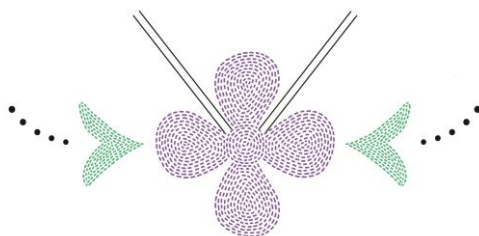


National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls



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 1 Public Hearings
Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre
Whitehorse, Yukon**



PUBLIC

Wednesday May 31, 2017

Public Volume 2

**Starr Evangeline Drynock,
In Relation to Deborah Evangeline;**

Edna Deerunner, In Relation to Annie Dick;

**Bella Bresse, Pamela Blanchard, Toni Blanchard & Logan
Blanchard, In Relation to Evangeline Billy;**

**Dorothy Hayes, In Relation to Elsie Tibbett, Rose Boya,
Angel Carlick, & Wendy Carlick;**

**Diane Lilley, Florence Washpan, Joy O'Brien,
Judith Kuster & Sa-Na-Kerri O'Brien;
In Relation to Tina Washpan**

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Hearing - Public
Opening Remarks

1

Whitehorse, Yukon
May 31, 2017

(PROCEEDINGS COMMENCED AT 9:05 A.M.)

1
2
3
4
5
6 WANEK HORN-MILLER: Good morning, everybody. My name
7 is Waneek Horn-Miller. I'm the Director of
8 Community Relations for the National Inquiry.
9 And welcome back today. Good to see all of you.

10 We just wanted to do before we got started
11 with the Elders' prayer, a couple of housekeeping
12 notes, just reminders.

13 First and foremost, please turn off your
14 phones. Try not to be on your phone. If you
15 need to take a phone or do texting or anything
16 like that, please go on the public side because
17 it's really important that we be attentive and
18 listening when we're on this side of the tent.
19 So I appreciate that.

20 There are cultural activities today that are
21 happening in the Elders' Tent and I have that
22 list. Oh, and I just dropped it. I put it down.
23 I will get that.

24 There's going to be -- in the Family Tent
25 there will be some cultural activities this
26 afternoon, and I think there's stick-handling
27 games and some drumming and different things for
28 the families.

29 There's also, if you've noticed, there's
30 these beautiful blankets, these quilts, these
31 have been made by women that are in prison in
32 Saskatchewan. They wanted to contribute
33 something to the families. So these are all --
34 were made by these beautiful women, Indigenous
35 women in prison.

36 We also wanted you to know that you can make
37 your own square. On this side in the Family
38 Tent, there's also a chance for you to sit down
39 and do your own square, and at the end we're
40 going to put it together in a quilt for this
41 hearing. So if you feel like you need time to go
42 and maybe just catch your thoughts, there's an
43 opportunity for you to do that.

44 If you've noticed, there's people with
45 yellow lanyards. They are the health supports.
46 Any time that you need health supports, you can
47 access -- and that's anybody. That includes

Hearing - Public
Opening Remarks

2

1 media. That includes supports. That includes
2 tech people. If you need a health support, a
3 time, please don't hesitate to go and access
4 that. There's also a health support cabin that
5 has a green door -- 11, yeah. That's the health
6 support cabin. So please access that.

7 There are -- if you've noticed, these are
8 bags that are sitting on the ground. These are
9 tear bags, and we have boxes of Kleenex. The
10 cultural teaching is that crying is healing,
11 crying is healthy. It's part of the process and
12 we honour those tears by collecting them in these
13 bags, and they're going to be taken and put
14 through a ceremony and -- at the cultural fire
15 that's happening over there at the end of the day
16 tomorrow. So if you have tissues, please put
17 them in these bags so that we can take good care
18 of them.

19 If you are feeling the need and you want to
20 go and be smudged or have -- just sit by the
21 sacred fire that's been burning since Monday
22 morning, we invite everybody, including all of
23 the media, including anybody here, anybody of the
24 staff, if you want to go and be smudged and talk
25 to the amazing people that are keeping that fire
26 going, it's a wonderful feeling to centre
27 yourself. So we welcome all of you. We just
28 want you to know that there's no pictures to be
29 taken while you're there. It's more of a time
30 for you just to collect yourself. It's an
31 amazing experience, so hopefully you'll get a
32 chance to go meet the fire keepers that are
33 helping us through this process.

34 I guess -- yes. The last one at least.
35 There's water being provided. We would really
36 appreciate it if you would take these water
37 bottles with you and we want to recycle them. So
38 at the end of the sessions when we're going for
39 breaks, please take your water bottle with you
40 and take them to the recycling. And if you don't
41 know where the recycling is, find someone with a
42 green lanyard, a yellow lanyard, and we'll help
43 you and we'll take them for you. So we will do
44 that for you.

45 And other than that, I wish all of you a
46 really -- a good day, a strong day, and I look
47 forward to talking with a lot of you.

**Hearing Public
Starr Drynock
(Deborah Evangeline)**

1 I'd like to ask Elder Hammond Dick to open
2 up the session.

3 Could you please, everybody just turn your
4 cell phones off. Thank you. And those of you --
5 just to know that anybody on the other side of
6 that curtain, we have reserved seats on this side
7 for family members, Elders, and support. So
8 don't hesitate to come inside here and you can be
9 in this side of things.

10 ELDER HAMMOND DICK: (OPENING PRAYER)

11 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Good morning, everyone,
12 and welcome to day two of our hearings in
13 Whitehorse. I'm Chief Commissioner Marion
14 Buller, and this morning with me are Commissioner
15 Qajaq Robinson and Commissioner Michèle Audette.
16 Ms. Snowshoe, are you ready to proceed?
17

18 **First Hearing**

19 **Starr Evangeline Drynock (Family of Deborah
20 Evangeline) with Karen Snowshoe (Commission Counsel)**
21

22 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Chief Commissioner, Commissioners, my
23 name is Karen Snowshoe, your Commission counsel
24 for today. And it is my honour to introduce you
25 today to Starr Evangeline Drynock. And it is
26 also my honour to introduce Starr's father,
27 Norman Drynock, who's travelled all the way from
28 Lytton, B.C., to be here in support of his
29 daughter.

30 Starr has prepared a written statement
31 today, which the family has kindly provided
32 copies for the Commissioners as well as for the
33 interpreter.

34 And Bryan, if you don't mind, Starr would
35 like to affirm today with the eagle feather.
36 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Good morning, Starr. I understand
37 you wish to affirm with the feather this morning.
38 Do you solemnly affirm that the evidence you will
39 give today will be the truth, the whole truth,
40 and nothing but the truth?

41 STARR DRYNOCK: I do.

42 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Thank you very much.
43

44 STARR EVANGELINE DRYNOCK,
45 affirmed.
46

47 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Starr, thank you for being here

**Hearing Public
Starr Drynock
(Deborah Evangeline)**

1 today, and it's been my honour to have been
2 working with you over the past while. I would
3 like to offer you this tobacco in support of your
4 words today.

5 STARR DRYNOCK: Thank you.

6 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Please proceed any time you're ready.

7 STARR DRYNOCK: My name is Starr Drynock. I'm 25
8 years old. I was born and raised in Merritt,
9 British Columbia, and moved here to Whitehorse in
10 March of 2007.

