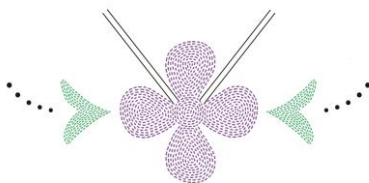


National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls



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

**National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls
Truth-Gathering Process – Part I Public Hearings
Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel
Britannia Ballroom
Metro Vancouver, British Columbia**



Public

Sunday April 8, 2018

Public Volume 117:

**Lauren “Blu” Waters and Dawn Gaudio,
In Relation to Viola G. Melvin**

**Heard by Chief Commissioner Marion Buller
Commission Counsel: Christa Big Canoe**

INTERNATIONAL REPORTING INC.

41-5450 Canotek Road, Ottawa, Ontario, K1J 9G2

E-mail: info@irri.net – Phone: 613-748-6043 – Fax: 613-748-8246

II

APPEARANCES

Assembly of First Nations	Non-appearance
Government of British Columbia	Non-appearance
Government of Canada	Anne Turley (Legal Counsel)
Heiltsuk First Nation	Non-appearance
Northwest Indigenous Council Society	Non-appearance
Our Place - Ray Cam Co-Operative Centre	Non-appearance
Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada	Beth Symes (Legal Counsel)
Vancouver Sex Workers' Rights Collective	Non-appearance
Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak/Women of the Metis Nation	Non-appearance

III
LIST OF EXHIBITS

NO.	DESCRIPTION	PAGE
Witness: Laureen "Blu" Waters and Dawn Gaudio Exhibit: (code: P01P15P0505)		
1	Folder containing six digital images shown during the public testimony of the witnesses.	69

IV

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
Public Volume 117	1
Witness: Laureen "Blue" Waters and Dawn Gaudio	
In relation to Viola G. Melvin	
Heard by Chief Commissioner Marion Buller	
 Commission Counsel: Christa Big Canoe	
 Grandmothers, Elders, Knowledge-keepers: Kathy Louis, Bernie Williams, Louise Haulli Reta Blind, Gladys Radek, Florence Catcheway, CeeJai Julian, Merle Williams, Deni Paquette, Donna Dickison, Ruth Alfred, Harriet Prince, Elaine Bissonnette, Eunice McMillan, Candace Ruth, Janice Brown, Theresa Russ, Deanna Lewis, Jennifer Thomas, Margerat George, Juanita Desjarlais	
 Clerk and Registrar: Bryan Zandberg	

1 Metro Vancouver, British Columbia

2 --- Upon commencing on Sunday, April 8, 2018, at 3:01 p.m.

3 (DRUMMING)

4 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Good afternoon,
5 Chief Commissioner. (Speaking in Anishinaabe). I just
6 want to start by acknowledging the host communities that
7 allow us to be on their territory as a guest. It's with a
8 great amount of pleasure that I get to introduce the next
9 person who will be sharing their story and sharing the
10 story of her grandmother, and Laureen "Blu" Waters, or
11 *Nokomis* Blu, as she is often known as, and her daughter
12 Dawn Gaudio -- Gaudio? Am I saying it right?

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Gaudio.

14 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Gaudio, thank you,
15 will be sharing their story.

16 Rather than have Blu promise in, she's
17 actually going to speak about her truth in traditional way.

18 MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS: *Tan'si*.

19 (Speaking in Cree). I stand before you today, and I offer
20 my words to my ancestors, to those that came before me, to
21 my family who now watches over me, and to those little ones
22 that are yet to come, that I will speak the words to my
23 truth, to my experiences, and speak so everyone can hear
24 those things that need to change.

1 These are my words to my ancestors. These
2 are my promises to them. My words are all I have.
3 Everything else is on loan from the Creator, so I give to
4 each and every one of you my word today that these will be
5 my truths. *Meegwetch.*

6 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** So I'm going to
7 refer to you as Blu as opposed to using -- I'm used to
8 calling you Grandmother Blu, so I'm going to call you Blu
9 today if that's okay, and --

10 **MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS:** (Indiscernible).

11 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** -- thank you very
12 much for making that promise, and I just want to start with
13 you telling us a little bit about you and introducing
14 yourself and the type of work you do nowadays.

15 **MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS:** One of my primary
16 jobs is to work for Seneca College as an Elder on campus, a
17 job that I'm very thankful that I have because I get to sit
18 with those students who have moved to
19 post-education -- post-secondary education to find their
20 way in this world, and -- and the good thing is they
21 continue to teach me because I don't have all the answers.
22 I can only teach them what was taught to me and then learn
23 from them, so I'm very grateful for that work.

24 I work for the district school boards,

1 Toronto, York, Peel, and here for the National Inquiry, I
2 sit as Commissioner Brian Eyolfson's grandmother, his
3 spiritual adviser, to help him with his journey doing this
4 work.

5 Those are my primary jobs that I have, but
6 my work has been with community and always has been with
7 community. Community was the one that named me. Community
8 is the one that calls me when the needs are there, and
9 they're the ones that -- that are my first and foremost
10 work that I do.

11 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And you mentioned in
12 Toronto and the area, so you -- you currently are in
13 Toronto, although you've been doing lots of traveling
14 lately. Most of your work and the community you're talking
15 about is actually in Toronto?

16 **MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS:** Yes. I live in
17 Peterborough right now for about the last seven months, but
18 I'm in Toronto at least three, four times a week, so I
19 travel about, I don't know, 280 kilometers a day, back and
20 forth, to do that work.

21 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** I also want to talk
22 to you -- before we talk about your grandmother and how
23 your grandmother was murdered, I want to talk to you a bit
24 about your childhood and growing up, where -- you know, can

1 you please tell the Commissioner about your youth and where
2 the beginnings were?

3 **MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS:** Well, I kind of
4 have ties to British Columbia because I was conceived in
5 Comox, so we'll go back to there.

6 **(LAUGHTER)**

7 **MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS:** My brother was
8 born in Comox, and my parents were carrying me and wanting
9 to visit my grandmother, and they figured they still had
10 a -- just over a month left to be able to get to Toronto
11 and back, but three or four days into them arriving in
12 Toronto, I guess I decided I wanted to come a little bit
13 early. Always in a hurry. That's me. My first name was
14 Fleetafoot (ph), which means "fast on your feet," and I
15 guess that was true, and that's probably why they named me
16 that, because I came early.

17 So I was born in Toronto, and -- my parents
18 were only 18 years old, and they already had my brother,
19 who was 2 years old, so they were very young, and my
20 grandparents had talked together and -- while my mother was
21 in the hospital with me, and my grandparents came when I
22 was seven days old, and they decided that two young parents
23 of 18 and still not living in a good way wouldn't be the
24 best choices for parents, so they took my brother and

1 myself, they took me from the hospital at eight days old,
2 and brought me to my first home, and that's where I lived
3 was with my grandmother.

4 We had a great childhood. We -- we were
5 taught all the things that we needed to -- to know. I -- I
6 remember traveling on -- getting up early in the morning
7 and going on a bus with my grandmother, who I'll refer to
8 as *Kohkom*. *Kohkom* would say, come on, let's get going, and
9 we would have to carry certain items, and my job was to
10 carry a 2-man tent, and she took lots of bags, and my
11 brother took some, and we'd get on the Greyhound bus and go
12 to Peterborough, get off, then, in the middle of the road.
13 There was nothing there at that time, and we would find a
14 corn field and put our tent in a corn field so we wouldn't
15 be seen, and we would go around collecting the medicines
16 and the things she needed to make trades with, and we would
17 stay overnight in that corn field, and I used to say,
18 why -- why do we have to be here? And she would say,
19 because we don't want people to know we're here because
20 they'll come and take everything, and then they won't
21 understand why we do this, so let's just do this and get to
22 sleep.

23 So we'd get up the next morning and jump on
24 the next bus and head back to Toronto, and she would do her

1 medicines and prepare what she needed, and we would travel
2 down to Regent Park, Moss Park, a place with where all the
3 Indigenous people were because that was a time when no one
4 had money and no one wanted to hire anybody if you were
5 Indigenous. They'd just look at you and say, ah, you're a
6 dirty Indian, you're going to be drunk, and we're not
7 hiring you.

8 So a lot of people lived in that area, which
9 was low-income housing. It was called the projects, and we
10 would go there on a Sunday -- on a Saturday morning because
11 my grandmother would start making bannock the night before,
12 as soon as she got off work, and we'd have a whole shopping
13 cart of bannock to trade, and that's how we'd get a lot of
14 our items would be to go there, and she would trade, and
15 someone would give her ten pounds of flour, and someone a
16 dozen eggs, and someone a pound of butter, and someone some
17 good old Crisco or just plain lard, and we would have the
18 things that we needed, those staple things that cost a lot
19 of money to buy, and we didn't have a lot of money at that
20 time.

21 When I was 4, just about 4 years old, my
22 grandfather passed away, and my -- my *Kohkom* had to work
23 two jobs to take care of my brother and myself. She had
24 already raised all her children, and -- and most of her

1 other grandchildren and -- sorry, nieces and nephews, she
2 had raised them, but she knew that if my brother and I were
3 to be the people we were meant to be, that she had to do
4 that work and help teach us.

