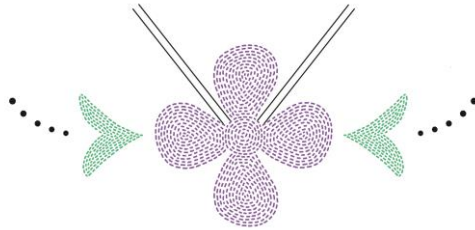


National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls



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 Statement Gathering
Sheraton Airport Hotel
Metro Vancouver (Richmond), British Columbia**



PUBLIC

Friday April 6, 2018

**Statement - Volume 365
Shirley Turcotte**

Statement gathered by Belinda Lacombe

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NOTE

Redactions to this public transcript have been made pursuant to Rule 55 of the Commission's *Legal Path: Rules of Respectful Practice*, which provides for "the discretion to redact private information of a sensitive nature where it is not material to the evidence to be given before distributing the information to the Parties. The National Inquiry will consider the public interest in releasing this type of information against the potential harmful impact on the individual whose personal information is at issue."

1 Richmond, British Columbia

2 --- Upon commencing on Friday, April 6, 2018

3 MS. BELINDA LACOMBE: First of all, we'll
4 start off by making sure you have a little bit of sage here
5 to help you get grounded.

6 I'll introduce myself. So my name is
7 Belinda Lacombe, I'm a statement gatherer with the National
8 Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Inquiry.
9 I'll ask you to introduce yourself and spell your name
10 please.

11 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: Shirley Turcotte,
12 S-H-I-R-L-E-Y T-U-R-C-O-T-T-E, giving a statement.

13 MR. JACK WONG: I'm a support person, my
14 name is Jack Wong, J-A-C-K W-O-N-G.

15 MS. BELINDA LACOMBE: Okay. We're here in
16 Richmond, B.C., it's April 6, 2018 at the Richmond Sheraton
17 Hotel.

18 All right, so you get the floor. You get
19 to share with the Commissioners whatever it is that you
20 feel they need to know.

21 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: Okay. I wasn't
22 planning on doing this and I've been actually supporting
23 the inquiry as much as I can from behind the scenes and
24 also helping support people through their own statements.

25 The reason I thought I wouldn't do it is

1 because I'm already so public about so many things. But
2 listening to people talking, I feel like there's some gaps
3 in what they're saying, so I wanted to give a statement.

4 I'm going to start with that I'm the
5 daughter of a pedophile. As a daughter of a pedophile,
6 that has a lot to do with what's happened in my life. As a
7 daughter of a pedophile, that also -- my father was Métis
8 and my mother was Mennonite white.

9 So growing up as a child, you know, it was
10 always -- the family was pretty dispersed because nobody
11 wanted to relate to a family that had a pedophile in it of
12 course. At the other end of things, the Mennonites don't
13 like you to marry Indigenous peoples. So there was, you
14 know, a lot of talk about being dirty squaw and dirty
15 Indian. You were either too Indian or not Indian enough;
16 not Indian enough for the Indians, and not white enough for
17 the whites.

18 Plus, being the daughter of a pedophile,
19 of course there was no interrelatedness among the families.
20 Because, of course, my mother was rejected for marrying an
21 Indian and marrying a sex offender as well.

22 So I would say that the reason I'm talking
23 about being the daughter of a pedophile, because it has to
24 do with why we lost our children and how they went missing.

25 So even at the inquiry here when they

1 asked me, who was it that went missing, there were two
2 children that went missing. Those children have motivated
3 my entire life, because I never knew -- I thought one was
4 dead, and I didn't know where we would ever find the other.

5 But to be able to say that these children
6 are the, you know, both my sister and my niece, because
7 it's an incest baby and, you know, a possible nephew and
8 brother are missing, that was complicated when you were
9 given the registration, because I think that was alarming
10 for the Inquiry people even to be able to register that.
11 So it's always complicated being the daughter of a
12 pedophile.