11 My mother's name was Deborah Evangeline
12 Edwards and she was born September 28th, 1969, in
13 Merritt, British Columbia. She had two children,
14 me and my older brother, Joseph Swakum, who is
15 now 28.

16 My mother loved music and she loved to
17 dance. Her hopes and dreams were to have her
18 family together and her strengths were wanting a
19 good life for her babies. Deborah was soft-
20 spoken and had resilient strength. She always
21 treated others with equality and kindness. She
22 made a little bit go a long way.

23 My dad, he had to buy her nice clothes and
24 shoes as she did little shopping for herself and
25 would wear old, worn shoes.

26 My mother grew up in foster homes where she
27 was sexually assaulted. She sought out
28 counselling to help take care of herself after
29 going through trauma and violent relationships.

30 In late April of 1992, my mother went
31 missing. My dad, Norman, was attending a first
32 aid course and was home for the weekend when a
33 local police pulled him over to see if he had
34 seen Debbie anywhere.

35 A week before she had gone missing, Deborah
36 told my dad to look after me if anything were to
37 happen.

38 On May 8th, 1992, my mother's body turned up
39 in the Nicola River. She was 22 years old.

40 My dad had brought up two names to the
41 police but they said they can't arrest people
42 from street talk and can't bother people if
43 there's no evidence, that evidence being any
44 traces of sexual assault. The Merritt Police
45 Department then put off my mother's death as a
46 suicide.

47 At the time of them finding Debbie, I was

**Hearing Public
Starr Drynock
(Deborah Evangeline)**

1 with Winston, my brother's father. After my
2 mother was found, I was taken in to Child
3 Services. My dad wanted custody of me but had to
4 prove that he was my father, so therefore went to
5 court. My dad had set precedents while fighting
6 for me. He was a single First Nations man trying
7 to get his daughter back. I was two and a half
8 when he got me back and he did anything and
9 everything to keep me out of the hands of Child
10 and Family Services.

11 I grew up an only child, often wondering why
12 my mother was not around. I started drinking at
13 an early age, about 14 years old. My heart was
14 filled with anger, loneliness, and frustration.
15 I was often jealous of girls who had their
16 mothers. I was angry I couldn't share my
17 milestones with my mother like they were. I was
18 raised my entire life by my father, who had to
19 play not only the father role but the mother role
20 as well.

21 My dad had told me again at about 16 or 17
22 years old what happened to my mother. I remember
23 being blindsided with anger and hurt, calling the
24 Merritt Police Department from here in Whitehorse
25 demanding to know what happened to my mother.
26 They told me they could not release those records
27 over the phone and that if I really wanted to
28 know, I could go down to the local department in
29 Merritt and there's a chance they might tell me
30 what happened.

31 The ache in my heart felt stronger but I
32 also felt at peace knowing the true story of what
33 really happened. As I grew up, I told myself I'd
34 be the mother I never had, that one day when I
35 have a baby, I'll raise him or her how I feel my
36 mother would raise me.

37 In March of 2012, I found out I was pregnant
38 with my baby. December 2nd, my daughter was
39 born: Navaeh Southerly Evangeline Drynock.
40 She's now four. I often tell her of her Grandma
41 Debbie and show her pictures that I got through
42 my Uncle Winston. Navaeh knows she's with us in
43 spirit and often asks about where she is, and I
44 happily share everything that I know with her.

45 My mother was raised not knowing her
46 culture. I was lucky to grow up having my
47 culture surround me and I'd like Navaeh to grow

**Hearing Public
Starr Drynock
(Deborah Evangeline)**

1 up knowing both of her cultures from the
2 Nlakapamux Nation in B.C. and the Trondek
3 Hwech'in First Nation up in Dawson City.

4 During my time here in the Yukon, I have
5 become more involved in traditional singing and
6 dancing. I share songs from the Nlakapamux
7 Nation and the Stl'atl'imx Nation in Lillooet,
8 B.C.

9 I've learned to let go of anger and
10 jealously I felt towards other girls and their
11 mothers. Instead, I adore seeing those
12 relationships and hope that one day my daughter
13 and I can be just as close.

14 Within the last couple years I started
15 following the Missing and Murdered Indigenous
16 Women movement. I sing the "Women's Warrior
17 Song" to support the families and honour the
18 women and girls who we've lost.

19 I'm telling my mother's story to honour her.
20 I may not have physically known her myself, but
21 by the stories people tell me, I know she is such
22 a beautiful woman and I want to share her and her
23 story with everyone.

24 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you, Starr. Commissioners,
25 Starr has sent some photos that she would like to
26 share with you. This is the first photo. And
27 first I'll ask Starr to describe this photo and
28 then I'll pass it to you. Starr, can you please
29 maybe just talk a bit about this photo.

30 STARR DRYNOCK: In this photo, it's my mother,
31 Deborah, my older brother, Joseph. He's probably
32 about two. And I'm not too sure how old I am
33 here but that's --

34 NORMAN DRYNOCK: Four and a half months.

35 STARR DRYNOCK: Four and a half months. And it's neat
36 because we still have this dress. It's red and
37 it's got white frills and my dad still has the
38 little headband.

39 NORMAN DRYNOCK: I still have her blouse.

40 STARR DRYNOCK: And my dad still has her white silk
41 blouse that she's wearing in this photo.

42 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you. Commissioners, this is
43 the second photo that Starr would like the
44 Commission to see. And again, I'll ask Starr to
45 just describe this photo and then I'll pass it to
46 you for viewing. Starr, can you tell the
47 Commissioners about this photo?

**Hearing Public
Starr Drynock
(Deborah Evangeline)**

1 STARR DRYNOCK: Like I said, my mom used to like
2 dancing. So in this photo, I was told she was
3 getting all dressed up to go out dancing and
4 have, I guess, a night of fun out.

5 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you. This is the third photo
6 that Starr would like to offer the Commission.
7 And again, I'll ask Starr if you could please
8 describe this photo and then I'll pass it to the
9 Commissioners for viewing.

10 STARR DRYNOCK: In this photo, it's me and my
11 daughter, Navaeh. We were getting ready for a
12 performance and she's wearing a tiny little shawl
13 that I made her. And the marks on her chin is to
14 represent the Raven Clan. It's supposed to
15 represent the tale. So we were just getting
16 ready for a performance. And I always love
17 taking pictures of her when she's all dolled up
18 in her regalia. So it plays a very important
19 part in our life because when we sing and dance,
20 it grounds me and it keeps me connected to
21 everything and it makes me focus on me and my
22 daughter's life.

23 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you. Commissioners, this is
24 the last photo that Starr would like to provide.
25 And again, Starr, if you could -- please take
26 your time. Just take as much time as you need,
27 and when you're ready, you can let the
28 Commissioners know a bit about this photo.

29 STARR DRYNOCK: So I have two sets of these photos of
30 my mother and my dad, Norman, here. He says this
31 is just before they were getting ready to go out
32 dancing in the town. We still have -- I've got
33 one copy and my dad's got the other copy of this
34 photo.

35 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you, Starr. Starr, if it's
36 okay with you, I just have a few questions.
37 Thank you.

38 The first question is, have you ever
39 obtained any of the documents related to any
40 criminal investigation or coroner's report
41 regarding your mother's death?