5 And while she was at work with her two jobs,
6 we weren't the most obedient children, I guess, because we
7 would be hungry. We had an aunty who -- when she was going
8 through menopause was probably one of the first or second
9 times she ever was to a doctor, and she went there to see
10 what she could do, and they gave her shock treatments, so
11 she never was the same. So my grandmother, my *Kohkom* would
12 ask her to come and watch us while she worked two jobs, but
13 she would forget. She'd forget that she had to do that, so
14 we would get up ourselves in the morning and go to school
15 and come home at lunchtime because the school was close,
16 and we would open up a can of whatever was there because we
17 weren't allowed to touch the stove because that's one of
18 the first lessons you learned: Don't touch the stove or
19 you'll burn the house down, and then we'll be living in the
20 corn field.

21 So we made sure we didn't do that, and there
22 would be no supervision there for us, but we knew what we
23 were supposed to do and what we were not supposed to do in
24 that way, so we might eat a half a head of lettuce. That

1 would be our lunch between the two of us, and we might just
2 eat crackers. Whatever was there, we would have.

3 And then at dinnertime, we'd come home, and
4 we would hope she'd be there, but sometimes she wasn't.
5 Most of the time, she wasn't, and -- and that was hard. My
6 brother a couple years older than me and very -- very brave
7 at the time when I look back, he would take us to
8 High Park, and he'd say, don't worry, we're going to eat;
9 it's my job to make sure we eat. And so he would jump over
10 the duck pond at High Park, and I'd be on one side of the
11 fence, and he'd be on the other, and he'd grab a goose, and
12 he'd snap its neck. It made an awful sound in the
13 beginning because it would be squawking, and he'd be
14 yelling at it to be quiet, and -- so he'd snap its neck,
15 and then he'd thank that goose, and he'd throw it over the
16 fence, and he'd say, now pull the feathers out real quick,
17 and I'd be, like, 5, 6, 7 years old doing this, and we'd
18 pull the feathers out, and we'd save the feathers, and then
19 we would cook it on a barbecue grill that we had taken from
20 somebody's backyard because we knew we had to eat, so he'd
21 make a fire, and we'd cook that goose, and we'd bring some
22 home for my grandmother because we knew she'd come home at
23 11 o'clock because she was working two jobs.

24 And when she'd get home, she'd yell out,

1 would say, what do you want at my door? And they'd say,
2 where's the papers for these children? She said, we didn't
3 have papers. We didn't have paper. We never wrote on
4 paper. I'll go get you some sand from the backyard, and
5 I'll write for you. She said, that's how we used to work.
6 We used to write in sand when we had something to say, and
7 that's what we believe in, traditional law, and that's
8 written in the sand only, and then it's erased when you're
9 finished because we're not supposed to leave our marks like
10 that.

11 So they'd get angry, and they'd say, well,
12 we're going to check into this because our laws state that
13 you have to have signed custody of these children. Where
14 are their parents? She said, in British Columbia. They'd
15 say, where? She goes, go find them. And that was her
16 answer, right? Because our law supersedes their law, and
17 that's what I was always taught.

18 So we would be a little bit scared, but you
19 know, a couple days would go by, and we would be hungry
20 again, so back down to High Park. High Park was our rez.
21 We called it High Park Rez; 273 hectares of land that was
22 gifted to the city of Toronto on our land, but yet, we're
23 not allowed to live on our land? Didn't seem right to us,
24 even as kids.

1 Children's Aid's name would be in there, as well, but
2 that's how we had to live, right, because we didn't have a
3 lot of money, and being an adult, how unjust was that that
4 the Government was paying non-Indigenous families to take
5 care of Indigenous kids, but yet they wouldn't give a cent
6 to my *Kohkom*, and she had to work two jobs? That's an
7 injustice in itself, but if you give your kids away, we'll
8 pay you. So it never seemed right to me.

9 The only hard time we ever had was my
10 brother one time said, jump on the bikes, and we're going
11 to High Park, and I thought, oh, I wonder what we're
12 getting today, and I thought, okay, maybe we're going go
13 fishing. I like to fish. And now we had a broomstick and
14 a roll of duct tape and a brand new hunting knife, a
15 hunting knife that he got by going down Ronsonvale (ph)
16 Avenue asking people for 10 cents because he had to get
17 back on the streetcar to go home, and he was real busy
18 because he saved up 20 bucks because it cost him 16.99 for
19 the knife, but he got it without having to steal it because
20 he got the money, and he taped that broom pole up when we
21 got to the park and stuck the knife on the end of it and
22 get my *Kohkum's* roll of sinew out and tied it around the
23 other end of the broomstick and wrapped it around his wrist
24 and said, we're going hunting beaver.

1 And we sat there for hours, and the sun was
2 just about going down, and he spotted the beaver coming out
3 of the -- the beaver dam, the hut there, and first shot, he
4 threw it, and he got that beaver, and he pulled it in, and
5 it was, like, I bet you 25 pounds, and I think I might have
6 weighed 40 or 45, and him probably 60, and we threw it in
7 our burlap potato bag sack because that was our backpacks.
8 We didn't have real cloth. We had burlap sacks. And then
9 he tried to carry it home on his back, but it was too
10 heavy. It was 25 pounds, so he duct-taped it to the
11 handlebars on his bike, and off we went home, but we spent
12 about a good hour slicing the heels of that beaver and then
13 trying to pull the skin off, but it wouldn't come off,
14 right? The fur wouldn't come off, and we never had a
15 beaver before, so we didn't even know how to skin it, and
16 by that time, we were hungry enough that we just took it
17 and put it on the old blue arborite table, those blue
18 arborite tables with the silver legs that pulled apart and
19 that you could put a leaf in. Well, we forgot that. We
20 didn't put no -- nothing underneath the beaver on the
21 kitchen table, and we ate something and went to bed.

22 By the time my *Kohkom* got home, that beaver
23 had bled all through the table, down over the floor, and
24 she called us out, and she was a little bit upset this

1 time. And when we got there, she looked at us, and it took
2 about two minutes for her to say something, so we knew we
3 were in trouble this time, and then she looked at us and
4 said, what is this? And she looked at my brother, because
5 she knew he was going to be smart. She goes, I know it's a
6 beaver. I'm assuming it come from the park. Why is it
7 like this? We said we didn't know how to take the fur off,
8 and we were hungry.

9 She hung her head, and she said, go back to
10 your room and change and just come out in your underwear
11 because I don't want to bleach too much. So she taught us
12 how to skin that beaver at 11 o'clock at night, and she
13 taught us how to season it, and she put it in the oven, and
14 she said, you'll be nice and full tomorrow morning because
15 we'll cook it real slow overnight, and don't worry, you
16 won't have to go to the park for the week because you got a
17 pretty big beaver there. So we were real happy, then,
18 right, because she taught us something new, but she always
19 taught us what we needed to know, all those things about
20 survival, living in a city, living away because our rights
21 were taken away because some of my family married non-
22 Indigenous people, so now our Indigenous families were no
23 longer Indigenous, right? I don't know how you go
24 overnight from being Indigenous to non-Indigenous, and who

1 gave the Government the right to say who we are, to say who
2 our blood line is.

3 But we did what we had to to survive, and it
4 was hard, but I remember all the fun I had with her, right?
5 I remember all the times when she went without for us
6 because that's what *kohkums* do, right? They take care of
7 their grandchildren to the best of their ability. She
8 didn't have a good life growing up. She had nothing. You
9 know, they had to scrape to get by as well.

10 I don't know if they were in residential
11 schools because it was never talked about, but I know my
12 one aunty, she would wash us with Javex so we wouldn't be
13 dirty Indians. She would wash all the hardwood floor with
14 Javex after we had just put the paste wax on and buffed it
15 with them old buffers, and she'd come along with a bottle
16 of Javex and pour it down and get down on her hands and
17 knees and scrub it with a brush because we didn't want to
18 be dirty, so I think she was in residential school, but I
19 never got to ask her.

20 So there was always those derogatory remarks
21 being thrown at us kids because we were -- there was only
22 two of us for a long time that lived in that area, and then
23 a good friend of mine now, her name is Tanesha Oakram (ph),
24 her family came, and her mother was Ojibway, so we had

1 another -- third kid to play with, but -- and she was
2 segregated, as well, because she was half-Jamaican and
3 half-Ojibway, so she didn't fit in anywhere either.

4 But my grandmother knew that Children's Aid
5 would be coming, and she always was aware that they were
6 going to knock on our door at any time, and which they did.
7 I mean, we had them come over and knock on the door at
8 4 o'clock on a Friday afternoon, and my brother would get
9 the door, and he'd say, oh, my *Kohkom* went over to
10 Loblaw's, she has to get us some more juice because we ran
11 out of juice, and they said, well, how long will she be
12 gone? And he said, I don't know, a half an hour. Where's
13 your aunty? She's busy upstairs, and they'd say, okay,
14 we'll be back. And he'd watch for them to leave, and he'd
15 jump on his bike, and he'd drive from Dundas and Bloor on
16 his bicycle up to Dundas and Keele, and he'd get my aunty,
17 and he'd say, aunty, come quick, the Children's Aid coming
18 back, and they'd get on the streetcar and come back.

19 And by the time she was already in there,
20 she'd sit three feet behind the door, and she'd sit there
21 on a chair, and when they knocked on the door, we opened
22 the door, and they'd ask her, you know, can we come in?
23 No. They'd say, well, you know we have a right to come in.
24 She said, you want to pay half the rent, you can come in.

