24 he had -- he stanchied his hand over her trying to  
25 stop the bleeding, but it wouldn't because she  
26 stabbed the main artery, and she died basically in  
27 his arm.

28 So I'm kind of happy that -- I'm

1 glad that he made it there so she didn't -- she  
2 didn't die alone.

3 Thank you.

4 MS. ANGIE SABOURIN: Hello, I just  
5 wanted to say another word, is that where was this  
6 guy, that it happened in his apartment at the  
7 highrise? I heard that she said he was in the  
8 bathroom and didn't witness anything. Surely he  
9 must have did, because commotion and that, you  
10 know, you've got to go check and see what's  
11 happening? But why, was he scared and stuck in the  
12 bathroom while these things were going on?

13 Lori's the one that started the --  
14 with Shayda, and Shayda is just a little girl, you  
15 know, and I think that's what took place between  
16 Roberta and Lori, because she tried to protect  
17 Shayda. Anyway, she got Shayda out of the way and  
18 Roberta was trying to grab the knife.

19 I think that's what Shayda told me  
20 on the Facebook. She messaged me, she said,  
21 "Auntie, Lori had a knife and she's going to  
22 Roberta, and Roberta tried to grab the knife away  
23 from her by grabbing her arm -- by grabbing her  
24 arm, and then she had that knife up and she just  
25 stabbed Roberta."

26 She stabbed Roberta by the door.  
27 Did Roberta get up -- went against the knife after  
28 what happened? She never got up after she got

1 stabbed by that door. That's where they got her --  
2 well, the ambulance I mean. Like, in all the  
3 meantime this guy, he's in the bathroom or what?  
4 That's one thing that's really puzzling me all the  
5 time.

6 Like, every time I see him around  
7 town I want to approach him and ask him, but I  
8 don't want to start nothing with those people. I  
9 just wanted to let it pass. But coming to think of  
10 it, something has to be done about this. Like, are  
11 they going to get away with murder?

12 You know, I know criminal record  
13 is a really bad record, but from the day you stab  
14 somebody, there's your criminal record. They say  
15 just because she had no criminal record she -- they  
16 let her go free. We didn't even get called for  
17 court, nobody told us anything. We don't know what  
18 was going on. We thought the law will handle it  
19 for sure, handle it like what...

20 I feel like freaking out at that  
21 session, but I was held back, really held back.

22 QUESTIONS BY COMMISSION COUNSEL, CONT'D:

23 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So the  
24 family has now shared a couple of things. I want  
25 to kind of circle back around and touch on -- one  
26 of them was coping, like following the loss of your  
27 sister there were different ways to cope. I'm just  
28 curious if there was any services.

1                   So regardless of what was  
2 happening with the charges and when they got  
3 stayed, did Victim Services reach out to you, did  
4 you have --

5                   MS. GRACE SABOURIN: No, nobody.  
6 Not, not as far as I can remember, no, nobody even  
7 offered or... Well, our family too, we kind of  
8 depend on each other. We're kind of like a private  
9 family. Even how big we are, we have a big  
10 extended family and we kind of use each other for  
11 support. So that was our support system then after  
12 that happened.

13                  MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: But you  
14 can't recall specifically while --

15                  MS. GRACE SABOURIN: No.

16                  MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: -- you're  
17 waiting for the bail or while you were waiting for  
18 anything --

19                  MS. GRACE SABOURIN: No.

20                  MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: -- whether  
21 the family dealt with Victim --

22                  MS. GRACE SABOURIN: Nothing.

23                  MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So if  
24 there were things available, or now, would you want  
25 to access things so that you guys can take that  
26 time to bereave and potentially if you wanted  
27 counselling -

28                  MS. GRACE SABOURIN: I don't know,

1 because like it's -- it's been -- this April will  
2 be three years already. I don't know, it's so hard  
3 to say on my part, but I'm just speaking for myself  
4 right now.

5 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Was there  
6 anything that would help after, when you first lost  
7 Roberta, would there have been services or  
8 something that might have helped you?