42 STARR DRYNOCK: No, I haven't obtained any records of
43 any sort. We even -- my dad and I even tried
44 looking online for like news articles and we
45 couldn't find any. And I haven't thought about
46 trying to get any records from the coroner or
47 from the police back home.

**Hearing Public
Starr Drynock
(Deborah Evangeline)**

1 KAREN SHOWSHOE: Would your family be interested in
2 obtaining any of those records?

3 STARR DRYNOCK: I've thought about it. I've thought
4 about wanting the records and everything, but I
5 think for now, just as long as I know her story
6 and I can share it with everybody, I think that's
7 all she would want, just for her story to be told
8 and have me just share her with you, have people
9 get to know her. And I think that's all that
10 would matter right now.

11 KAREN SHOWSHOE: I'd like to ask you a bit about your
12 strength and your resilience, but just one quick
13 question before I ask that. Were there any
14 suspects in your mother's death, and if so, do
15 you know their ethnicity or background?

16 STARR DRYNOCK: I know there were two. One was Native
17 and one was a Caucasian. That's all I know. My
18 dad told me more, but my mind, I think, just
19 blocks it out. And it's probably for the best in
20 a way. So I've just accepted that, that it's
21 just two men. And yeah, I've grown to accept
22 that. I don't need to know their names or where
23 they are or who they are.

24 KAREN SHOWSHOE: Thank you. Starr, you mention being
25 a dancer and you talk about your traditions and
26 your culture. And I'm just wondering, are there
27 any other factors that contribute to your
28 strength and resilience as a young woman?

29 STARR DRYNOCK: Growing up, I always thought that my
30 mother would want me to be like a kind, caring,
31 loving person. And I know that -- I guess
32 growing up without my mom, it'd have to make me
33 strong, independent -- a strong, independent
34 woman, and I have to learn to do things on my
35 own. And I knew that one day that I would have a
36 baby to look after, and I always told myself, I'm
37 going to be a good mom for him or her. And sure
38 enough, I've got my daughter, and so she's what
39 keeps me going. There are days sometimes where I
40 like, oh, I don't think I can do this. I don't
41 think I can like keep going. But I look at her,
42 and my dad says that she's got a lot of facial
43 traits and even like personality traits that
44 match my mom. And so, thinking of that, it keeps
45 me going because I know I've got a part of my mom
46 in my baby. So she helps me. She helps me out.
47 Her Nlakapamux name is Yedik Moyammen (phonetic)

**Hearing Public
Starr Drynock
(Deborah Evangeline)**

1 and it means "good medicine." So she's been good
2 medicine for me and definitely my dad, and she
3 helps, like just hugging her and feeling her, she
4 gives off a good energy, and so that's why we
5 call her "Good Medicine." So that plays a big
6 part in how I'm so strong and how I keep myself
7 going.

8 KAREN SHOWSHOE: Thank you. Starr, my final question
9 is about your supports, your support system. And
10 you've spoken about how your father has been a
11 tremendous support to you. And again, Mr.
12 Drynock, I really express my gratitude that
13 you're here in support of your daughter. Starr,
14 in addition to your father, have you had any
15 other supports throughout your life that you'd
16 like to speak about?

17 STARR DRYNOCK: Some other supports of mine are
18 friends and close family. My Auntie Loretta, she
19 moved back down to Spence's Bridge, I talk with
20 her a lot and she really helps me through the
21 tough times. I've got lots of -- or a few close
22 friends up here that I talk to. My friend Kim,
23 she's like a sister to me, so we can talk about
24 anything and everything. I've got supports at
25 Many Rivers Counselling and I've got friends and
26 family, like my Uncle Roger here. He's always
27 there for me. So it's really good to help --
28 thank you. It's really good to have close and
29 good support of friends and family that can be
30 there to support me when I need it.

31 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Thank you, Starr. I don't have any
32 more questions for you. Is there anything that's
33 come to mind, anything else that you'd like the
34 Commissioners to know? Or is it okay to see if
35 they have any questions? Okay.

36 Starr has indicated that she's open to
37 questions from the Commissioners.

38 STARR DRYNOCK: Hello.

39 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Hi. Thank you. Thank you for
40 telling us about your mom and honouring her with
41 your words and your memories and these photos.
42 You have her smile and we noticed that.

43 Part of our work is to look at ways to
44 honour the lost loved ones, and you've done that
45 now. And if there's any other memories you or
46 your dad want to share with us, I just wanted to
47 welcome you to, if you'd like to, tell us more

**Hearing Public
Starr Drynock
(Deborah Evangeline)**

1 about her, it would be a real honour. Thank you
2 so much.

3 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Commissioner, Starr has -- yes, her
4 testimony is complete about the memories of her
5 mother. And if anything comes up in the future,
6 she has offered to provide it to me and I'll
7 provide it to the Commissioners.

8 COMMISSIONER AUDETTE: As for me, it's a beautiful
9 teaching that you're giving us, as mothers, as
10 women, and I hope that the people across Canada
11 or on this Mother Earth see your strength, your
12 beauty. You too, le papa. And if I may, I would
13 like to bring a piece of your energy with me for
14 the rest of the day -- only if you want. Merci.

15 NORMAN DRYNOCK: I'd like to thank you for the
16 opportunity for my daughter to speak and all the
17 thoughtfulness of your team to bring not only me
18 but other family members in support. I am very
19 grateful. (Aboriginal language spoken)

20 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Commissioners, any other questions?

21 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: We're very grateful that
22 you came and shared these beautiful stories about
23 your mother. Thank you so much. And we have
24 something for you.

25
26 (SEED GIFTING CEREMONY)

27

First Hearing Exhibits

**Starr Evangeline Drynock (Family of Deborah
Evangeline)**

31

32 Exhibit P1: Three-page one-sided witness statement "My
33 name is Starr Evangeline Drynock..."

34 Exhibit P2: 8.5 x 11" photocopy of photo of woman
35 holding two young children on a couch.

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37 Starr Drynock with daughter Nevaeh in regalia and
38 raven facial markings.

39 Exhibit P4: 8.5 x 11" photocopy of a photo of a woman
40 standing with a broad smile in a white shirt,
41 dark jacket.

42 Exhibit P5: 8.5 x 11" photocopy of a photo man in a
43 cowboy hat with arms around a woman in a long-
44 sleeve white shirt.

45

46

47

**Hearing Public
Starr Drynock
(Deborah Evangeline)**

1 KAREN SNOWSHOE: Commissioners, in closing, Starr
2 would like to offer the "Women's Warrior Song."

3
4 (SONG)

5
6 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: We'll take a short break.
7 Thank you.

8
9 (PROCEEDINGS ADJOURNED AT 9:47 A.M.)
10 (PROCEEDINGS RECONVENED AT 10:07 A.M.)

11
12 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Let's resume. Ms.
13 Lundrigan, are you ready?

14 LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN: Yes, we are ready.

15 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Go ahead, please.

16
17 **Second Hearing**

18 **Edna Deerunner (Family of Annie Dick) with Lillian**
19 **Lundrigan (Commission Counsel)**

20
21 LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN: Thank you. (Aboriginal language
22 spoken), Commissioners. Good morning. I would
23 like to introduce to you the family member of
24 Annie Dick, Edna Deerunner, and her support
25 sitting with her today.