1 (LAUGHTER)

2 MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS: And she wouldn't
3 let them in, and, you know, they'd ask her questions. You
4 know, are the children fed? She said, do they look
5 starving? Well, do the children have enough clothing and
6 everything? Don't they clothes on? Don't they look clean?
7 Can't you smell the bleach? So she wouldn't let them in,
8 and then when she had enough of them, she'd say, I'm
9 finished with you. I have no more -- I have no more
10 answers for you because you shouldn't be answering me
11 questions, and she'd slam the door, and off they'd go.

12 So that didn't really help out the
13 situation, but it was a point of resistance, right, and a
14 point of being interfered with that she didn't like. So my
15 grandmother knew a time was coming that Children's Aid, you
16 know, might actually take us away, and when my brother was
17 10, I was 8, he decided to go and live out here, actually,
18 in Chemainus with my father. My father was living out in
19 Chemainus, because he said he wasn't going to any
20 Children's Aid, so he went and lived with my father in
21 Chemainus, and my grandmother started talking to the family
22 down the street, which was a white family from Nova Scotia
23 and Newfoundland, and they had five kids of their own, and
24 she'd made arrangements with them that would they take me

1 from Monday to Friday and make sure that Children's Aid
2 would be satisfied, and then on the weekends I'd go and
3 stay with her because she only would live up the street
4 because she knew and she heard the stories when she was
5 down in Regent Park of how many people lost their children,
6 and they never got to see them again, and they couldn't
7 find them, so she wanted me close.

8 So they agreed, so when I was 10, I went to
9 live with the white family down the street, and that's
10 where I found out about the injustice of the payments
11 because they were being paid to keep me in their home.
12 They were given a certificate for dental or prescriptions
13 or for anything that I might need, and I had to convert to
14 Catholicism because they were Catholics, so it was like I
15 was a double agent living a double life because during the
16 week, I would be a Catholic and go to church everything
17 else, and then on the weekends I'd be with my *Kohkom*, and
18 we'd be singing songs and drumming and going out to the
19 park and going -- learning about which medicine is what, so
20 she prepared me.

21 I -- I just have one more thing to throw in.
22 I just want to back it up a bit. In between that time, my
23 brother and I had to go to a before-school and an
24 after-school home or else we would be taken away by the

1 Children's Aid, and there was no -- no family, I guess,
2 that would take both of us, so I was in one home with a
3 family called the McDonalds (ph) and my brother was in
4 another home just around the corner from me with the
5 Perrys (ph), and we were there with them for a few years,
6 and when I first went there, it wasn't too bad because I
7 just had to be there for about a half an hour, half an hour
8 in the morning, and -- until 4:30 when my aunty would take
9 care of us because my brother would jump on his bike and
10 run up and tell her to be at home at 4:30, and -- but the
11 bad part was that was when I was 7 years old, and -- I
12 think we have a picture of me with one of my nephews. I
13 don't know if we can find it to put up. Well, there, I was
14 9. Okay? I was 9 years old there, and my nephew was about
15 3 -- 2 and a half, 3 years old, so I was really small. I'm
16 not that big now. I'm bigger this way but not bigger that
17 way.

18 (LAUGHTER)

19 MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS: So I was 9 years
20 old there, and that was -- that was out in Delta, B.C.,
21 when I went to visit my -- my nephew. So I was two years
22 younger than that, and I was at this care family's home,
23 and this woman used to say to us when we came home after
24 school, I'm going to make you dinner, go and do your -- go

1 and do your stuff, because she had another couple kids
2 there, and I would sit on the third floor, and she'd
3 say -- and when I call you, say, yes, mother. And I'd sit
4 on that third-floor landing, and she would call us, and I
5 would sit there, and I would count, and I would say when I
6 get to 10 I'll say, "yes, mother." And I'd get up to 8, 9,
7 I couldn't get to 10 because she wasn't my mother, and she
8 wasn't nice, so I would sit on that landing till it was
9 time to go home so I wouldn't get dinner, but I refused to
10 call someone "mother" when they weren't my mother and they
11 didn't deserve to be called "mother."

12 And while I was there, at 7 years old was
13 the first time I was sexually abused by another person who
14 was there from care, and that's how the Government was
15 taking care of us. That's how Children's Aid was taking
16 care of us, by forcing us to go to somebody's house and be
17 sexually abused at 7 years old by other foster kids that
18 are in the system that had already been hardened and been
19 abused, and a lot of the times abused people become
20 abusers, and that's exactly what this person was.

21 So that was hard, right, and I couldn't tell
22 my grandmother because the threat was, I'll tell Children's
23 Aid and they'll take you away for sure because they'll know
24 you're lying, so you couldn't tell, so you just had to be

1 fearful every time you came from school and hope that they
2 weren't there because there was no option.

3 I don't know if you have anything to...

4 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** No. Thank you for
5 sharing. So once you were living -- you were living down
6 the street with a family, you still get the chance to see
7 your grandmother on weekends and stuff, I'm assuming?

8 **MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS:** M'hm. Oh, yeah.

9 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Yeah.

10 **MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS:** It was the
11 highlight of my week.

12 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Hm. You had
13 mentioned that you also had to go to the church a lot,
14 attend the church almost daily?

15 **MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS:** Yeah. I guess
16 you would call her my foster mother. I called them my
17 adopted parents although I was never adopted. We had to go
18 every night, especially the month of May, which was the
19 Month of Mary -- things I can't forget -- and do the rosary
20 and learn all the prayers and make sure the priest seen you
21 because if he didn't, he'd be telling your parents that he
22 didn't see you, and then you'd be in trouble because he
23 didn't see you.

24 So yeah, we had to go almost every night

1 because she was a deacon in the church, and that was part
2 of the things we did, six kids walking down the road, going
3 to church every night. So it wasn't the most fun times,
4 but on the weekends, it was -- it was good because I didn't
5 have to go on Friday night, and I got to go and see
6 my -- my *Kohkom*.

7 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** I understand you
8 spent a number of years, actually, with that family, so
9 from the time you were ten until how old were you when
10 you were --

11 **MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS:** I was 19 when I
12 left there, because I felt an obligation, and I felt a
13 responsibility, and it wasn't entirely bad. They had good
14 intentions, but they only knew what they knew. They would
15 introduce us -- introduce me and if my brother came around,
16 this is our little Indians that we adopted. So, you know,
17 and they thought that was okay to say because that's what
18 they learned. They didn't realize the racism and the
19 discrimination that they were saying, and we weren't old
20 enough or we didn't want to challenge them, and we just
21 thought, well, yeah, that's who we are, so that's okay, but
22 it really wasn't, right? And a few times, you know, I got
23 into arguments when I was older, and they would make a
24 comment, like, well, we tried to beat the Indian out of

1 you, and it didn't work; and no, and it never will, right?
2 So, I mean, these are comments that were common especially
3 coming from the east coast because we know the history of
4 the east coast, of the annihilation of a whole group of
5 Indians. You know, we know that those were the British
6 colonizers who came over on the ships. They were still
7 under British rule. They were the last ones to join
8 confederation. So they still had that British ruling in
9 them and thinking that they were the original owners of
10 this land and they were the ones that made the laws, so you
11 couldn't challenge that as a kid.

12 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And, actually, you
13 still -- you're still connected with them. You still feel
14 like you have responsibilities and obligations to them. Is
15 that fair to say?

16 **MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS:** Yeah, it is.
17 I -- I -- they moved up from Nova Scotia, and I even moved
18 them into my house with me because that's part of the
19 kindness that I learned. That's part of the reciprocal
20 understanding of following those -- those teachings of
21 respect and truth and honesty and humility, bravery and
22 wisdom and love. Right? So, yeah, and I still -- I still
23 have contact with them. They called me today, and now that
24 they're older, they're like, 80 -- 81 and 75. It's hard to

1 walk away when you see someone who needs help, even though
2 you may not have been the number one child on the list, but
3 being raised in a way that this is my work, this is who I
4 was raised to be, to do this work, and I -- I wouldn't do
5 it any other way.

6 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** I want to step back,
7 and I want to step back to the day that you actually
8 discovered your grandmother murdered, and I know it's not
9 going to be easy to tell, so take your time and share as
10 much as you feel comfortable sharing.

11 **MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS:** Yeah, I -- you
12 see, my -- my *Kohkom* was like my mother. She was the first
13 person who loved me. I was 16, and I had -- had a day off
14 school, a professional development day, and I had decided
15 to go with my foster mother to Dufferin Mall, and I -- we
16 were walking up the street, and I said, hang on, let me go
17 and see if my *Kohkom* needs anything, because I know she had
18 just retired a year before, so I knew she was going to be
19 there during the day now.

20 And I went and I knocked on her door, and
21 there was no answer, and I thought, ah, I'm going to go
22 around to the back and see if her coat's on the chair
23 because that's what she did. She came in and put her
24 jacket or coat or her sweater or whatever on, and if she

1 was home, there'd be a teacup on the table. If she was
2 gone out, the teacup would be in the sink, and I looked in,
3 and I seen the teacup on the table, but I seen two -- two
4 teacups on the table and her sweater on the chair. So I
5 knew she would be there, and I knocked on the back door and
6 peeked in. I couldn't see her, and I went around to the
7 side of the house, and I thought, I'll look in and see.
8 They have a parrot, and if that parrot cage is open, I know
9 for sure she's home because that parrot would tear apart
10 her curtains. She wasn't very happy that parrot, and the
11 parrot cage was open, so I knew she was home.