13 So the first, you know -- well, first I
14 want to say to the police and to the state, to the
15 Government of Canada, you know, you knew very early that my
16 father was a sex offender, we went to court very early, and
17 you did nothing to protect us from him getting the children
18 back.

19 He was charged with contributing to
20 juvenile delinquency. I think I might have been about six
21 years old when that happened. I never got to live with my
22 mother again, and I did get to go back to live with him,
23 which meant deeper torture, deeper -- more horrifying
24 experiences that, you know, that are terrifying and beyond
25 that.

1 Of course, you know, the thing about being
2 Indigenous is to be able to find place and land and home,
3 and that wasn't possible because being the daughter of a
4 pedophile community is not wanting you back, that's for
5 sure.

6 So I was never able to get really in
7 contact with the family on my father's side. I do believe
8 the state has something to do with that, in the sense that
9 not following up on children who had been tortured or
10 traumatized. You know, Indian kids just didn't matter.
11 Métis people didn't matter. Half-breed children didn't
12 matter.

13 I guess the thing, when my sister first
14 got pregnant -- she got pregnant a couple times of course.
15 These are likely my father's babies. The first child, when
16 the baby was born, we were told the baby died. We figured
17 she did die, and I know my sister had to sign some papers
18 and God knows what happened, but baby was gone. The second
19 child, we kept that child for a while. The child was
20 around for a couple of years, and then the child was taken,
21 a little boy. He was taken.

22 So we thought the first child died and we
23 thought the first child was deformed because we thought the
24 eyes were crossed or something was off about that infant,
25 so there was no -- we really did believe that child died.

1 The boy, we felt -- he was taken at two, and there were a
2 lot of threats involved that, you know, there was no system
3 there to help my sister raise this beautiful boy, this
4 darling boy.

5 So he was adopted out. We looked for him
6 forever. In fact, all of the work I've ever done has been
7 about missing children, trying to save the lives of
8 children, which was a good thing because that really -- I
9 did a lot of really good work in terms of trying to save
10 children, save children's lives, motivated for Indigenous
11 peoples and Indigenous children especially.

12 We put out -- we're trying to find this
13 boy who was adopted [indiscernible] and given a different
14 name and sent to a different province.

15 I didn't find out what they changed his
16 name to until many years later, in fact just a couple years
17 ago. It took me so much to try to get his name from the
18 government. They just would not give me where they had
19 placed him, where they had sent him, what province he went
20 to, you know, or was he sent to another country.

21 When I finally got his name -- and it's a
22 blur for me, I can't keep -- I can't hold that colonial
23 name, like that colonized name, I can't -- I only know him
24 as Davie or baby, right? I keep falling back to what I
25 remember him as. You can't imagine that these babies,

1 they're awake for us for the rest of our lives. So I can't
2 see him as the man he grew into, I just still see the
3 little boy. I love him, because he's really motivated all
4 of my life's work, plenty of my life's work.

5 But I put out his name over Facebook and
6 over -- you know, and I'm quite well-known in the country,
7 I sent his name everywhere and everybody was looking for
8 him, the new name. Where they had sent him was apparently
9 B.C. -- from Manitoba to B.C., which was really ironic
10 because I've lived in B.C. since 1980, which was bizarre,
11 he could have been there.

12 But it just seems that he never -- we
13 could never find him. It's likely that he's dead and
14 that's why we just can't find him. Because we just can't
15 find a trail for this guy. But there's no way that any one
16 of us can go look at death records. It's just still as raw
17 and painful as it was when we were children. We can't find
18 him dead. We don't want to know -- we don't want to know
19 if he's dead. That would be unbearable.

20 But the stranger thing is because we
21 thought the girl was dead, we assumed she was dead, when we
22 were seeking children of my sister's last name a young
23 girl, a younger woman, wasn't even yet -- she was thirty-
24 something, came looking for us. So this young girl that we
25 thought was dead, this infant that was dead was actually

1 never dead. The hospital just said she was dead. You
2 can't imagine what it's like to have an adult woman come to
3 your family saying she's looking for her mom, looking for
4 her mother and her sisters, and family.