26 Edna, can you please share with the
27 Commissioners what you would like to share today.
28 We have to do the affirmation. Sorry.

29 BRYAN ZANDBERG: You don't have to raise your right
30 hand but you can raise your right feather.

31 Do you solemnly affirm that the evidence you
32 will give today will be the truth, the whole
33 truth, and nothing but the truth?

34 EDNA DEERUNNER: Well, from the point of a five-year-
35 old, yes.

36 EDNA DEERUNNER, affirmed.

37
38 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay. Thank you.

39 LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN: Okay. You can share your story
40 with the Commissioners.

41 EDNA DEERUNNER: Now, if I get nervous, someone's
42 going to have to hold this for me.

43 I'm here on behalf of my mama, and her name
44 is Annie Dick. She died in 1957-58, New Year's
45 Eve, or around there, in our little cabin in the
46 woods up at Porter Creek, and she died at the
47 hand of my father after many, many violent

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1 episodes toward her.

2 I have a picture of her. This is when she
3 was 25. She died at 30. There were five of us
4 born to her. Excuse me, there were six of us
5 born to her, a half-sister that wasn't raised in
6 our family but she was very much a part of our
7 life, and the five of us.

8 Where am I going here? I'm Kaska and Slavey
9 of the Dene. Slavey is Northwest Territory, and
10 that was my grandmother's people. My grandfather
11 was from the Yukon Territory. And I am Irish,
12 English, and Scot and I was raised in the Yukon
13 for almost five years. I left shortly after Mama
14 died because Daddy was trying to get ahead of the
15 law, as far as I know. He didn't ever pay for
16 his crime -- except for he did. You know that a
17 soul pays for those things. And I know that he
18 did. I had to forgive him and I still love him.

19 The logistics of the house -- well, first of
20 all, can I tell you why I want to talk to you? I
21 got to hold this. First of all, my -- my mama's
22 remains were never found, and that hits hard on a
23 family. I have the legal description of the
24 location of the property that we lived on, and it
25 needs to be translated into current terms so that
26 perhaps I can go and find her bones, because I
27 have a theory -- I was almost five. I have a
28 theory of where she was buried, and I have a
29 theory of how she was buried. Now, when she
30 died, Daddy was a drinker. Mama didn't drink
31 until the last, maybe year or so of her life, and
32 I think she sort of gave up. She was his
33 punching bag. And she was young and beautiful
34 and then her face got -- it got really damaged.

35 Where was I? Well, first I should talk
36 about how she died. Daddy was in a blackout.
37 I'm positive of that. I've worked on this issue
38 for 32 years of my life, which is about when I
39 woke up. The earlier parts of my life, I was a
40 pretty good little white girl, upper middle
41 class. I was married. I had a career in the
42 legal field in Alaska. I was what I thought was
43 fairly happy. And then things changed and I woke
44 up, and it was like, oh, there's more to life
45 than what I thought. So my husband said, you
46 need to go home. So I went home. And it changed
47 my world. And -- I'm very grateful for what my

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1 people have given to me.

2 So what I want is not only to find her bones
3 and bring them home. The next part I say not
4 with anger or legal intent or anything like that,
5 but I would like to have the RCMP apologize to me
6 and my family and my community for not opening a
7 file on my mama. My mama's a very amazing woman
8 and she was very accomplished in her way. She
9 was a trapper. She was a great mama. I didn't
10 see a lot of joy as a five-year-old. I just
11 didn't see it. But she loved us with her whole
12 heart. And the night that Daddy finished her
13 life, she -- I woke up.

14 Okay. Twelve years of my life I have no
15 memory except for these little tiny bits, and one
16 of those little bits came out one day in Alaska,
17 because I'd been searching for them, and I saw
18 the whole death scene. I saw myself looking
19 through a little slat in the crib that I was in.
20 I saw Mama reaching over Daddy to try and get the
21 keys out from under his pants because she wanted
22 to leave because he was being mean to her, and he
23 woke up and he just started on her. Now, this
24 oldest brother -- this picture of my mama, that's
25 my oldest brother. And that was her -- he was
26 her knight in shining armour. He protected her.
27 He was too young to have to do that but he did.
28 And he tried to step between Mama and Daddy, and
29 they laid him -- Daddy laid him out flat and he
30 was completely unconscious when Mama died. So I
31 think what happened is, in his rage, and
32 unfortunately in his blackout, he just went too
33 far. And she -- there wasn't any coming back for
34 her. And so he took a knife and he killed her.

35 Now, that's my memory that came back, and
36 those memories can be undependable. My eldest
37 brother believes -- his memory came back and told
38 him that Daddy took a cast iron frypan and hit
39 her on the side of the head and killed her that
40 way. It doesn't really matter. He killed her.

41 That's where my memory stops for a while. I
42 think I must have gone into a horrible shock. I
43 know that we did not remember -- we didn't
44 remember that she had died in that way. I was
45 told lies. I was told that she had committed
46 suicide and I hated her for a while. My little
47 six-year-old girl was just angry. And then my

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1 mama realized what was going on, my adopted mom,
2 and she said, well, really what happened was that
3 she died at the hands of GIs, so then I hated GIs
4 forever. Well, when truth really came out, it
5 really was my father.

6 I have very few memories but I treasure
7 them. My mama taught me how to knit and crochet
8 to the point where I can do it now, when I wasn't
9 even five years old. She would read me stories
10 from a story book, and I don't think she knew how
11 to read. Probably one of my favourite memories
12 is being on her back, over her shoulder watching
13 her snare rabbits, going from snare to snare and
14 picking up the rabbits.

15 We quickly left Canada and moved to Alaska.
16 My father, I believe, called his youngest brother
17 in and him and his wife came and got my brother
18 and me. Now, there was five of us, so -- well,
19 plus the half-sister. The half-sister's name is
20 Doris and she's passed. She has a beautiful
21 family in Ross River. Then I have my brother
22 Joe, who was five years older than me, myself,
23 and then my brother Bob, who was my best friend,
24 and he was two years younger than me. And then
25 there was Kathy, who died of alcohol-related
26 illness in 1984, and she's -- her death is the
27 reason I woke up. Lots of things happened in
28 those years. And then I have Maggie, Margaret,
29 who is five years younger than me and she was the
30 baby.

31 This is Kathy. This woman would wake up in
32 alcohol recovery places, and until two years
33 before her death she became sober, she affected
34 southeast Alaska. I think once we become strong,
35 we really can't stop people in my family because
36 we're good, strong people. Anyway, this is
37 Kathy, and she was raised in Florida by an uncle.
38 She had a really tough life. She had a really,
39 really tough life. Do I have other pictures?

40 LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN: Can I ask you a couple of
41 questions?

42 EDNA DEERUNNER: Sure.

43 LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN: When you talked about your home
44 and the location and what you want help finding
45 the remains of your mother, can you please
46 describe this document to the Commissioners.

47 EDNA DEERUNNER: Are you going to give it to them?

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1 LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN: Yes, I am.

2 EDNA DEERUNNER: This is the document of transfer of
3 property between my father and another man, and
4 this shows the location of the property that we
5 lived on when I was a child. We lived north of
6 Ross for most of -- well, for some of the time.
7 That's where I was born. And then we moved down
8 here.