9 MS. ANGIE SABOURIN: Yeah, because  
10 like -- to me, like after I lost my daughter, like  
11 -- just like we drifted apart. The family drifted  
12 apart, because we lost our most favourite person  
13 there. I tried to talk for us to stick together,  
14 so we just mourn all by ourselves, and that didn't  
15 seem to help at all.

16 It took me about a year to a year  
17 and a half to be back at what I'm doing. I enjoy  
18 - like, after I retired, I enjoy sewing, go for my  
19 walks. It's no use for me to do that. What do I  
20 want to live for anyway? You know, I lost my girl,  
21 I don't want to live.

22 But then I didn't realize that I  
23 had other girls over there who are not  
24 communicating as much as they used to. Janice here  
25 in Yellowknife and Nicole was in Calgary, and  
26 William is in Calgary, Arnold's in Edmonton, that  
27 we all drifted away.

28 So I had two girls, my girl Grace

Angie Sabourin, Grace Sabourin and Violet Sabourin  
In relation to Roberta Lynn Sabourin

1 and Kim, and just like sometimes we don't know what  
2 to say to one another. We may -- we may love each  
3 other, but then the one we lost was the most  
4 important thing in our life and she's gone, and we  
5 had no use for anybody else. That's what we -- it  
6 was all in our head.

7                   But come to think of it, like  
8 Roberta had other daughters and sons out there,  
9 granddaughters and great-granddaughter, and that --  
10 that kept me going.

11                   My mother -- lost my mother too  
12 that same year -- no, a year after.

13                   MS. GRACE SABOURIN: Same year,  
14 mom.

15                   MS. ANGIE SABOURIN: 2016 --

16                   MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Actually,  
17 maybe we can have that family picture.

18                   MS. ANGIE SABOURIN: -- and then I  
19 lost my mother 2016, yeah.

20                   MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Maybe we  
21 can have that family picture pulled up and you can  
22 point for me.

23                   MS. ANGIE SABOURIN: Yeah.

24                   MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Maybe can  
25 we ask to have the one group family picture pulled  
26 up? See the picture? So if we're talking about  
27 the three women in the middle that --

28                   MS. ANGIE SABOURIN: That's my

1 mother, right there, my daughter Roberta and my  
2 sister Irene. All those three in a row like that,  
3 they're all gone. Yeah, I lost my sister to  
4 cancer, the one in the back. Then there's me,  
5 Nicole, Grace and Janice.

6 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So the  
7 family had a hard time keeping connected without  
8 the person that kind of connected you the most. So  
9 would there have been something or is there  
10 something you would like, some type of service or  
11 anything, counselling, that would maybe help, that  
12 you would be interested in?

13 MS. ANGIE SABOURIN:  
14 [indiscernible].

15 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Is there a  
16 type of -- because you didn't get that chance, is  
17 there any type of services or counselling or  
18 anything that you and the family might be  
19 interested in doing?

20 So just so we're all on the same  
21 page here, then the Commissioner knows what  
22 everybody's chatting about. When I say is there  
23 anything that could help, like self-care, some type  
24 of programming, counselling, not necessarily today,  
25 but moving forward, that might help?

26 MS. GRACE SABOURIN: I'll probably  
27 have to look into it to see which kind of program  
28 would probably suit me. But I'll have to search



Angie Sabourin, Grace Sabourin and Violet Sabourin  
In relation to Roberta Lynn Sabourin

1 and find out, because I haven't really looked for  
2 any help yet besides just certain immediate family  
3 members.

4 I have -- I find it hard because  
5 I'm a private person, it's the first time I'm  
6 actually sitting here talking about this.  
7 Sometimes I think I can deal with it on my own, but  
8 time will tell, I'll have to find out for myself.

9 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: One of the  
10 other things I wanted to ask, and whoever's in a  
11 position to answer it, I understand both Angie and  
12 Grace take care of Roberta's two youngest  
13 daughters. Their names again were...?

14 MS. GRACE SABOURIN: Mykayla and  
15 Kerissa.

16 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Kerissa?

17 MS. GRACE SABOURIN: Kerissa.

18 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Kerissa  
19 and Mykayla?