5 So she found us. That was very
6 complicated for all of us. It was torturous, imagine
7 having to tell her that her father was my father. Huge
8 amounts of agony in terms of discussing her life, our
9 lives. She lived a very very different life than we did.
10 She grew up wealthy, and her politics are very very
11 different from ours and her life is very different.

12 You know, we grew up -- I was homeless
13 from as long as I can remember as a child, starving,
14 homeless. I have to say that starvation, for me, was far
15 worse than pedophilia. Homelessness and starvation are
16 huge.

17 You can get used to a fuck if you have to,
18 if you have to you can get used to it, but starvation and
19 trying to find food for other children who are starving and
20 homelessness, where to sleep tonight, those things are not
21 things you can get used to, at least I never got used to
22 it.

23 So poverty is at the core of a lot of what
24 goes down for Indigenous peoples in this country and for
25 the murdered and missing. Because what happens when

1 there's poverty is you get dispersed; all of us children
2 got dispersed. I don't know my siblings very well, we had
3 years and years apart. Because we were all sleeping in
4 different beds and trying to get food in different
5 locations. Because you don't have a core safe place in
6 which to grow in.

7 So when you say murdered, it's murderous
8 to -- it's an ongoing murder to not be able to know,
9 connect, or find your siblings. That alone is murderous.
10 They're alive, they're alive and you can't find them.

11 It's made our family very tight. Like, my
12 siblings and I are very close, but we are completely
13 different, and this is the really -- the heart issue. Some
14 of us are highly educated, some of us have done a lot of
15 healing, some of us are broken and totally unable to get up
16 off the sidewalk. Some of us are dead. I believe my
17 brother, the one who I had raised since he was three, I
18 believe he died of a broken heart and neglect and...

19 It's hard when you're children raising
20 children, to have your children die on you. It's because
21 it's not just a sibling that dies, it's a sibling and a
22 son.

23 So Canada's been very disappointing for me
24 and I'm a well-known Canadian who has done a lot of work in
25 the healing. I feel very healthy. I'm very blessed, I

Shirley Turcotte

1 feel very healthy, I'm a world traveller, I come and go. I
2 have, you know, an extremely blessed life, but it's very
3 difficult to live in two worlds, because I do live in two
4 worlds, because I am so fortunate.

5 I have everything that I could possibly
6 want or need, right? So when I go to the dinner parties or
7 whatever I fit right in, but I don't fit at all, because
8 it's living in two words. I'm both the colonizer and the
9 colonized. I am one of the same.

10 So to watch Canadians allow children to be
11 taken from homes in alarming numbers that are equal and
12 even greater than the residential school era is not only
13 terrifying, but horrifying. So while I have the best beds
14 to sleep in and the best foods to eat, the best friends and
15 good company, I have to always juggle the reality of racism
16 and the pain of that.

17 So, you know, it is both a crushing thing
18 and a motivator, so it motivates me to design really good
19 programs. I never regret that I was put in a mental
20 institute for schizophrenia instead of it being addressed
21 as post-traumatic stress, which it was. Because in that
22 institute, I could see how western medicine was just way
23 off the mark when it comes to genocide. It really was not
24 helping.

25 I saw how the treatment of people in the

1 mental institute, and it was many years ago so I'm an old
2 woman now, but it motivated me to work on finding the
3 things that kept me alive during the most horrific
4 experiences; being locked in a basement for nearly five
5 years, all these horrifying things that happened, there was
6 always land and life there.

7 So I could always find something in land
8 that could help me through a horrendous day, and that I
9 believe that's our culture that saved my life, the culture
10 of land. So I could start designing programs around
11 complex trauma that were related to genocide and related to
12 land and to bring back the things that actually did work
13 and kept those of us that did survive alive.