9 LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN: And you mentioned when your mother
10 passed away that you were all brought to the
11 Mission home, Lazy Mountain --

12 EDNA DEERUNNER: Had I gotten to that yet?

13 LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN: I think so. I'll present this to
14 the Commission as well.

15 EDNA DEERUNNER: Yes. She's got an affidavit from the
16 -- there were two couples that ran the children's
17 home that we were placed in for seven years. It
18 was an extreme Christian home. It was abusive,
19 and not. There were good people there; there
20 were really horrible people there. There was a
21 minister who was a pedophile and many of us got
22 caught by him. There was -- I was raped by one
23 of the fellow -- I want to say inmates, but
24 that's not exactly -- how would I say that?
25 Students? Inmates? I like inmates.

26 But we did have good people there too. I
27 have to say that. But the extremism of the
28 Christianity was what probably affected me the
29 most, and certainly at eight years old I said,
30 no, and that was my -- one of my earliest and
31 strongest decisions, I think. But the best part
32 of the children's home was that we had 75
33 children to play with.

34 We weren't fed properly. I have a lifelong
35 problem with filling up my refrigerator to the
36 max. So that is something I carry with me in my
37 life. I was neglected, had a really tough time.
38 If you really needed help and the people weren't
39 willing to help you, you were pretty much on your
40 own as a little child. So we sort of took care
41 of each other too.

42 Anyway, seven years there, and then Daddy
43 died in 1964 in the Seward Harbour. He was one
44 of the very few people who died in the '64
45 earthquake in Alaska. There was like under 200
46 people and he was one of them. At that point
47 then I was adopted or taken by his youngest

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1 brother, who was a real estate appraiser in
2 Alaska, in Anchorage, and his wife, who was a
3 mover and a shaker. Nothing slowed her down when
4 she wanted to do something and she was very
5 political and active, and I got -- I got the
6 bones of my personality from her because I didn't
7 get them in the children's home, and I bless her
8 every day.

9 LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN: If you can just describe that to
10 the Commissioners. I will be presenting it to
11 them.

12 EDNA DEERUNNER: I don't hear you when you speak.

13 LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN: Oh. If you can describe this
14 document to the Commissioners, I will be giving
15 it to them.

16 EDNA DEERUNNER: Okay. This is the presumptive death
17 certificate of my father, Robert Martin Simmons.
18 He also had a pretty tough life, and I know that
19 he came to the Yukon running away from an
20 addiction to speed back in those days, and he
21 became a trapper and a drunk. There was parts of
22 him that were really, really good and he admired
23 my mama for the -- I don't know how long. But he
24 spoke very highly of her in a series of letters
25 that he sent to his mom in White Rock, B.C., and
26 talked about how she could track and trap and
27 hunt, and he would say, she's better than me,
28 she's teaching me a lot. And so she did. She
29 did. My mama was a kind, kind person, and if
30 there was something that she saw -- and these are
31 memories that I'm getting from my family and my
32 community members. I don't have these memories,
33 not all of them. They said if she saw that
34 someone needed something done, she would just do
35 it, and I like that. I do the same.

36 I wrote letters to the Yukon. I wrote
37 letters to the RCMP asking for documents, asking
38 for files, and I didn't get them. I got that
39 "Our records don't go back that far." But
40 really, what I came to, my conclusion was back in
41 those days -- and I'm saying that kindly toward
42 these days -- is that we just weren't cared for.
43 We weren't respected. We were just Native women.
44 And we need to change that because we are
45 amazing.

46 LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN: Edna, these are the letters you're
47 describing?

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1 EDNA DEERUNNER: Okay, she's going to show you the
2 letters that I wrote. Thank you.

3 So my goal is to -- well, I'm moving here.
4 I'm coming home. I've been in B.C. for the last
5 six or seven years, and I'm -- someone gave me a
6 pair of snowshoes not too long ago, and it was
7 like, okay, Spirit wants me home, I'm going home.
8 Now, I'm scared to death of 40 and 60 below
9 because I haven't been in that in a long time, so
10 I'm thinking Costa Rica for about a month every
11 winter. (Laughing) I know.

12 So my goal also with the RCMP is to build a
13 relationship, because we certainly aren't getting
14 anywhere the way we have been. I'm finding out
15 that there are some that are willing to listen to
16 us, some that are willing to work with us, and
17 those are the ones that I want to build a
18 relationship with.

19 Next are some pictures of -- an old picture,
20 1923 or '24, and right in the front sitting down
21 is my grandmother. Her name was Margaret -- you
22 don't have it yet.

23 LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN: I will give them copies.

24 EDNA DEERUNNER: Okay. Margaret Jules Dick
25 (phonetic). And she is the woman that came from
26 Fort Simpson. That's where she was born. And
27 this is her funeral flyer. And then next is my
28 grandpa. Margaret's Native name is Magedi, and
29 that is the name of our safe house in Ross River.
30 She was quite the woman. And this is my
31 grandfather, Kasowa (phonetic) and his name is
32 Frank Dick, and Kasowa was named after the snow,
33 the kind of snow that was on the ground the
34 morning he was born. And I loved my grandpa. My
35 grandma comes up to here on me. My grandpa --
36 you just look around the room and you see these
37 hands going away. He always talked with his
38 hands and he had the biggest hands. He knows.
39 So -- and you know what, they both tell me I was
40 their favourite grandchild. (Laughing) They
41 were kidding. He told all of us that.

42 This is our Dick family taken by Margaret
43 Thompson in the '80s. You know who Margaret
44 Thompson is, hey? She was a really powerful
45 woman who we were blessed to have live in Kaska
46 land with us, and she is -- that's how we named
47 our social services building, is the Margaret

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1 Thompson Centre. She was a really beautiful
2 lady. And so she took this picture of us, and I
3 am in here with my son and my Auntie Josephine
4 and her husband, and their children are in here.
5 My Uncle Harry's three children are in here.
6 Don't let me forget anyone. My sister Doris --
7 my half-sister Doris, and at least one of her
8 children are in here. Alan (phonetic), yeah. So
9 there you are. I'm in the back standing there
10 with my brother, my dear brother.

11 Okay. In terms of damage to my family, I
12 just want to quickly say that there were five
13 born to my mama -- six born to my mama, and there
14 are two of us living. We died of alcohol-related
15 deaths, we died of violent murder, we died of
16 being beaten by a cop, we died of a second brain
17 injury, and finally, my dearest one jumped off a
18 bridge in Whitehorse. He stopped the taxi and he
19 said, I can't do it anymore. So I lost my
20 brother.

21 Thank you.

22 LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN: Thank you, Edna. Do you want to
23 share the recommendations that you want to share
24 with the Commissioners today, if you have any
25 recommendations.

26 EDNA DEERUNNER: I gave you my recommendations. I
27 want to find my mama's bones and I want to
28 establish some kind of a relationship with the
29 RCMP. I think it would help us so much to have
30 an apology to our people. I really think that
31 would be powerful for us. Thank you.

32 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: For the apology, what is it
33 that -- the apology that you seek. What would
34 you like the apology to be for? You said --

35 EDNA DEERUNNER: For not responding to the death of my
36 mother. She disappeared. They actually didn't
37 know if she died, but she did. I mean, the
38 priest even told me that he knew that Daddy had
39 killed her. So the RCMP were negligent, in my
40 opinion, in not even opening a file.