12 And when I got back to the front door, it
13 was open, and I -- sorry. When I was going back to the
14 front door, I seen this man named Lawrence Dorian (ph), who
15 was a friend of -- I guess you would call him my
16 step-grandfather. My grandmother had been married a few
17 years before that to him. He was our neighbour, and I
18 motioned to him to go to the door, but by the time I got
19 there, I was 16 and quite capable of running then and got
20 around to the door and tried door. It was open. And he
21 came walking up the hallway towards me, and I asked him,
22 hey, Larry, what are you doing here? And he said, oh, I
23 just thought I'd stop in. I'm off today. And I noticed he
24 had on an ugly, ugly colour rust shirt, and he had

1 a -- sorry -- a stain on his shirt and a pair of blue jeans
2 on and a pair of black dress shoes, and I looked at him and
3 I thought, oh, wow, my grandmother must have gave him some
4 ice cream with strawberry jam, because that's what she
5 would do when somebody came over, right? Give you
6 something a little bit sweet. And I asked him, where is
7 she? And she said, she's gone over to Loblaw's to get some
8 milk, the same thing that we used to say, so I figured it
9 must be true. So I said, okay, well, let her know I'm
10 going to Dufferin Mall, and I'll come and check on her
11 later. And he leaned up against the wall, just on the
12 other side of the bedroom where I couldn't see in the
13 bedroom. So I told him, okay, I'll be back later, and he
14 said, okay, and I left and went off to Dufferin Mall.

15 And I was coming up the street in the
16 afternoon, and I seen a fire truck there up -- up the
17 street, and I seen an ambulance, and I seen some police
18 cars, and I thought, oh, something must have happened at
19 the laundry right beside her house, and then as I got up
20 the road further, one of the neighbours came out and said,
21 you better go and see, I think the ambulance has got your
22 grandmother in there. And so as I was walking fast and
23 getting to cross over, the ambulance drove by me, so I went
24 running up to the house, and I -- and I went running in,

1 and the police were in there, and my step-grandfather was
2 in there, and I said, what's going on? What's happening?
3 What's happening? And the police said, well, they've taken
4 your grandmother away. She's no longer with us. And I
5 said, what happened? I said, I was here today, and I
6 talked with Larry. Right? I said, Larry was here today,
7 and I talked to him. She was fine then. She was at
8 Loblaw's. What's going on? So the police took me and
9 said, come with me to the kitchen.

10 And as they did that, my mother -- my birth
11 mother had come down from Jane and Weston Road. It's where
12 she lived. So she lived in Toronto for about 15 years, and
13 we seen her once -- once a year at Christmastime, and she
14 was only a 10-minute car ride away from us. But she came
15 in, and she was drunk, so she had driven down there drunk,
16 so I guess they phoned her, and she came in, and I was
17 crying, and she looked at me, and she said, why are you
18 crying? It's my mother. And I was very angry at that time
19 because I thought, no, it's my mother, because she couldn't
20 be, and -- so that was very hard, and she was acting up,
21 and I think that's probably one of the first times I seen
22 that -- how my *Kohkom* had protected me from what I would
23 have grown up with, which was that alcoholism and that
24 abusive language and things like that.

1 So while I was talking to the police and
2 telling them what I seen there that day, I looked down, and
3 under the kitchen cabinets was an old-style cabinet that
4 had an indent underneath the bottom of the cupboards, and I
5 looked, and I seen partial -- one set of my grandmother's
6 teeth, and I started to cry harder because I knew something
7 must have happened for sure because why would her teeth be
8 laying there on the floor?

9 So the police took me into the living room,
10 and I think that time my mother was outside yelling at
11 whoever, and I have no idea who -- where my
12 step-grandfather was, but there was three or four police
13 officers there, and I sat down on the couch, and as I was
14 sitting there, continuing to tell him how I had gone around
15 from the front to the back, I looked down and underneath
16 the TV was the other set of her teeth, and I thought,
17 what -- what did he do between the kitchen and the living
18 room? And you say my grandfather found her in bed? He
19 thought she was sleeping? That's a -- a full length of the
20 house.

21 So it took a while for me to be able to tell
22 my story to them because I knew that something bad
23 happened, but I didn't know what, and I didn't know what
24 for a long time. I just knew that he had murdered her, but

1 that's all I was told.

2 I remember the name of the seargent named
3 Seargent Jack Press from homicide department. He came and
4 talked to me afterwards, as well, and -- I don't remember
5 much from that time. I lost that school year. This
6 happened on April 14th, 1977, so I lost that school year.
7 I don't remember the days. I don't remember any events. I
8 remember my brother coming from B.C. to Turner and Porter
9 Funeral Home. That's where she was laid -- laid out for
10 people to come and visit, and I remember my brother having
11 a fight with my mother because he had come in an ugly
12 three-piece rust suit. That colour rust, I don't like at
13 all, and he -- she was angry with him because my brother
14 and I are both two-spirited, and my grandmother raised us
15 to be two-spirited people, allowed us to be two-spirited
16 people, because she said we have gifts for the people, and
17 my mother was angry and screamed and yelled at my brother
18 saying, you're not a -- you're not a boy, you're not a man,
19 you're a woman. And my brother, of course, was 18 at the
20 time. He just said, I don't have to listen to you, and he
21 turned around and left, and I started crying because my
22 brother was leaving again, and that was at a time when I
23 needed him.

24 And I don't remember anything else until I

1 was in court, and that was quite a while later. I don't
2 even know how long, September or something. I don't know.
3 But while I was in court, I sat there for about three weeks
4 inside the courtroom, and I -- I had no counsel. I had no
5 one to help me. I got on the streetcar. I put my -- I
6 think it was a quarter at the time and went down to the
7 courthouse and sat there listening to stuff I couldn't
8 understand, and I remember them calling my name to go up to
9 the stand. I'm sure I told them the story, the same thing,
10 because that was the truth, what happened. I don't
11 remember if they cross-examined me. I don't remember any
12 of that stuff because that whole year was lost.

13 I remember my aunty, my Aunty Val, which I
14 don't know if her picture was up there or not, but I have a
15 picture of my Aunt Val who just passed away two years ago
16 now, and she came with me the day of the sentencing, and
17 she was like a second mother to me because she lived on the
18 second floor with my cousins, and -- so she helped me. She
19 sat there with me, and that's when I heard what had
20 happened to my *Kohkom*. That's when I heard that he was
21 originally charged with second-degree murder and indignity
22 to a human body.

23 After he had strangled her, trying to get to
24 some money that was underneath their kitchen sink in a

1 small 12-inch-by-12-inch lock box that my *Kohkom* didn't
2 know the combination to because they were saving to go on a
3 honeymoon, and he had worked with my step-grandfather as a
4 shipper and receiver for Overland Express. He had to be
5 able to read and write because he was a shipper/receiver,
6 but yet he was telling the Court that he couldn't read or
7 write and that he didn't know anything, he was a simple
8 man.

9 So they pled him down to manslaughter and
10 they dropped the charge from where after he strangled her,
11 and he broke a bone in her neck, and she suffocated to
12 death, and she scratched him. He was all scratched up,
13 apparently, so she fought. She was only 5-foot tall and
14 maybe a hundred pounds, if that.

15 And after he had strangled her, he had sex
16 with her while she was dead, with my *Kohkom*, because she
17 wasn't worth anything to him. She was my world. And this
18 man could stand there and say he didn't mean it. How could
19 you not mean it while you had your hands around somebody's
20 neck? How could you have -- how could you not mean it when
21 one part of their teeth ended up in one room and one in
22 another? How could you not mean it when you picked them
23 off of the floor and put them in a bed and had sex with
24 them after they were dead? And I'm glad I didn't know

1 about it before the trial because I would have had people
2 go down there and take his life.

3 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Excuse me, Blu.

4 Could we take a short break?

5 **MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS:** Yes.

6 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** We'll take a

7 5-minute break, please.

8 --- Upon recessing at 3:53 p.m.

9 --- Upon resuming at 4:06 p.m.

10 **(DRUMMING)**

11 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** *Meegwetch.* Thank
12 you. Thank you for the song.

13 **MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS:** *Haw'aa.*

14 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** So I know the last
15 point you were touching on is very difficult, and I don't
16 want us to take you back there, but can I take you back to
17 the courtroom?

18 **MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS:** Yeah.

19 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** I think there's a
20 little more in terms of you had just shared that it was
21 over the money, but can you talk a little more about the
22 relationship between Larry and your step-grandfather?