14 Of course, as most Indigenous peoples
15 going through homelessness and all the different things we
16 went through, suicide was always always there, we were
17 always trying to kill ourselves; either jumping in front of
18 cars or drinking poison or any way to kill yourself that
19 you could imagine. Right now, the tendency is for people
20 to want to hang themselves. But the trends change through
21 the years.

22 So suicide was always part. Nobody
23 expected to live and I certainly didn't expect to live this
24 long. I don't know, I wanted to say something about
25 suicide, but I don't know what it is exactly. I've lost my

1 train of thought, which happens.

2 Was I going somewhere with that? There
3 was something I'm sure.

4 MR. JACK WONG: I don't have it.

5 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: Do you have it?
6 Did you hear me say...?

7 MS. BELINDA LACOMBE: I don't have it, but
8 can I ask you a question?

9 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: Yeah, go ahead.

10 MS. BELINDA LACOMBE: I just want to know
11 the date when your brother passed away. Can you remember
12 that?

13 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: You will never be
14 able to keep a date in my body about the date that my
15 brother passed away. My husband can keep the date and
16 every now and then I'll ask him,

17 "When did [L.] die?"

18 But because my body won't retain it.

19 MS. BELINDA LACOMBE: Okay.

20 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: There's certain
21 things that don't... You remember my brother's death?

22 MR. JACK WONG: Yeah. You brought the
23 watch to me, and I think it's about 10 years ago.

24 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: Yeah. I won't be
25 able to say the month, the day, the year.

1 MS. BELINDA LACOMBE: So about 10 years
2 ago?

3 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: Yeah. I won't be
4 able to -- yeah.

5 MS. BELINDA LACOMBE: Okay.

6 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: I can't keep any
7 dates.

8 MS. BELINDA LACOMBE: So would you like
9 that I don't ask you about dates?

10 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: No, ask, go a head.
11 Because that's -- for them to know that trauma's like that.
12 I consider myself well, and I can't retain a date. Then
13 you go to court and somebody asks you a date like or, you
14 know. Trauma's an interesting thing. Some things are too
15 unbearable to hold in your central -- so you hold it
16 someplace else, which is fine, it's not a problem. It's
17 only a problem for the courts and the police.

18 Any other good questions or is that --

19 MS. BELINDA LACOMBE: No, that was the
20 only one so far.

21 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: There's really
22 nothing that the Inquiry can do for me that I can think of.
23 I just want to say that poverty sucks --

24 MS. BELINDA LACOMBE: Is there anything
25 else you want to say about the western -- like, how that

1 didn't work there?

2 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: Oh yeah. Yeah,
3 that didn't work and that, you know, going through -- I
4 feel very lucky having gone through so much of the systemic
5 horrors of the medical world, you know, the therapeutic
6 world and how that...

7 Because I think to be able to be a good
8 witness I was able to watch and see what they were up to
9 and see how that really didn't fit and that what they were
10 doing might be good for, you know, mommy didn't love you,
11 but it had -- it was nowhere even close to the mark of what
12 was needed where kids are -- intergenerational trauma where
13 kids are stolen by the state. Just like it's not a mommy
14 didn't love you thing at all.

15 It's -- you know, there were no mothers
16 sometimes for generations because of the state's
17 interference in our lives. The brutality of the
18 residential schools and the brutality of racism that has
19 struck down so many of our peoples.

20 Any comments from you? You've known me a
21 long time and, I don't know, anything you want to say?
22 You're allowed to talk, help the Inquiry.

23 MR. JACK WONG: Okay, I didn't know about
24 that.

25 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: I'm giving you

1 permission, yeah.

2 MR. JACK WONG: Okay. Racism kills, it's
3 cost the lives of 100 million, 150 million natives in North
4 America. It's been systemic, it's been ongoing, it's 10
5 generations, if not more, and it's still taking lives. You
6 know, I'm happy that there's this first baby step in
7 recognition of what's been wrought upon the Indigenous of
8 this world, not in just Canada. But Canada has done a
9 great job in doing it.