20 MS. GRACE SABOURIN: Mykayla's  
21 nine, Kerissa's eight. Kerissa will be 10 at the  
22 end of February -- no, Mykayla will be 10 at the  
23 end of February, Kerissa will be nine at the end of  
24 March. So we've been looking after them, probably a  
25 year before -- two years before this happened, a  
26 year and a half. That year when Roberta passed  
27 away they were working on getting the girls back,  
28 yeah, because my mom and I we're still raising them

Angie Sabourin, Grace Sabourin and Violet Sabourin  
In relation to Roberta Lynn Sabourin

1 right now.

2 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So, you  
3 know, you both had talked about the fact that  
4 they're going to grow-up without their mom.

5 MS. GRACE SABOURIN: M'hmm.

6 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: But that  
7 they sometimes do things like write Mother's Day  
8 cards. There was something, Angie, you had told me  
9 about the girls taking pictures of their mom. Can  
10 you tell us that, a little bit more about that,  
11 what the girls do with pictures of their mom?

12 MS. GRACE SABOURIN: What do the  
13 girls do with pictures of their mom?

14 The used -- they take them to bed  
15 or they hang -- they actually hang them all over  
16 the fridge with magnets.

17 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: They  
18 sometimes take them to bed, do I understand, and  
19 put them under their pillows?

20 MS. ANGIE SABOURIN: That's her  
21 granddaughter.

22 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: That's her  
23 granddaughter. So in that --

24 MS. ANGIE SABOURIN:  
25 [indiscernible] through her grandkids. That's my  
26 daughter, Roberta's -- my daughter Roberta's  
27 granddaughter, Ember(ph). That was the last visit  
28 she had with them. Today she's seven. I believe

Angie Sabourin, Grace Sabourin and Violet Sabourin  
In relation to Roberta Lynn Sabourin

1 she was five right there, starting kindergarten.  
2 Yeah, she just got off Head Start and today she's  
3 seven years old. Her last visit to her daughter --

4 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So I  
5 understand though one of the things her daughters  
6 do, and they both live with you, is they take  
7 pictures of their mother sometimes to bed with them  
8 and put them under the pillow. Why do you allow  
9 that or why do you -- what's important about that?

10 When they go to bed with the  
11 picture right under their pillow, that you thought  
12 that's really important because...?

13 MS. ANGIE SABOURIN: Yeah. Well,  
14 her daughters -- well, they're still young, but  
15 they always have their mom's picture under their  
16 pillow. That's Kerissa, the last baby she had. I  
17 let them be, to have their mom's picture under  
18 their pillow. But sometimes I will get very upset  
19 because Mykayla will pick on Kerissa right about  
20 now, and Kerissa will throw herself on a couch or  
21 wherever she can - can be, and she'll be crying,  
22 "Mommy! Mommy!" if Grace is not there.

23 She'll get that on Sunday only,  
24 like kind of hard for me to calm her down. "I want  
25 my mommy! I want my mommy!" That made me cry too.  
26 I told her, I said, "Mommy's picture up there,  
27 she's looking at you." I said, "Mommy's an angel  
28 now," I said, "she's with you."

1 I told Mykayla, "Don't pick on her  
2 for nothing. You're older, you're supposed to be  
3 protecting her, not picking on her." Yeah,  
4 sometimes they get out of hand by picking on one  
5 another.

6 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Typical  
7 sisters then?

8 MS. ANGIE SABOURIN: Yeah.

9 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: I just  
10 want to make sure that I'm not missing anything  
11 that any of the family members wanted to share  
12 before I ask the Commissioner if he has any  
13 questions or concerns.

14 I may ask for just a brief break  
15 before do get to your comments. But, first, I want  
16 to give you the opportunity to add anything if  
17 we've overlooked anything.

18 MS. GRACE SABOURIN: I just wanted  
19 to thank the Inquiry team for continuing this, and  
20 hopefully to teach the RCMP and the prosecutors  
21 that they just can't ignore cases like this.  
22 Because when that happens there's a lot of victims  
23 at the end and it's lots of hurt and pain that we  
24 all go through.

25 Them just to brush aside a case  
26 like this, it's like they don't even treat the  
27 person as a person, it's just a file, an number.  
28 Okay, that's closed, that's gone, that's it. Case

1 closed. But, to us, it's never closed.