23 **MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS:** Uh-huh. So Larry
24 and my step-grandfather's name was Vic, they worked

1 together at Overland Express, and they knew each other, and
2 they knew each other well, and my -- my step-grandfather
3 had for sure told him that there was money there in that
4 safe, and that's what he had went there to get. He had
5 called in sick that day, I found out later, and what I
6 didn't say earlier is that my step-grandfather, I told you
7 he lived beside us, but I only went there when he wasn't
8 there because he was another one of my abusers, and again,
9 I couldn't tell because I had been placed down the street
10 from the Children's Aid, and I knew that I would be taken
11 away from down the street. That was a for-sure now. So I
12 didn't trust him, and I still don't know to this day if he
13 had anything to do with it because he never talked to me
14 even after that. He destroyed all the pictures that I had
15 or my *Kohkom* had of us. He threw everything of hers away,
16 and seeing as they were legally married, he had the say on
17 what happened to her, and he decided to have her cremated
18 and put in common ground at Prospect Cemetery, which
19 is -- "common ground" means that she's put in the -- put in
20 the ground with numerous other people, with no name, no
21 footstone, no headstone can go on there. It's a number on
22 the ground, and she didn't deserve to be laid to rest
23 there. I -- I would have taken her back to the east coast
24 and put her in the Atlantic ocean like I did with my birth

1 mother's ashes and sent her home because she'd get put in a
2 hole in the ground where lots of other people were, but you
3 know what? She probably would have liked that because she
4 was for the people, and that's the way it gives me comfort
5 knowing that, because she helped out people wherever she
6 could and however she could. So that's probably the way it
7 was meant to be.

8 But sitting in a courtroom there and not
9 having anybody to help you, as a 16-year-old kid, right?
10 It wasn't right. You know, I know it's, you know, 41 years
11 ago, but there was no dignity for anybody who was -- or
12 identified as an Indigenous person, and it's not much
13 better today. It really isn't. You know, we can think of,
14 you know, how -- how far we've come, and we have come a
15 certain distance, but we haven't come far enough, nowhere
16 near far enough, because we can't still be who we are. We
17 can't still do our ceremonies like they should be.
18 We -- we don't have access to lands to do them. Who wants
19 to sweat inside the city? We're not meant to sweat in
20 between concrete buildings. We're not meant to do our
21 *Yuwipi* or our tie-up ceremonies or any of our ceremonies in
22 the -- in the city, in the concrete, right?

23 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Can we talk a little
24 bit about what happened to Larry after he was convicted of

1 the manslaughter?

2 **MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS:** So that day that
3 I heard those things in the courtroom and I finally seen
4 who he -- who and how he really was, he got sentenced to
5 15 years, ten years to be served in Penetanguishene mental
6 health centre, so he got to sit there and have fun, watch
7 TV, not be behind bars like he should have been. He got to
8 be institutionalized in a place where he would be given
9 medication to make him feel good, and a man who knew how to
10 read and write but claimed that he didn't and got away with
11 it because of our criminal system. That's not our system.
12 The system we have is not our system. Our system, he would
13 have been brought before the grandmothers, and he would
14 have been sat down, and he would have been explained to of
15 how he impacted not only the immediate family but the
16 extended family, the community, and the whole nation,
17 right? And he would have had to apologize in front of
18 everyone, and he would have had to speak to me directly,
19 and he would have had to apologize, and he would have had
20 to do something to show that he had truly learned from what
21 he did was wrong. I never got to tell him how I felt. I
22 never got to tell him the impact that he had on my life or
23 the rest of my family. What was already a fractured
24 family, he became fragmented because I couldn't speak to a

1 mother anymore and never came to visit me anymore because
2 my *Kohkom* wasn't there. Yeah, I talked to her once a year
3 and I didn't even know she was my mother until I was 6 or
4 7 years old, but she was still my mother, and I lost that
5 contact until I was well into my 30s, and I never got to
6 learn from her more because there's still a lot I don't
7 know, and I'm 57 years old, and I could have still had a
8 lot of time to learn from her, and maybe she could have
9 taught me how to process anger because I still have a
10 problem with that, especially when it comes to the
11 injustices, because I never seen her angry. Never.

12 But he got 15 years, serving 10, then parole
13 for the next 5, and while I was sitting at a job -- I
14 already had my -- my children. This is my daughter Dawn
15 who's come here with me to -- to sit and -- and comfort me
16 and help me. She didn't get to meet her -- her great
17 grandmother. She didn't even know about these things that
18 I'm speaking about today because I didn't want to tell her,
19 but I need our -- our family's lineage and knowledge to be
20 carried on, and she's strong. She's strong.

21 So while I was at work and already had my
22 children, in walked Sergeant Jack Press from the homicide
23 department. I have no idea how he found me to tell me that
24 Lawrence Dorian will be getting out of -- out of jail.

1 He's eligible -- eligible for parole, and he's been a model
2 prisoner, so there should be no reason why he can't get
3 out. I said, what does that mean? He said, well, he'll be
4 getting out, and he'll be going to live in Burlington,
5 which is why I have a problem crossing that bridge, that
6 Burlington bridge, because I know he was walking around and
7 my grandmother wasn't. He was able to be free and live his
8 life then, and he said, he'll be there with his sister, but
9 if you see him, give us a call. Well, I'm 26 years old
10 now, right? 27 years old. Is he coming after me because I
11 was the one that was there in the house that knew he was
12 there? Oh, we don't think so, they said. There should be
13 no reason. He's been a model prisoner. I didn't hear
14 anything about whether or not I could say I didn't want him
15 to come out. They didn't say anything to me that I could
16 appear before anything, and maybe there wasn't anything at
17 that time. I don't know, but I certainly wasn't advised of
18 anything; besides, he's been the least, and he's been a
19 model prisoner, as if that cleared the sheets of
20 everything.

21 He never once wrote a letter saying he was
22 sorry for it. If he had all that time in a rehabilitation
23 place, I never heard from him. I don't even know if he's
24 alive today. Probably not, but -- and I don't want to look

1 into it because if he was alive, I wouldn't want him to be,
2 and that goes against my own teachings, and I'm -- and I'm
3 an Elder in the community, but a man who disgraces a woman
4 after she's passed away is not a man. Even our animals
5 don't do things like that. He -- I can't even refer to him
6 in a name because there is no word for it, but he's not
7 human and he's not animal. He's below -- I can't even give
8 a name to it, as I say, because our Creator didn't make
9 something like that. That's the product of colonization
10 and views that are non-Indigenous. Those are the ways of
11 someone who's non-Indigenous and a colonizer.

12 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Blu, I do want to
13 return to you to talk about some of the community work you
14 have, but first, I'd like to ask Dawn a couple of questions
15 if that's okay.

16 **MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS:** M'hm.

17 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** So -- can you turn
18 the microphone on?

19 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Oh, sorry.

20 **MS. DAWN GAUDIO:** Sure.

21 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Thank you, Dawn.

22 I -- I know that you grew up with a mother who did a lot of
23 work in the community and was often working late hours, who
24 was often on call, helping people in need, and I know that

1 today's the first time you've heard some of the stories,
2 and so I'm -- the question I have for you is hard, and it
3 might not come easy, but looking back, do you understand a
4 little bit more about some of the work your mom's done?

5 **MS. DAWN GAUDIO:** I think my mom was always
6 who she was supposed to be. She always did the work she
7 was supposed to do, that she was called to do, and to be
8 completely honest, I don't think that the paths she's
9 chosen in life were dictated by the events that she
10 endured. I believe that there was a lot of quirks, maybe,
11 that she acquired along the way because of it. Like, the
12 continuous canned food. So much canned food, always in the
13 cupboard, and just, like, being really strict --

14 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** Hm.

15 **MS. DAWN GAUDIO:** -- and not being able to
16 go anywhere or stay overnight or -- like, really regimented
17 times to be in -- in the house, and -- like, overtly
18 protective. Like, a lot of safety precautions. Yeah, I
19 can see how that would -- would be. I mean, she always
20 said she didn't want anybody to hurt us, so we couldn't
21 really do much, at least me, especially. My brother could
22 play outside a little bit longer, but not me. So I just
23 thought she was super overprotective, but yeah.

24 Working with women, especially, and

1 children, like, she always did work like that. She always
2 did talk to everybody. I don't think that, myself, my own
3 belief, a personal event in your life or something that she
4 went through broke her. I think it scarred her, but I
5 don't think it broke her, and I don't think that we should
6 let those things break us.

7 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** No, that's true.
8 You mentioned quirks and the canned food and sort of the
9 strict -- the protection.

10 **MS. DAWN GAUDIO:** Lots of cans. Lots of
11 cans.

12 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** And lots of
13 protection, not being able to go out. I imagine she made
14 you -- once there was the technology -- text you or touch
15 base with her or phone or...

16 **MS. DAWN GAUDIO:** And we had very limited
17 computer time and very little time on the phone, specific
18 time frames. Like, pretty army-like. Yeah.

19 **(LAUGHTER)**

20 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** But, you know,
21 something your -- your mom just said is, you know, the
22 lineage and the -- the culture and the teachings as -- and
23 being able to pass that ancestry on, she's still been able
24 to do that, hasn't she?

1 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** So, Blu, I -- I am
2 also from the Toronto community and well aware of the work
3 that you do in the community for youth, for two-spirited,
4 for women. I know that some of your work is driven by your
5 life experience. You know, Dawn saying what was meant to
6 be may have been part of what's put you on the path,
7 but -- and you were pretty modest in the introduction about
8 the type of work you do, so I want to talk to you a little
9 bit about the work you do in the community and why you do
10 that work.