41 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Okay.

42 EDNA DEERUNNER: And I'm sure there was a request at
43 some point for there to be a file opened. I'm
44 not asking for anything else. Anything else. I
45 just want an apology.

46 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: You said an apology for your
47 people as well.

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1 EDNA DEERUNNER: Absolutely.
2 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Can you tell us a little bit
3 more about that?
4 EDNA DEERUNNER: Can't it be in the same form?
5 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Yes. I just want to know
6 what's in your heart and your mind in terms of
7 what it should --
8 EDNA DEERUNNER: Yeah.
9 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: -- what they should
10 acknowledge.
11 EDNA DEERUNNER: Yeah. I want it to be a thorough
12 one.
13 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Yes. I'd like to know what
14 you want them to acknowledge.
15 EDNA DEERUNNER: Well, it's a fact that we were
16 treated terribly. We are still being treated
17 terribly. So somehow we need to rebuild some
18 kind of a relationship where the communication
19 happens. And that's part of why I come home. I
20 want to help. I'm not a scrapper -- usually.
21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I was going to say
22 [indiscernible] you have it in you.
23 EDNA DEERUNNER: I might. I think what I bring to my
24 people is a strong voice, but it's not a mean
25 one.
26 LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN: Any more questions from the
27 Commissioners? I'm just asking if there's any
28 more questions from the Commissioners.
29 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: I wanted to --
30 LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN: You need to put it closer to you.
31 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Okay. I'm notoriously soft-
32 spoken. Lillian knows that. So thank you for
33 the reminder. This one reminds me all the time.
34 I just wanted to clarify a couple of points
35 just so I understand more clearly your family's
36 history, you and your siblings. After your mom
37 passed, after she was killed, how long before you
38 guys left Ross and went into the home?
39 EDNA DEERUNNER: We were not in Ross River. We were
40 in Porter Creek.
41 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Okay, sorry.
42 EDNA DEERUNNER: And I don't -- I can't tell you
43 specifically, but it was still winter when we
44 left. I can tell you that and I know it was the
45 same year. I know we were illegally taken
46 through the border in Skagway. But those sorts
47 of things don't matter to me.

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1 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: I asked because -- you know,
2 the death of your mother had a profound impact on
3 you and your --

4 EDNA DEERUNNER: I can't hear you.

5 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Your mother's death --

6 EDNA DEERUNNER: Yeah.

7 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: -- clearly had a profound
8 impact on you and your siblings. And I just
9 wanted to better understand a little bit the
10 timeline of when you guys were --

11 EDNA DEERUNNER: Certainly. I --

12 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: -- ripped apart.

13 EDNA DEERUNNER: -- understand that completely. It's
14 just that -- you realize I'm a -- I was a five-
15 year-old child. I wasn't even five. I think
16 that Daddy killed Mom. I think that he called
17 his brother right away and they came and got us.
18 We went through the border, that was just my
19 brother and me, so there's the older brother
20 still and the two younger girls. I think they
21 all came to Alaska. I don't know which part of
22 Alaska they came to, but likely Skagway since I
23 have an auntie that lives there on my father's
24 side. And the middle one, Kathy, who was between
25 Bob and Maggie, she was shipped to Florida and
26 raised there under grim circumstances. Her
27 mother -- her so-called mother, my auntie, would
28 try and wash her, try and tell her not to tell
29 anyone that she was Native. I don't know the
30 whole story, but Kathy lived a tough life.

31 And then the youngest sister -- this is just
32 a guess, now, but she and I have talked about it
33 and we think Daddy sold her because she was
34 raised by a very wealthy couple who were too old
35 to have adoptions, in those days. And they were
36 in the same social group as my mom and dad. And
37 when I switch from "mama" to "mom" or "daddy" to
38 "dad," that's my second set of parents. So
39 that's what I know.

40 And some -- we did stay in a mission in
41 Skagway -- it's called the Pius X Mission -- for
42 a few months. I don't totally understand how
43 long it was. I have some memories there. They
44 were mostly pleasant. I mean, the nuns could be
45 a little tough sometimes and it was scary to run
46 past those statues that would glow in the dark
47 type of thing when I was a kid. I remember that.

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1 But I had my two brothers. I think in some ways
2 I got lucky to have the boys with me. The girls
3 didn't have that, and I feel sad for that. Does
4 that answer your question?

5 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: [Indiscernible - off
6 microphone]

7 LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN: So if there's no further questions
8 from the -- I think there's more questions from
9 the Commissioners.

10 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: I just have a couple of
11 questions for you about your mother's bones. You
12 said that you want to find your mother's bones?

13 EDNA DEERUNNER: Yes, ma'am. They did bring a woman's
14 body to my Aunt Josephine -- or to our family,
15 and my Aunt Josephine told me -- she's passed
16 now, my Aunt Josephine told me that they weren't
17 Mama's bones. They weren't Mama's body because
18 she had gold teeth, and Mama didn't have gold
19 teeth. So they did eventually bury her in a
20 cemetery in Whitehorse, but we did not claim that
21 body as far as I know.

22 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Oh. So --

23 EDNA DEERUNNER: So my supposition is Daddy -- this is
24 the best I can come up with as a five-year-old
25 kid, and I'm a pretty strong, intelligent little
26 five-year-old kid. I mean, I paid attention
27 because that's what kept me safe. I think -- in
28 that old shed there was a stove, and I think he
29 must have heated the shed on the inside and the
30 ground for maybe a couple of days until he could
31 work the ground, and I think that's where he
32 buried her.

33 Now, I have talked to wise people about it,
34 and one of them said, you will find her
35 burial -- her grave, and it will be covered with
36 our medicine. So I'm really hoping that's so.
37 If it isn't, I'll deal with that.

38 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Okay. Thank you. You've said
39 you'd like to build a relationship with the RCMP.
40 Can you tell us more about that?

41 EDNA DEERUNNER: No, because I -- it hasn't begun yet.
42 I have traditionally worked with -- I worked in
43 the prisons in Alaska. I brought Native way into
44 --for Native people. So I've worked with
45 structure many, many times. I've done a lot of -
46 - okay, sorry. I'm trained in healing. My first
47 teacher was Inupiak in Alaska. He was a healer

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1 and a shaman, and he taught me how to move
2 energy. And I just went from there. I had one
3 teacher after another. You just put your foot in
4 front of another, right? And so that's who I am.
5 That's my life's joy. I make medicines. I work
6 with people. I do -- I don't really call it
7 workshops. I just go and sit with people. You
8 know, we have circle or whatever. I worked with
9 an Elder when we went to the prisons, and his
10 name is Walter Austin. He's passed now.

11 Walter was probably one of the most amazing
12 Elders I could have had in there, and they didn't
13 want him because he was an old street drunk, or
14 he'd been an old street drunk. And they said,
15 no, we don't want him. I said, if you want me,
16 then you have to take him too. And they did. So
17 the last time I saw him, he goes -- well, first
18 of all, he was eating strips and he wanted more,
19 and then the second one was he called me the
20 woman who got him into jail. (Laughing) He was a
21 magnificent man to work with.