2 I'd just like to than the whole  
3 team. Thank you.

4 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: I'm just  
5 going to see if I could just have one moment, then  
6 I'm going to actually see if you have some comments  
7 or questions as well please.

8 --- Upon recessing

9 --- Upon resuming

10 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:  
11 Commissioner Eyolfson, did you have any questions  
12 or comments for any of the family members?

13 QUESTIONS BY COMMISSIONER EYOLFSON:

14 COMMISSIONER EYOLFSON: I just  
15 have a couple of follow-up questions.

16 Christa was asking you about, you  
17 know, what services may be of assistance. I'm  
18 wondering if in raising Mykayla and Kerissa without  
19 their mother are there any resources or needs that  
20 might assist with that that you can think of or  
21 recommend?

22 MS. GRACE SABOURIN: They were  
23 getting counselling, but because right now they're  
24 still under the foster care system and so me and my  
25 mom are basically raising them under foster care,  
26 and they did -- they were going for counselling,  
27 the two little ones. But the only thing we  
28 couldn't get was the proper resources to get a ride

1 to and from there. They said that we can use  
2 medical travel.

3                               But, to me, if they really want to  
4 be involved, Social Services, and show that they  
5 care, because they're actually under them, that I  
6 figure that they're the ones that should be picking  
7 us up and bringing them -- bringing them there to  
8 the foster care. Like, it's 13 kilometres out of  
9 town. In the wintertime it's all the way around --  
10 or, no, wintertime we've got an ice crossing, but  
11 in the summertime it's all the way around.

12                              That's the only support I was  
13 trying to ask them for. We never really got it,  
14 right, we had to find our own way to bring them to  
15 counselling. Sometimes they wanted to take them  
16 out of school. But, to me, school's more  
17 important. Or may have some kind of counselling  
18 services even on the reserve or have them bring  
19 someone over or something. Just so they won't miss  
20 so much school because of this.

21                              But that's it, just the  
22 transportation, there and back. So that's only my  
23 concern, because I would like to get them back into  
24 counselling again. It's been over a year. I think  
25 they really need them because they're getting at  
26 that age now where they probably do need the help  
27 before they start -- before they get older and  
28 before it starts affecting them more seriously.

Angie Sabourin, Grace Sabourin and Violet Sabourin  
In relation to Roberta Lynn Sabourin

1                   Because there's only so much the  
2 family can do, we can do. Yeah, it's only so much  
3 we can do. Thank you.

4                   COMMISSIONER EYOLFSON: Thank you.  
5 I don't have any other specific questions, unless  
6 there's any other comments or recommendations you  
7 wanted to make before we close this session.

8                   MS. VIOLET SABOURIN: I just  
9 wanted to mention about Mykayla and Kerissa. Last  
10 summer I got to keep them for a few months because  
11 Grace and Angie needed a -- they were going through  
12 a rough time. So Social Services got me to watch  
13 Mykayla and Kerissa at that time.

14                   The time that they spent with me  
15 Kerissa would have -- when she was sleeping  
16 apparently I guess she -- she would cry at night  
17 for her mom. Because I work in the morning and I  
18 send them to bed early, it was my -- my daughter  
19 heard them -- heard Kerissa crying in the middle of  
20 the night, and she was crying for her mom, she was  
21 calling for her mom at that time. So my daughter  
22 had told me this in the morning after they went to  
23 school.

24                   So then I called the social worker  
25 and mentioned it to her, that the girls should get  
26 some counselling, and because this is what the  
27 girls -- well, Kerissa was doing at night. She's  
28 the youngest one, who is still crying for her mom.

1                                   I also heard that when she would  
2 spend the nights over with her little cousins, and  
3 my daughter would also hear her crying at night for  
4 her mother. She was telling me this, that -- she  
5 also told me this, and it kind of like really  
6 brought tears to my eyes. She said, "Mom," she  
7 said, "Kerissa was crying last night for her mom,"  
8 she said.