11 **MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS:** Well, I knew who
12 I was meant to be from the time I was 4 years old because
13 my -- my *Kohkom* told me, and then paths in my life have
14 lead me to where I am now. One of those paths was on my
15 way to Sundance, and I learned the buffalo dance, and I do
16 that buffalo dance for our youth who commit suicide, and
17 we -- at Sundance, we hang a buffalo skull off our back,
18 and we offer that up for those people who have committed
19 suicide so that that buffalo, which is the biggest and the
20 strongest animal we have -- Commissioner, as you know,
21 being from Saskatchewan, it sustained us for our lives
22 until they were almost run into extinction, for fun and
23 games from the nonIndigenous people, so we would
24 starve -- that buffalo's the only one big and strong enough

1 to take those suicide spirits back to the Creator because
2 they've interrupted their path. They've stopped that
3 normal progression that they were supposed to walk and
4 learn, and they did that because they were suffering. We
5 failed them. We failed them as human beings because they
6 were suffering, and we didn't see it, and much like I did
7 to my daughter, I hid stuff from her because didn't want
8 her to know about it, right? I didn't want her to have to
9 bear that weight, but our children know, and those young
10 ones, those young ones, they -- they know things that we
11 think they don't know, and they become overburdened because
12 we haven't taught them because we lost our ways. Our ways
13 were taken away, so culture's very important for us, to
14 regain our culture and our languages and our -- and our
15 ceremonies because that's how our ancestors survived, and
16 in that ceremony, the buffalo collects those spirits and
17 takes them back to the Creator, and it's usually a
18 year-long process that that happens because we have to
19 mourn, right? Our tears are our healing, right? Those
20 tears are washing away those things that we need to let go
21 of.

22 I have a hard time crying because I see so
23 much sadness, and I experienced a lot of sadness, and I see
24 our youth experiencing those sadnesses, so I have to be

1 strong for them, and we do that work for students because
2 it needs to be done. Our youth are killing themselves
3 left, right, and centre, right, because of the world we
4 live in and the things that have happened in our world and
5 the losses that we suffered through those that -- from
6 residential school and '60s scoop.

7 It hasn't been an easy journey for
8 Indigenous people since -- since those ships landed and our
9 ways started diminish, so I do that work for them. I sit
10 and I listen to them. I spend time with them. I cook for
11 them. I cooked up some pickerel a couple of weeks ago
12 while I was there because they're hungry, because we still
13 can't afford to feed our children, and I know what hungry
14 felt like, so I cook for them at Seneca College. We whip
15 them up bannock. We bring in food ourselves to feed our
16 students because even our institutions don't have enough
17 funding in our resource centres to help out the need that's
18 out there. I do sweats for our two-spirited people because
19 they've been driven away from our ceremonies from the
20 colonial ideas of the gender binary.

21 When I was young, my grandmother told me,
22 one day you'll -- you can be a hunter, you can be a
23 gatherer, you can be a child-protector, you can be a
24 builder, because we didn't have specific gender roles. We

1 had responsibilities. So if you were good at hunting, you
2 were a hunter. It didn't matter whether you were born with
3 a male body or a female body. If you were a good hunter,
4 you were a good hunter. If you weren't, you're a
5 vegetarian nowadays, but that's a different story.

6 (LAUGHTER)

7 MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS: If you knew where
8 those medicines were, you were able to go and get them, and
9 you were able to prepare them, and you were able to help
10 the people, and those two-spirit people were always welcome
11 in our communities. They were a vibrant part of our
12 community. They brought the balance because they could do
13 whatever responsibility was needed, and we have driven them
14 out of our communities because we've accepted that gender
15 binary, and our youth are suffering because of that,
16 because our two-spirited people are not allowed to be who
17 they are, they're not accepted in ceremonies, they're not
18 accepted outside of ceremonies, they're not accepted in
19 their own reserves, and they're not accepted in the city,
20 from those Elders in the city, because they've been
21 influenced through Christianity and through the colonial
22 effects, and it's time we bring them back into the circle
23 because they bring the balance, those two-spirited youth,
24 and I'll go anywhere --

1 (APPLAUSE)

2 MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS: I'll go anywhere
3 to help them because I was fortunate enough to be who I am.
4 I tried living the other way. I married Dawn's father.
5 Beautiful man, best friend, but not a husband with me
6 because that's not who we were meant to be. I was meant to
7 have my beautiful children. My children have a good
8 relationship with him. He's happy living his lifestyle,
9 and I'm happy living mine, and that's the way it should be.
10 We should be allowed to be who we are and not have somebody
11 tell us who they are. Right? We shouldn't say, oh, you're
12 a woman, you're a man, you're a woman, you're a man. We
13 should say, who are you, and let them tell us who they are,
14 because we don't go up to anybody else and say to them, oh,
15 you're Asian, you can't stand on this side, you have to
16 wear a skirt; or you're African-American, you have to wear
17 a skirt. We don't -- we don't do those things to anybody
18 else. Why do we hurt our own people? Why do we keep this
19 lateral violence going amongst our own people? Because
20 when someone can't be who they are, that's lateral violence
21 when you tell them they're not that person. We don't have
22 that right. Our teachings are to be respectful, and you're
23 not being respectful if you're telling somebody who to be.
24 You're being respectful of you. Let them be who they are

1 and accept them for who they are. My children did it. I
2 was scared to tell them who I was. I was petrified, and
3 when I finally told them, they looked at me and said, it's
4 about time you knew, Mom. We all knew.

5 (LAUGHTER)

6 MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS: Our young ones
7 know. They have the answers for this time that we're in.
8 We have to start giving them those tools. Us that carry
9 these sacred items, it's time we give them to them. What's
10 the worst they can do? We can stand beside them and make
11 sure they do it correctly, or we can let them do it so they
12 learn and they carry on for us. Why have our ancestors
13 carried these drums, these medicines, all these tools,
14 these pipes but to teach others? Why are we holding them?
15 It's time for us to give them to our youth. It's time for
16 us to gift those gifts away. That's our way. We gift
17 things to people. We help them, we teach them, and then we
18 let them go with it. Right? Because if we don't let them
19 go, they're going to be taking their own lives because they
20 can't be who they are. We have to give them that
21 opportunity to be who they are. The same way our
22 ancestors, our relatives gave us that ability, we have to
23 pass it on. It's not ours to keep. It's ours to hold onto
24 and to teach to somebody else.

1 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** I know during your
2 earlier testimony, you did touch on a couple of really
3 important points, particularly the fact that the
4 system -- the child welfare system often paid non-
5 Indigenous families in foster care when they wouldn't help
6 the kinship relationships, so I was curious if you had any
7 specific -- because we see -- still see that happening in
8 places, and -- across the country, and so I was wondering
9 if you had any specific recommendations on what we need to
10 do to strengthen kinship relationships and support those
11 kinship relationships?

12 **MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS:** Give the money to
13 the families.

14 **(APPLAUSE)**

15 **MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS:** How can we pay
16 someone who doesn't know anything about us to teach us and
17 raise us to be the people we're supposed to be? How can we
18 pay someone who has no idea about us, but yet we make
19 every -- the original family members of those children be
20 made to feel like they're nothing? They know what's best
21 for us, our aunties and our -- our grandmothers and our
22 cousins and our brothers and sisters. Why are you paying
23 other people instead of giving that money to us? Right?
24 You don't pay us our treaties. You don't pay us for the

1 land you took. At least pay -- pay the families to raise
2 the children that you're trying to take.

3 (APPLAUSE)

4 MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE: One of the things
5 we've often heard, particularly with CFS or Child Welfare
6 Services, the reason that Indigenous children are often
7 apprehended is seen as neglect, and when you were telling
8 your story about the beaver on the table or the fact that
9 your grandmother would tell you, jeez, if they catch you
10 doing this -- I see the way that you guys were doing that
11 was actually whether you felt disconnected from the land or
12 not, you were doing something you inherently knew. Your
13 blood memory knew how to feed yourself and take care of.
14 How -- how do we recognize that lifestyle, that living off
15 country food, that the traditional ways is just as
16 important and as valued so that when we think of things
17 like children are neglected because they're in poverty,
18 what about those traditional tools?

19 MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS: You know what,
20 when -- when we hunted in High Park -- and we called it
21 hunted in High Park, right -- that's 50 years ago. The
22 waters were clean. The animals were clean. They weren't
23 polluted with mercury and -- and petroleum products. But
24 teaching a child to hunt and fish and use the gifts the

1 Creator gave us, the Creator created everything on this
2 earth so that we would be able to sustain ourselves, and we
3 have become dependent on a government system that cares
4 nothing for us. They make us not be able to grow things on
5 our own properties because it's against the law. You can't
6 go hunting because it's against the law unless you have
7 your status card or you pay the Government a fee for a
8 license, and then you have to pay the Government a fee to
9 go to a hunting course, and then you have to pay the
10 Government a fee to learn how to put bullets in a gun,
11 right? High Park is 20 -- 27 -- there's High Park
12 there -- 2,700 hectares of park land, right? Why can't we
13 hunt the geese there? They come and land, they take off
14 again. They're clean there. They're not as clean as what
15 they should be, but they're still at least cleaner, and it
16 feeds people's bellies, right? Why can't we go to our
17 provincial parks and hunt in our provincial parks that have
18 never been built on, that are not contaminated, and take
19 the lives of those animals, giving them thanks beforehand,
20 and feed our families, teach our children how to do that?
21 No. The Government won't do that because they want us
22 dependent on them. They cancelled the home economic
23 programs in school so our children wouldn't know how to
24 cook because both parents are having to go to work.