10 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: Do you see how the
11 trauma that runs through my generations has pushed forward
12 a movement? Because I do think the intergenerational grief
13 and horror just pushes Indigenous peoples forward to
14 creating things that they need because this other thing has
15 not worked.

16 MR. JACK WONG: No, it hasn't worked and
17 this new kind of reawakening of cultural awareness I think
18 has brought about some new growth --

19 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: Yeah.

20 MR. JACK WONG: -- and a new approach.

21 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: I'd like to say new
22 growth, new approach. But I also want to add, it doesn't
23 give me my babies back. It does not give those children
24 back. That broken heart is forever there and you can --
25 and I'm a healed woman and, you know, I'm a woman who is,

1 you know, the grandmother of Aboriginal focusing range of
2 therapy.

3 But it doesn't give us our children back.
4 I want that to be really clear. Maybe that will help me
5 work to the day I die, and that's a good thing. Maybe I'll
6 never get to retire, because I can't have my babies back.

7 Canada should never have done that and it
8 shouldn't be doing it now. It needs to change Child
9 Welfare immediately, immediately. This is wrong. You need
10 to help families keep their families together even
11 pedophile families, even children that have children by
12 their fathers. You don't have the right to take their
13 babies away and call them dead. You do not have that
14 right. This is wrong.

15 Thank you for giving us a forum. I've
16 supported the Inquiry as long as I could, because these
17 stories need to be told and we need to change things
18 yesterday and the day before, and the day before that.
19 Meegwetch, thank you.

20 MS. BELINDA LACOMBE: Can I ask you --

21 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: Yeah.

22 MS. BELINDA LACOMBE: -- can you talk a
23 little bit about what does work, Shirley?

24 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: Well, what does
25 work is --

1 MS. BELINDA LACOMBE: Around complex
2 trauma and [indiscernible/speaking at the same time] --

3 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: Around complex
4 trauma, what does work is that when you are connecting with
5 the horror in your body, the suffering, the trouble, to be
6 able to recognize and to be able to -- the feelings, these
7 deep deep powerful feelings, to be able to understand them,
8 not as I feel my feelings, but as a collective horror.
9 Because you can't get better when these powerful powerful
10 movements of pain come up through you. If you think that's
11 all yours, you know, you're going die from it.

12 But if you recognize that we're holding
13 this together and it's ours and that's it's collective and
14 that it's intergenerational, there is so much more room for
15 dancing, for healing, for help, for healthiness.

16 So what helps is not to look through a
17 Western lens, but look through an Indigenous lens that is
18 collective, that is intergenerational and that recognizes
19 the trauma from the -- the historical trauma that's not our
20 enemy, that's our wisdom.

21 The historical trauma, the
22 intergenerational trauma, you know, it's not all about
23 suffering, it's also about, wow, look what we've learned,
24 look what we've done. These are experiences we have. We
25 are experts in genocide. No one knows genocide like

1 Indigenous peoples know genocide.

2 This is not me, my feeling, this is our
3 genocide experience that we know how to navigate, move
4 around, and to work with. The western lens where
5 everything is I, me, my, my feelings, I'm this, I'm that,
6 is so narrow that it kills us.

7 When there's a symptom in my body, I've
8 got to see whose is it. This might not even be mine, it's
9 something I'm sharing, it's a collective thing.

10 Indigeneity is about collective experience. Therapy in the
11 western world is very narcissistic, it's all focused on I,
12 me, my. That does not help with genocide.