9                                   So I told Crystal(ph) that, "How  
10 many times was she doing this?" She said, every  
11 time she comes, like at night, with her -- one of  
12 her youngest daughters, she said, she would hear  
13 her crying. So I said, I'm going to have to do  
14 something and talk to the social worker, so we can  
15 try to like do something for her.

16                                  I said, she's -- she's too young  
17 to be like -- I know she misses her mom, I said,  
18 but we have to always remember Roberta and, you  
19 know, we've still got to tell her daughters and  
20 remind her daughters that you never forget your  
21 mother, and your mother's going to always be in  
22 your heart. I always tell her that.

23                                  So that at that time when I had  
24 them for the two months I got them to go see a  
25 counselling, and I brought them to go see the  
26 social worker, and she said she was going to take  
27 them to go see counselling. I'm not sure if that's  
28 -- they were still trying to help them with that.



Angie Sabourin, Grace Sabourin and Violet Sabourin  
In relation to Roberta Lynn Sabourin

1 But then two months after that the girls went back  
2 home to Grace and Angie.

3 I just wanted to mention this.

4 COMMISSIONER EYOLFSON: Thank you.

5 Angie, Grace and Violet, I just  
6 want to thank you very much for coming and sharing  
7 with us today and telling us about Roberta and  
8 contributing to the work of the Inquiry.

9 So I just appreciate you coming  
10 and sharing. We have some small gifts of  
11 appreciation for you sharing your truth with us  
12 today. I'm going to ask Grandmother Blu to help me  
13 with this.

14 PRESENTATION OF GIFTS:

15 MS WATERS GAUDIO: So, Angie, we  
16 want to give you this scarf which was made by the  
17 Native Women's Association, as a token of  
18 appreciation for your coming and telling the story  
19 of your daughter and your family.

20 Also in there is an eagle feather  
21 for you as well to help you with your journey, to  
22 help you with your healing, and to help you with  
23 the work that you've taken on with your  
24 grandchildren and doing that work. We'd like to  
25 just offer you this as a token of appreciation of  
26 hearing your story and bringing that information to  
27 the Commission so they can come forward with  
28 recommendations.

Angie Sabourin, Grace Sabourin and Violet Sabourin  
In relation to Roberta Lynn Sabourin

1                   To each of you an eagle feather to  
2 help you with your journeys with the work that  
3 needs to be done. So we want to just offer this to  
4 you so that when you use this you can be at peace  
5 knowing that that eagle flies the closest, so your  
6 prayers will be taken up to there. There's  
7 Labrador tea so you can make some tea and enjoy a  
8 nice relaxing evening.

9                   Thank you for your words.

10                   MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you.  
11 Thank you again for sharing.

12                   Chief Eyolfson, if we could  
13 actually adjourn for today. The hearings will be  
14 in the main room of the Nova commencing at 9:00  
15 a.m. tomorrow morning. So if we could adjourn  
16 until then I would appreciate it.

17                   COMMISSIONER EYOLFSON: Okay.  
18 Let's adjourn for the day.

19                   MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you.  
20 So the hearings are adjourned for the day.

21 --- Exhibits (code: P01P09P0206)

22                   Exhibit 1: Folder containing  
23 15 digital images and one  
24 PowerPoint presentation  
25 displayed during the  
26 witnesses' public testimony  
27 Exhibit 2: PDF of Hay River  
28 Hub newspaper edition

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1 published December 16, 2015  
2 (43rd year, No. 43), which  
3 includes cover headline and  
4 article "Murder charge stayed  
5 in stabbing" by Paul Bickford  
6 (20 pages)  
7 Exhibit 3: CBC article dated  
8 December 11, 2015 titled,  
9 "Lori Hansen stabbed Roberta  
10 Sabourin In self- defence  
11 (sic), say lawyers," by Mitch  
12 Wiles, last updated December  
13 11, 2015 7:18 AM CT, print  
14 date January 24, 2016 (one  
15 page)  
16 --- Whereupon the hearing concluded at 6:24 p.m.

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT I have, to the best  
of my skill and ability,  
accurately transcribed from a pre-existing  
recording  
the foregoing proceeding.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Jennifer Cheslock", written over a horizontal line.

Jennifer Cheslock, Transcriptionist