1 (APPLAUSE)

2 MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS: Right? Our
3 children don't know how -- mine did because, you know, as
4 you heard, I ran them like the army, but...

5 (LAUGHTER)

6 MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS: My son was baking
7 cakes at 9 years old and waking us up because I had fallen
8 asleep from working to eat cake, but we need to teach our
9 children. We are in a -- in a world today where technology
10 is the greatest resource we have, but if we don't remember
11 our old ways of how to fish and hunt and skin and use that
12 hide to make our regalias, to learn to dance again, to make
13 the skin on our drums, to make our rattles so that we can
14 regain our culture; if we don't teach that to our children,
15 why did our ancestors suffer? Right? It's our
16 responsibility. For those of us that have learned and been
17 gifted those teachings from people who spent the time with
18 us, we have to start doing those things again. We have to
19 bring programs back into school that teach our young ones
20 to cook because both their parents are out there working.
21 By THE time they get home, pick up their children, you
22 know, if they're sick, they attend to them, it's
23 Kraft Dinner time again. We were raised on Kraft Dinner,
24 but we know it's not balanced. We did it because we had

1 to, but the parents are tired to cook. The children have
2 to wait till the parents come home. Right? It's no
3 different now. We have latchkey kids now. It's just that
4 we learned to hide it because the Government kept stealing
5 all our kids, right, and taking them away, but they need to
6 learn how to cook in schools. Bring back those programs.
7 Teach them how to sew, because then by the time they're in
8 Grade 7 and 8, they know how to sew their regalia, right?
9 They know how to cook food. They know how to make feast
10 foods. They know how to carry about their cultural ways.
11 We have to regain those things back, so we have to do that.

12 **MS. CHRISTA BIG CANOE:** What other
13 recommendations would you like to share with the
14 Commissioner?

15 **MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS:** Well, I want to
16 say, first of all, that Justin Trudeau was here. He was
17 here, not far from here, but did he come here? Did he show
18 up here to show his respect to the murdered and missing
19 Indigenous women? No. Our ancestors said that there will
20 be those people that come and they speak with a forked
21 tongue, and I'm starting with Justin Trudeau -- well,
22 actually, I'm starting with his father who made the
23 White Papers, who want to eliminate the Indigenous people,
24 and you can't tell me a child doesn't learn by its

1 environment, so you can't tell me he never heard his father
2 talking about the dirty Indians, because his father sure as
3 heck said it.

4 And he promised us Indigenous people that he
5 would no longer put pipelines in, that he would take care
6 of the problems with the water at Attawapiskat. Pipelines
7 are going in not far from here. Our grandmothers are
8 standing there right now defending that land because he
9 said --

10 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** He's not welcome
11 here.

12 **MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS:** Pardon?

13 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** He's not welcome
14 here.

15 **MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS:** No, and I don't
16 blame you, because what beautiful resources you have will
17 be ruined, but he was here, and he promised he wouldn't put
18 in those pipelines, and we believed him. We believed that
19 snake with the forked tongue because not long afterwards,
20 he started putting an okay in for pipelines, and
21 Attawapiskat still has no fresh water, so how can we
22 believe those in government that tell us one thing and do
23 another? We have to get our own people in government. We
24 have to start running.

1 (APPLAUSE)

2 MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS: We've been lied
3 to too many times. It's time that we put our own people in
4 those places to look after our own people because they're
5 not looking after us. So we need to stand up against
6 government in a way that we take their places, that we
7 become responsible because then we only have ourselves to
8 blame, right?

9 We need to make sure that our children are
10 taken care of and that we help each other to become healthy
11 again. We become addicted to opiates, and we use the
12 alcohol, the spirits, our -- our -- our ancestors named it
13 right. They're spirits, but they're not spirits from our
14 place. They're spirits to take us down, and we use them to
15 hide the pain that we've endured over all these years, but
16 all it does is block that pain for a little while. That
17 root is still deep down inside of us, and unless we pull
18 that root out, so we need our healers to come back to our
19 centres. We need our medicine people to come back and show
20 us how to remove those roots so that we don't keep falling
21 back into alcohol and addictions, so we need our health
22 centres to have traditional people in our hospitals, to
23 have a traditional person in it, not have them so that when
24 they come in, they've got to show the nurses and doctors

1 everything that they're using, ask for permission for a
2 space, and there's always none available. We need our own
3 healers inside working in hospitals and health care
4 centres.

5 (APPLAUSE)

6 MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS: We need our
7 people in the school systems. We have qualified people to
8 go into school systems. We need to start protesting and
9 saying, why are you passing over our Indigenous people that
10 have applied for these jobs and hiring non-Indigenous
11 people to teach Indigenous courses? Right? We need to
12 say, stop, enough's enough. We have qualified people that
13 can go in and teach. We need land-based programs because
14 that covers the whole aspect of teaching our children the
15 resources to go back to the land, to live off the land, to
16 be taught by our own people who still have those ways and
17 still have that knowledge, and these are basic things. We
18 need to know that when somebody goes to a health care
19 centre, they're not going to be left in a wheelchair or on
20 a stretcher for ten hours after they've had a stroke so
21 that by that time, they're going to become immobilized, and
22 now they're going to need more extensive treatments. Just
23 because they're Indigenous, they're put in the hallway
24 because the first thought is, they're probably drunk. It's

1 still happening today; and Canada, wake up. You think this
2 doesn't happen? It's happening today. Right? Come to
3 places like Winnipeg and here in Vancouver. My daughter
4 said she'd never seen such racism in all her life -- and
5 we've lived in Toronto -- is what she's seen here just
6 walking down a street. Okay? This is her first visit
7 here, so Canada, I don't know why you can't see, and I
8 don't know why you won't use your voices and stand up for
9 the Indigenous people because it's our land you're here on.
10 We welcomed you.

11 (APPLAUSE)

12 **MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS:** So we need the
13 school systems to know who the Indigenous people are. As
14 was said earlier in the week, we need our Immigration to
15 say who the Indigenous people were, to teach them. You
16 know our 94 recommendations that were given to us by the
17 TRC: People, wake up. They're recommendations. They hold
18 no weight. We were so happy. Oh. They -- they re-
19 tortured and traumatized our residential school survivors
20 to get the information what was needed to make a
21 recommendation. That's like me saying, yeah, okay, I'll
22 look at it. How many of those recommendations are in case?

23 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** Shame, Canada.

24 **MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS:** We need laws. We

1 need policies, so I would like to see policies put in place
2 where it becomes law, because the only way we're going to
3 fight them is by laws because they -- they set this up by
4 law. Who we are and how we are today was developed by law,
5 the Indian Act, set to get rid of us. Let's make policies
6 and vote for those who will make policies and laws that
7 help support us, that have put requirements in that every
8 person who attends a school has to be taking courses to
9 learn about Indigenous people and land.

10 (APPLAUSE)

11 MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS: And it's the law.
12 It's not a recommendation. It's the law, because that's
13 the only way we're going to win is by putting laws in
14 place. I speak, and I -- I try to make, you know,
15 reconciliation, but it's -- we're not here to reconcile
16 people. Canada has to reconcile with us.

17 (APPLAUSE)

18 MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS: "Reconcile" means
19 to make right. We're not the ones that need to make things
20 right. The rest of Canada has to know what damages have
21 been done to our Indigenous people so they can make it
22 right. Yes, it wasn't the current people that are walking
23 here, most of them today, but what are you doing to make
24 things right? How are you standing up for those people

1 that don't have fresh water to drink, right? If -- if
2 you're a -- a person who's immigrated to Canada or taken a
3 Canadian citizenship oath, it is your responsibility
4 because as a Canadian citizen, you are now obligated to our
5 treaties because you are represented through the Government
6 side. We're still here on our side. You're still not
7 following the things to make it right, so start standing up
8 for the things that are wrong. Stand up beside us.

9 (APPLAUSE)

10 MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS: And most of all,
11 take care of our kids. Put some child centres back in.
12 There is no rec centres. The Government took out all the
13 rec centres for the kids, for the youth. They don't have
14 places to go to play sports or to hang out in or to, you
15 know, learn how to play pool at, where they can get their
16 first dates at. You know? They -- they need safe spaces
17 to go to that feel like home, not prisons, because that's
18 where we're sending them, right? They need safe spaces
19 where they can go and have access to a gym; you know,
20 physical education materials there; you know, floor hockey,
21 basketball, baseball. How many -- how many items are
22 thrown away from companies that have a slight defect in
23 them? I'm calling on Cooper. I'm calling on all those
24 baseball companies, all those hockey companies. Give our

1 kids equipment that might have a word spelled wrong instead
2 of throwing it in the garbage, right? Give back. Canada
3 has made way too much money off of our backs.

4 (APPLAUSE)

5 MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS: It's true. Give
6 our kids sports so they can play, but we can't give them
7 sports as Indigenous people because nobody's going to hire
8 us to get a job so that we can buy them sports equipment,
9 so our kids sit back, and they watch the game of lacrosse
10 that we created. That's where it's wrong, right?
11 Fred Sasakamoose is one of my relatives. Played
12 professional hockey, one of the very few because we
13 couldn't afford to send our kids to play hockey. Right?
14 We have the abilities. We have the skills. Give us the
15 same opportunities as you give every other person who just
16 lands inside of Canada. Right? We don't want anything
17 more. We want a fair shot.