22 And then the young man that we went in --
23 there was a team of three of us. His name is
24 Buzz Daney and he's a lovely man. I think he's
25 Chocktaw. But he lived in Alaska. He's one of
26 the singers and musicians in what's called
27 Medicine Dream and it's a beautiful Native
28 American band that is much loved by Alaska. And
29 Buzz is now helping to run the tribal doctor
30 program in Alaska for the Native hospital.

31 So we did good work, and we built a good
32 foundation there.

33 LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN: Thank you, Edna. There's no
34 further questions from the Commissioners.

35 EDNA DEERUNNER: Thank you very much. I appreciate
36 you letting me be here today to talk about my
37 mama.

38 LILLIAN LUNDRIGAN: Thank you, Edna.

39 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Edna, because we're so
40 grateful that you came to talk to us today, we
41 have some small gifts of seeds for you.

42
43 (SEED GIFTING CEREMONY)

44
45 **Second Hearing Exhibits**
46 **Edna Deerunner (Family of Annie Dick)**

47

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(Annie Dick)

1 Exhibit P1: Affidavit of Walter J. Covich; Affidavit
2 of Edna D. Covich; two pages with respective
3 signature, both sworn January 12, 1990.

4 Exhibit P2: Six-page Agreement dated April 29, 1958
5 (see second page) on letterhead of Nielsen,
6 Enderton and MacWilliam, barristers and
7 solicitors, dated May 1958 Whitehorse and on
8 legal paper.

9 Exhibit P3: 8.5 x 11" photocopy of a photo of a woman
10 in hat and dark jacket holding a boy.

11 Exhibit P4: Two-page Presumptive death certificate,
12 Alaska Department of Health, for Robert Martin
13 Simmons, presumed date of death March 27, 1964.

14 Exhibit P5: One-page photocopy of Whitehorse Star news
15 report "Man has taxi stop, jumps to his death" by
16 Chuck Tobin. No date of photocopy.

17 Exhibit P6: Four-page photocopy of text and images,
18 some double-sided, stapled top left corner. First
19 page: photo of group in front of a cabin with the
20 caption: "At Ross River, Y.T 1923 or 24..." Funeral
21 program for Kazoa' Frank Dick and group photo on
22 subsequent pages.

23
24
25
26 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: We'll take a break until
27 11:20, please.

28
29
30 (PROCEEDINGS ADJOURNED)

31 (PROCEEDINGS RECONVENED AT 11:30 A.M.)

32
33 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Ms. van Tongeren, are you
34 ready to proceed?

35
36 **Third Hearing**

37 **Bella Bresse, Pamela Blanchard, Toni Blanchard, Logan**
38 **Blanchard (Family of Evangeline Billy) with Wendy van**
39 **Tongeren (Commission Counsel)**

40
41 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Yes, thank you. We are ready. I
42 apologize for being a bit late. There was
43 another matter that also required my attention in
44 the in camera room. Thank you.

45 My name, for those of you who don't know me,
46 is Wendy van Tongeren and I am one of the lawyers
47 with the inquiry. And I feel very, very honoured

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1 to present -- oh, a Commissioner is sitting in
2 the middle. A wonderful sight.

3 So I've been working with this family for
4 this event today, and the first person that I met
5 from the family is Bella Bresse, B-r-e-s-s, and
6 we met -- s-e. And we met -- we're on first-name
7 terms so I wasn't quite sure of the second, but I
8 apologize for the misspelling. And we met in
9 Carmacks. And so I'm hoping -- I wasn't here,
10 but did you have a smudging? Okay, good. Thank
11 you. I'm glad you did that.

12 There will be three people who are
13 presenting today. The first one is Bella, and
14 then -- do you want it in the same order, do you
15 want to do your poem first, Pam? You do. So
16 Bella and then Pam and then Toni, okay? Okay,
17 great. So that's what we're going to do. But
18 not to forget Logan, who is the glue of the
19 family. So we're happy that everybody is here.
20 Thank you so much.

21 So Bella has been asked -- are you still
22 going to swear on a Bible or --

23 BELLA BRESSE: We're going to use the feather and all
24 my children are going to hold the feather while
25 we do the affirmation.

26 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: That's a beautiful idea. Let's
27 do that.

28 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Good morning, Toni and Bella and
29 Pamela and Logan. I'll just ask you all the same
30 question. Do you all solemnly affirm that the
31 evidence you will give today will be the truth,
32 the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

33 ALL: Yes.

34 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay. Thank you very much.

35
36 BELLA BRESSE, PAMELA BLANCHARD,
37 TONI BLANCHARD, AND LOGAN
38 BLANCHARD, affirmed.
39

40 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Bella, you're going first. Did
41 anyone talk to you already about offering you
42 tobacco and would you like tobacco? There you
43 go. Thank you.

44 Okay, I feel a little bit like a, you know,
45 a show host, and so I've got this first big
46 question for you, Bella, and I know you do well.
47 So here we are, the second day of the inquiry,

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1 and you made a choice to come and to speak from
2 the heart, to tell Commissioners and others about
3 things that have occurred in your life. I'd like
4 to start with you by asking, could you just name
5 the topics as if they're chapters in a book, just
6 the topics that you're going to cover today.

7 BELLA BRESSE: Good morning. My name is Bella. I'm
8 from the Crow Clan from Little Salmon/Carmacks
9 First Nation. What we are going to discuss today
10 is about my daughter, of how she was found and
11 what the investigators have come up with. And
12 I'm going to tell you a little bit of all what
13 I've been through emotionally and the impact of
14 losing my daughter. And also I'm going to tell
15 you a little bit about the courts, the system,
16 and other agencies that we have applied to.

17 I have my children here with me: Toni,
18 Pamela, and Logan. Logan is a big support for me
19 and so is Toni and Pamela. My youngest daughter,
20 she couldn't be here with us because she has her
21 little family and it's far away for her to come,
22 so -- but she keeps us in her prayers and it's
23 very difficult for her too, so she's not ready
24 yet. But once she's ready, she'll be coming into
25 the family gatherings. And also I'd like to tell
26 about my healing path since it happened.

27 And also I'd like to tell you about my
28 daughter. Evangeline Kris Billy was born March
29 the 7th, 1980. She was five foot, nine inches
30 and she was 150 some pounds. She's a very
31 beautiful, beautiful woman. She left us three
32 grandchildren. Her oldest is now and will be
33 graduating from Grade 12. She couldn't be here
34 with us today because she's musically inclined so
35 she's doing a little concert in Carmacks. I say
36 concert. She's -- she also written a song for
37 her mom, but I didn't have time to get together
38 the song, but hopefully when you come back and
39 visit us, I will have that song for you and I'll
40 have her here with us.

41 WENDY VON TONGEREN: So before you start to talk about
42 those things, I wonder if you would like to talk
43 about yourself first a little bit.

44 BELLA BRESSE: I just introduced myself.

45 WENDY VON TONGEREN: Is that all you want to say about
46 all the wonderful accomplishments that you have
47 had, who you are?

Hearing - Public**Bella Bresse, Pamela Blanchard,
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1 BELLA BRESSE: When I heard about my daughter, it
2 broke my heart. It felt like a big void. I
3 couldn't -- I couldn't -- find anything to help
4 me. It was difficult. My grieving path led me
5 everywhere. They say your grieving cycle goes
6 around in a circle, but mine was all over. I was
7 angry one day and the next day I feel good and
8 the next day I'll be angry again, and it just
9 seemed like my grieving just went out of whack.
10 And I turned to alcohol, and I think the alcohol
11 took away my pain, the pain, the void I was
12 trying to fill because it was still there, the
13 void of losing my daughter. And with my
14 children, I had to tell them, wherever you go,
15 please let me know, let me know where you're at,
16 let me know who you're with. I don't want
17 nothing to happen, so I'm like a mother bear.
18 Anything goes -- happens, then grrrr.