13 Also there's sort of this overlay that
14 PTSD in complex trauma is a negative instead of, you know,
15 it may be a lot of knowledge, a lot of really important
16 knowledge. The idea that the trouble that I've had comes
17 up through my mother, my father, and through the ancestors
18 and moves on over into my son, I am so grateful for that,
19 that my son knows what it's like to be the daughter of a
20 pedophile. I am happy about that, because he knows exactly
21 what to do, how to move, what steps to take in the country
22 next because that's knowledge, that he can then move
23 forward to try to make lives better, and he does. He knows
24 what it feels like to be me a little bit, maybe not fully
25 me, but he knows a little bit because it's the river that

1 runs through.

2 That's not damage that's coming forward,
3 that's information on what steps to take. Now, right now
4 he's the -- putting in the Office of Indigenization for the
5 City of Toronto to try, you know, what's it called again?
6 I don't know what it is, it's some big thing there in
7 Toronto bringing Indigenous knowledge to the City of
8 Toronto. It's about fuckin' time.

9 But anyway, my point is if he didn't know
10 this history in his bones, he wouldn't choose to do
11 something to make the lives of children better. He is
12 still saving the children we can't find, and thank God for
13 that.

14 So I'm tired of people looking at complex
15 trauma from a western lens that says we're all fucked up in
16 intergenerational trauma is something that we're trying to
17 get through instead of something that we've experienced and
18 learned from and can step forward in and use as our
19 knowledge, our intergenerational knowledge for our next
20 steps. There's a lot of next steps. We have a long way to
21 go.

22 MS. BELINDA LACOMBE: Thank you.

23 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: Thank you.

24 MS. BELINDA LACOMBE: After hearing you
25 say that, you spoke a little bit about child welfare --

1 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: Yeah, a lot about
2 child welfare.

3 MS. BELINDA LACOMBE: -- and how there
4 needs to be a change.

5 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: Yes.

6 MS. BELINDA LACOMBE: Right now, I heard
7 you say.

8 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: Yes. There are a
9 lot of changes happening.

10 MS. BELINDA LACOMBE: So my question to
11 you, Shirley, is can you speak a little bit about how you
12 see that? What changes your...?

13 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: Well, mostly --

14 MS. BELINDA LACOMBE: I mean, this could
15 be like some recommendations too.

16 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: Well, I believe
17 allotted -- mainly get the money back to the places that
18 can put the programs in place that are so exceptional.
19 There are exceptional programs, and really it's a local
20 area -- every area, every nation has its own ideas about
21 what would work in their particular communities and they're
22 wise in that, they're wise and knowing a culcom(ph) program
23 works best over here, you know.

24 There's a million -- there's so many
25 brilliant ideas coming out of different nations on what

1 would work best in their local area, but they're not funded
2 and given the support to put in place the things that they
3 know would work to be able to keep the children in the
4 home.

5 Some programs are, you know, if the
6 parents aren't doing well the parents have to go and
7 caregivers come into the home so the children aren't
8 displaced. There are sister programs and, you know,
9 culcom(ph) programs, like I said. There's all kinds of
10 programs that it's not a problem about the ingenuity and
11 brilliance of local communities to know -- local Indigenous
12 communities to know what will work. The problem is getting
13 the funds in place that would allow those programs to work.

14 Indigenous people know how to keep their
15 kids and they know how to keep their kids well. The
16 colonizing world is to get the fuck out of the way so that
17 that could happen, because the programs are there. The
18 problem is that, you know, not having the rights and not
19 having the funding, not having the space to do what we know
20 works.

21 Also to introduce cultural programs into
22 those like Indigenous tools for living, for an example,
23 where that's again another brilliant program that can work
24 for many ages and many... But the thing is to get the
25 funding in place and to get the -- I think, you know,

1 Canadians really couldn't give a shit about Indigenous
2 peoples in Canada.

3 I mean, we look here at the inquiry and I
4 look in the room, the public room here, I'm in Vancouver
5 for goodness sakes, how come every chair isn't full of
6 (inaudible) or state people wanting to do something right
7 for the disparity that is here in our country for
8 Indigenous peoples? The chairs are empty.