18 (APPLAUSE)

19 MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS: So give us the
20 same opportunities, so if they -- if the Inquiry can put
21 requests out to have companies to help support our
22 Indigenous communities that are suffering, right? Make
23 donations to them. They get written off for it. Help out
24 wherever anybody can, and put a recommendation in that

1 the -- that the Canadian Government takes care of those
2 promises that they haven't, such as clean water, because if
3 we don't have any water, we're not going to keep living,
4 and those people that do not have water deserve to
5 have -- to be able to turn on their kitchen tap and have
6 water come out of it. They shouldn't have to drive three
7 miles down the road to a filling station and fill up
8 containers that they've been using for the last ten years
9 because they don't even have other containers, so how
10 healthy is it to put water in a container you've been
11 refilling for ten years knowing that it's made out of
12 plastic, and back ten years ago, that plastic wasn't
13 supposed to be refilled.

14 So we need to really start helping our
15 communities out that have been left out. Promises have
16 been made, but they haven't been kept, so we need the
17 Government to start keeping their promises by -- by the
18 recommendations and the requests, and I think the
19 word "recommendation" means just to make a recommendation.
20 Doesn't mean it has to be followed. I think it should be.
21 The families of the murdered and missing Indigenous women
22 demand that these things happen, not recommend, because the
23 Government will say, yeah, well, I recommend I get a pay
24 raise, but you know what? They'll give it to themselves,

1 but when we recommend it, it doesn't get heard, so it
2 should be that we demand these things.

3 Huh?

4 **UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:** (Indiscernible).

5 **MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS:** Oh, you can say
6 that.

7 **MS. DAWN GAUDIO:** I have -- I have a
8 recommendation. Not every community, some that don't have,
9 like, fresh water or -- have struggles with, like, the
10 education systems, and everybody wants to be a part of this
11 across Canada. I know this. Everybody's losing people,
12 and it's not a totem, which I think are awesome. You know,
13 memorials, monuments, they're great, but maybe a flag that
14 everybody should be having erected at every institution,
15 educational, health care, doesn't matter what province
16 you're in, a federal flag to represent Indigenous peoples,
17 especially in memory of the murdered and missing Indigenous
18 women.

19 **MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS:** We're only one
20 family. We can only speak to the things that we
21 experienced, and if we can see this many injustices, and we
22 know that over a thousand people have come and testified
23 for us. The number's probably way up there higher, but we
24 know definitely over a thousand. Canada, doesn't a

1 thousand families who have lost their loved ones matter?
2 If it was your loved one who was missing or had been
3 murdered, you'd want justice, so we're not asking for
4 anything above and beyond. We're just asking to be treated
5 fairly, to have coroners give reports. People have been
6 waiting six years for a report not knowing how their loved
7 one died. That's shameful on our coroner departments.
8 People have been waiting to find out what happened to their
9 loved ones, and there's still no answers, and there's
10 people out there who know. You know, I heard -- I
11 heard -- I heard the words, tell the truth and shame the
12 devil. Well, we need to start telling the truth. People
13 who know things need to start saying. Those families are
14 asking to find the bodies of their loved ones so they can
15 put them to rest in a good way so that ceremony can be
16 done. That's all we're asking for, and we're asking for
17 the rest of Canada to realize that every woman, every
18 child, every young boy that they kill, those women are the
19 life-givers. You've now taken a mother, an aunty, a
20 grandmother, or a boy away from their family. We're not
21 here to kill each other. We're here to lift each other up
22 and support each other and live peacefully. We need Canada
23 to listen and to start respecting the -- the original
24 people of this land, the Indigenous people. We're not the

1 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** So I'm
2 just simply going to say thank you with all my heart to you
3 and Dawn for reminding us of our obligations, reminding us
4 of the beauty and strength of our cultures and languages,
5 our ceremonies. Thank you for reminding us that we're
6 beautiful, strong, resilient people. You've given us a
7 lot -- oh, you're going to tell me something, aren't you?

8 **MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS:** Yes, I am. I
9 have one more thing to say.

10 **(LAUGHTER)**

11 **MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS:** I'm trying hard
12 to hold my tongue. You know, this Commission was set up
13 for a 2-year term, a just over 2-year term, and the
14 Government made a big deal about it. They were being so
15 gracious to give us a -- you know, an inquiry that people
16 have been fighting for, like Gladys and Bernie and all the
17 rest of the people down here, you know, especially here in
18 the Downtown Eastside: Oh, we're going to give you an
19 inquiry, and it's going to be Indigenous-lead, and you can
20 do what you need to do, and here's \$53 million.

21 By the time the Commission got going and
22 everything else and people were hired and things put into
23 place, you know, that takes time, and they want the
24 Commission to cover more than 500 reserves in Canada on a

1 2-year -- on a less than 2-year term with \$53 million, but
2 yet they're handing out 15 and 20 and \$30 million for
3 single initiatives. Right? Millions' worth of dollars for
4 the single initiatives, and we've asked for an extension
5 with the -- you know, us family members have asked for an
6 extension to the Commissioners, and the Commissioners
7 applied for an extension, and I only hope that they give us
8 that extension.

9 (APPLAUSE)

10 MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS: Because I'd like
11 to see them go to 500 reserves with \$53 million in less
12 than a 2-year turnover time to get all the stories from
13 every community that there is inside of Canada, and it
14 couldn't be done. So they think they set us up to fail,
15 and I know they do, but we're not going to fail because one
16 way or another --

17 (APPLAUSE)

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We're not going to
19 fail.

20 MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS: No, we're not
21 going to fail, and one way or another, even if they only
22 give us a 6-month extension, we will give them a report.
23 It won't be a thorough report like they'll be expecting
24 because they're going to say they gave us all this money,

1 but we don't have that much time to do it in, and we can't
2 visit everywhere because there was -- there was specific
3 things that they put in place -- I think they're called
4 terms of reference or something that they had to -- the
5 Commissioners had to follow. They couldn't go outside of
6 those things. They can't approach communities and ask for
7 us to come in because then they're not being impartial, so
8 it was put out there for communities to contact us. Well,
9 some communities don't even have telephones. They don't
10 have Wi-Fi. They don't even have water, so how can we
11 reach all those communities with the message, you've got to
12 contact the Commission? Right? It's impossible. But
13 we've tried the best that we can as family members and as
14 the workers with the Commission, have tried the best that
15 they can to put that out there that the people had to
16 contact the Commission and be invited to the communities,
17 and we've had an overwhelming response. We can't even get
18 to the numbers of the ones that -- that requested us to
19 come in and do that in the 2-year term because there's over
20 500 of them.

21 So I -- I also ask that Carolyn Bennett, you
22 know, stand up for the words that she used that she will
23 support the Commission in the beginning. Don't be swayed
24 by people who are angry because we can't please everybody.

1 We're human beings, and we're going to have conflicts,
2 we're going to have disagreements, and don't be swayed
3 by -- by family members who feel that they haven't been
4 heard. Well, you should be talking to Trudeau and to
5 Carolyn Bennett about that, about only a 2-year term to be
6 heard with. Don't be angry at the Commission because they
7 can't get there.

8 (APPLAUSE)

9 MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS: Because they have
10 a right to be angry that their story's not heard, but they
11 don't have a right to be angry at the Commission, and I
12 support them for wanting to have their story told because I
13 struggled whether or not I was going to tell mine, and I
14 applied just like everybody else, right? But I struggled
15 whether or not I would tell my story, and I asked my -- my
16 *Kohkom*, should I do this? And I offered my tobacco, and
17 when I opened my eyes and looked up, I had a red cardinal
18 sitting on my bird feeder, and I said, thank you, *Kohkom*, I
19 will do it for you.

20 But those people that are out there that are
21 making waves for the Commission, I hear you, and I feel
22 your frustration, and I feel your anger, but it's not the
23 Commission you should be angry with. It's the Federal
24 Government who only gave us a 2-year term to do this work

1 in. We've applied for an extension because we see the
2 amount of stories that need to be heard. We hear about it.
3 We see the anger from the people who want to be heard.

4 So I call upon Carolyn Bennett, and I call
5 upon Justin Trudeau. This is your opportunity again to
6 make things right with the Indigenous people. Let our
7 murdered and missing women's voices, children, girls,
8 two-spirit, and trans be heard.

9 (APPLAUSE)

10 **MS. LAUREEN "BLU" WATERS:** Sorry, Marion. I
11 got to talk for when I see injustice. I'm sorry for
12 interrupting you.


13 **CHIEF COMMISSIONER MARION BULLER:** Well,
14 actually, thank you for interrupting.

15 Blu, you've given us so much today and every
16 day that you're with us, and, as you know, we have gifts
17 for you and Dawn. We have eagle feathers for you because,
18 as we know, the eagles will, with their feathers, lift us
19 up and hold us up when we need it, and when we feel we can
20 go to the next level, we can push ourselves and do even
21 more. Those eagle feathers will lift us up and carry us to
22 those new heights.

23 And we also have some seeds for you because
24 when the Commissioners -- I see some of them back

LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST'S CERTIFICATE

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

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jenessa Leriger", is written over a horizontal line.

Jenessa Leriger

April 12, 2018