9 There's an apathy across this country and
10 so they don't want to turn the money over, the funds over
11 so that we can get on with a job that we know how to do
12 really well.

13 So the recommendation is get the hell out
14 of the way, give us space and the resources to do what we
15 know how to do. Stop suggesting things, get out of our
16 way, we already know.

17 It's going to be very much what each area
18 knows best. What would work in Moose Factory when I am in
19 Moose Factory -- I go all over through nations all across
20 the country and into the States too. You know, what will
21 work in Moose Factory is not going to be the same thing
22 that's going to work up in Wet'suwet'en Territory when I'm
23 up in Northern B.C., which is not going to be the same
24 thing that's going to work in Peguis when I'm in Manitoba.

25 You know, they all have answers. Toronto

1 has some amazing child welfare answers for their problems,
2 amazing. But the resources to keep those things ongoing,
3 implemented, and to carry that through, we don't have the
4 good will of Canadians to have that happen, and that's the
5 problem.

6 You know, so what has to happen, you know,
7 to me -- and, you know, our men are in jail and our women
8 are in jail. What the hell is going on here? I just
9 watched CBC yesterday, and the numbers of people being shot
10 by police is like at a all-time high, and of course they're
11 brown people and black people, right? So keeping our
12 people alive is getting even harder.

13 So, you know, when you see clustered
14 suicides -- and I work in Moose Factory, I work in many
15 places, and when I see 13 kids die I know it's not 13 --
16 they're not -- those kids that died, that's the suicide of
17 their entire nation. Their whole nation is committing
18 suicide, it's just coming out through those 13 people,
19 right? They're speaking, the kids, the youth, are
20 speaking, those youth that are committing suicide are
21 speaking and they're speaking for their whole nation.
22 There is a disparity that has got to be expressed.

23 Since Truth & Reconciliation the stories
24 have been coming up and the suicides are a lot higher
25 because we expect change; if you're not going to change --

1 or we'll die. Kids don't even know why they're dying, they
2 don't even know that it's collective intergenerational
3 trauma saying you've got to change Canada, you've got to
4 change this now or we'll die on you. I mean, you know,
5 because we are collective.

6 So, you know, when those kids are dying
7 they're dying for all of us because we're not -- because of
8 the apathy of Canadians across the board. It's so
9 disappointing to come here and see those chairs empty.
10 It's so heartbreaking, I can't tell you. I'm really pissed
11 right off about that.

12 Am I saying this -- how am I sounding? A
13 little off or...?

14 MR. JACK WONG: Well, you're angry, you're
15 pissed. Tell us more how you feel, Shirley. You're a
16 little unclear about that.

17 --- Laughter

18 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: As if you haven't
19 heard enough through all the years.

20 There's a long way to go.

21 MS. BELINDA LACOMBE: Yeah.

22 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: Good. Anything
23 else?

24 MS. BELINDA LACOMBE: So I just -- there's
25 one more thing.

1 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: Okay.

2 MS. BELINDA LACOMBE: I just wonder if
3 there's a way that you could share here today -- is there
4 something that could be done in Canada that would bring
5 more awareness to those Sixties Scoop babies? Because that
6 seems to be --

7 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: Okay. So this is
8 the hardest one for me, the Sixties Scoop. Because, you
9 know, I can't even put my name on that list of people
10 because it's too heartbreaking. So it's almost as if the
11 trauma around our missing kids in our family -- as if the
12 trauma is so big and so bad that you can't ask me to help
13 with that. I help with so much in Canada; I help in, you
14 know, creating Indigenous therapy programs, training
15 therapists all over the nations. I help so much, don't ask
16 me to help with the Sixties Scoop, because it can't -- I
17 bleed there.

18 It's so interesting, you know, you see me
19 lecturing on almost everything, but you don't see me
20 touching the Sixties Scoop because I can't, I can't find my
21 babies. I'm going to be forever in that there. So you've
22 got to ask somebody else to do that piece. I feel like I
23 do my piece so much I can't do that piece.

24 MS. BELINDA LACOMBE: Okay.

25 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: That's trauma, and

1 it's a healthy trauma. It's not even like a broken trauma.
2 It's like, of course you can't help there, Shirley, you can
3 barely -- you're still looking for your babies. I'm busy
4 looking for babies. Even though you don't see me looking
5 for babies because I can't bear to look, I'm looking for
6 babies. I can't bear to look at death records or anything
7 like that.

8 Even though [L.] was adopted out and she
9 was in a good family, I'm still looking for her as the
10 baby. Even though, because the woman that she is is not
11 the Indigenous family that I know, because in the
12 colonization she was put into a non-Indigenous family and
13 so she grew-up with a completely non-Indigenous world.

14 I come from an Indigenous world, and so
15 I'm still looking for her in the Indigenous world. I can't
16 find her. Who I see is my dear sister/niece in the
17 colonized world. You can't even imagine the conversations
18 to have with her, you know, after all these years to be
19 able -- she's asking me,

20 "Do I call you sister or do I call
21 you auntie? What do I call you?"

22 These are the conversations we have to
23 come up with, which maybe would have been sorted out if she
24 had been here a long time ago. But because she shows up
25 later in life, and we think she's dead, we have to have

1 these absurd conversations; am I your aunt, am I your
2 sister...?

3 I have to say to her,

4 "Well, I don't know. What does it
5 feel like?"

6 "Do you feel like my sister's
7 children are like your sisters or do
8 they feel like your cousins?"

9 She says,

10 "Well, they feel more like sisters."

11 I said,

12 "Well, then call me aunt."

13 You know, these are very complicated
14 complicated conversations because the state just fucked
15 things up so badly that we have to have these horrible
16 conversations.

17 Then there's this conversation, well, can
18 you help us now? What do we do about the Sixties Scoop?
19 Like, fuck-off already. Don't ask me that. You know, you
20 can ask me how to build therapy programs or how to look at
21 something through an Indigenous lens and, you know, what
22 medicines work here?

23 You can ask me those things, but don't ask
24 me things about the little missing babies because I can't
25 help you. I can't even barely help myself on that one.

1 MS. BELINDA LACOMBE: Okay. That's a good
2 thing for the Commission to know --

3 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: Yeah.

4 MS. BELINDA LACOMBE: -- about that
5 question. Okay.

6 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: Thank you.

7 MS. BELINDA LACOMBE: Is there anything --
8 any last --

9 MS. SHIRLEY TURCOTTE: I just thank
10 goodness it was you as the intaker, the whatever, because I
11 felt you were amazing and non-intrusive and lovely. I hope
12 that anyone else that's doing this are as competent and
13 good at what they're doing as you are.

14 I appreciate you being here so much and I
15 appreciate the Inquiry. I know it's been extremely
16 difficult and complicated, I can't even imagine. But we've
17 got to get the stories down, and we're doing that. Just
18 keep going, keep at it.

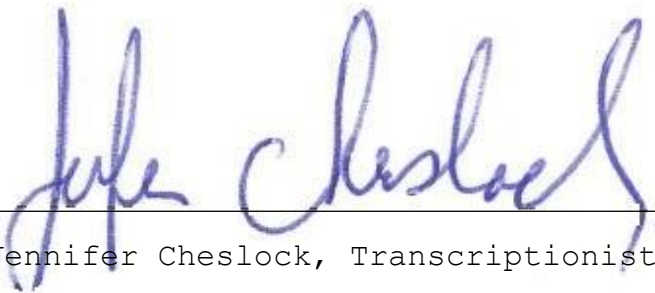
19 My dear friend Jack, as always through the
20 years, comes with me across the miles, over the miles.

21 Thank you everybody. Meegwetch.

22 MR. JACK WONG: Meegwetch.

23 --- Whereupon the statement concluded.

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



Jennifer Cheslock, Transcriptionist