19 I started working out at Exploration Camp
20 and tried to take my mind off losing my daughter
21 and never seeing my daughter again, thinking
22 about my grandchildren, how my grandchildren's
23 going to grow up without a mom.

24 I had my two youngest grandchildren -- I
25 have not seen them for five years until last year
26 for less than an hour. They brought them to see
27 us, and I haven't seen them since. They didn't
28 know who I was. They didn't know. The only
29 thing they remembered was the house and they
30 asked me, "Do you still have that picture?" And
31 I asked them, "What picture?" "Of Mom."

32 So I do believe that they know who their
33 mother is, and they know that we're family, and
34 if they do want to come home, they'll come home
35 to open arms.

36 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Okay. Do you recall that we put
37 together a -- I've got to change the spelling
38 here.

39 BELLA BRESSE: It's okay. I forgive you.

40 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: So this is a family tree?

41 BELLA BRESSE: Yes.

42 WENDY BAN TONGEREN: I wonder if that helps to just
43 introduce the children, who are here. And also
44 perhaps when you speak about Evangeline, who was
45 your eldest daughter, tell us about her children,
46 how old they are now.

47 BELLA BRESSE: My oldest daughter, her name is

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1 Evangeline Kris Billy. She was born March 7,
2 1980. She has three children, Azul, Ileana
3 (phonetic), and Elijah. Ileana and Elijah are
4 the twins I was just telling you about a few
5 minutes ago.

6 My second oldest, Georgina Billy, November
7 5th, 1981. I just recently -- she just recently
8 passed about five months ago from illness.

9 Toni is my third oldest. She was born May
10 11th, 1983. And Pamela --

11 Oh, just a minute. Georgina leaves me with
12 three grandsons, Bodacious (phonetic), Lane
13 (phonetic), and Evan. Evan was named after his
14 Aunt Evangeline.

15 Toni has two children, Raina (phonetic) and
16 Petra (phonetic).

17 And Pamela, May 3rd, 1984, and has two sons,
18 Arkin (phonetic) and Bobby.

19 And Logan, February 1st, 1987, still single.
20 (Laughing)

21 Any my youngest daughter, Tara, she was born
22 March 4th, 1981 (sic), and has two girls, Avery
23 (phonetic) and Henley (phonetic).

24 So in all I have twelve grandchildren and
25 I'm very proud of my grandchildren.

26 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Okay. But you can -- I
27 understand that it needs a few amendments but --
28 Okay. So you named those areas that you're going
29 to cover today. You talked about Evangeline and
30 justice and your healing path.

31 ALEX CARLICK: May I say something?

32 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Who are you, sir?

33 ALEX CARLICK: Alex Carlick, Wendy Carlick's son.

34 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Okay. And are you feeling
35 okay?

36 ALEX CARLICK: What?

37 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Are you feeling okay
38 today?

39 ALEX CARLICK: Yeah.

40 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Okay.

41 ALEX CARLICK: I think it's better that you just give
42 me the -- I'd just like to say that I feel
43 everybody's pain right now. My mom was like the
44 greatest person ever, and every day I'm crying
45 because she was taken from me just like my
46 sister. And I see no cops around here because
47 they never did nothing for anything that I went

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1 through. I lost everything, closest family that
2 I had: my grandma, my mom, and my sister. And I
3 feel everybody's pain around here. It's pretty
4 hard that you have to go through these
5 situations. But I'm still not alone. My mom was
6 a mother to a lot of people, and I know that
7 she's always going to be with me. And I feel you
8 guys's pain that everybody that left you lost.

9 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Thank you very much.

10 Everybody okay?

11 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay, everybody, we're going to take
12 a ten-minute break right now and then reconvene
13 ten minutes from now, okay? At the request of
14 the family. Thank you.

15
16 (PROCEEDINGS ADJOURNED)

17 (PROCEEDINGS RECONVENED AT 12:01 P.M.)

18
19 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: So why don't we start with a
20 celebration of your family with some photos that
21 you've brought. And maybe what we could do is --
22 look at Mr. Glue over there. He's already got it
23 and he's showing his picture, and so perhaps we
24 should do it like the way he is. So show your
25 picture and we'll pass the mic down and you
26 basically say what is in your picture. These are
27 all pictures of the family. You can start,
28 Logan.

29 LOGAN BLANCHARD: Hello. My name is Logan Blanchard.
30 I am younger brother of Evangeline Billy. And in
31 this picture she just had her twins, on the left,
32 Elijah, and on the right is Ileana.

33 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Thank you.

34 PAMELA BLANCHARD: In this picture there's Evan. Then
35 there's me here and our youngest sister, Tara.

36 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Pamela, tell them about the
37 twirly dress.

38 PAMELA BLANCHARD: I liked dresses like this because
39 it furred out and I could turn in it. Yeah, it
40 looked really nice.

41 BELLA BRESSE: This is a school picture when my
42 daughter attended the Tantalus School in
43 Carmacks. She was 16 -- 16/17 years old at this
44 time. She's very beautiful, as you can see, and
45 she always had that smile where if you see her
46 smile you just automatically have to smile too.

47 TONI BLANCHARD: I have two pictures. I have two

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1 photos. One is when she just had her twins,
2 Ileana and Elijah, and her eldest daughter, Azul,
3 and our Auntie Candace is in the picture, in this
4 one. This one here, we were in Dawson, and
5 there's myself, my younger sister Tara; Evan's in
6 the middle; my mom and my nephew Arkin.

7 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: So Bella, is now the time to talk
8 about what happened to Evan?

9 BELLA BRESSE: The RCMP called me late at night and
10 told me that they found my daughter. I didn't
11 want to believe it at first. And my niece came
12 to see me and she said, "Auntie, Auntie,
13 something happened." And right away I knew
14 something -- right away I knew when something
15 happened to one of my children. And I had some
16 people from Carmacks with me. They stayed with
17 me, they made some tea for me, made sure that I
18 was okay.

19 The RCMP didn't really tell me the whole
20 story over the phone, but when I got to
21 Whitehorse, the RCMPs met with me and my family.
22 They told me what had happened. They told me
23 that my daughter's ex was there to identify her
24 body and made sure that it was her.

25 We met with the RCMP and they told us what
26 had happened, that the accused had hit her in the
27 head, side of the head, with a blunt object.
28 When we saw the autopsy pictures, you can see the
29 big gash on the side of her head and down in her
30 lower jaw area, and there's bruises all over her
31 body. And that they found her body half in the
32 Yukon River and the other half was still on the
33 ground and that she was naked from waist down.

34 I -- I didn't know what to think. I didn't
35 know what to say. It just seemed like I was
36 starting to -- to close. And I'd start thinking
37 about her children and I'd start thinking about
38 my children, and I kept praying and praying
39 somehow we'll get through this. It was difficult
40 for everybody because everybody knew my daughter.
41 Some way, somehow their paths crossed. She's
42 very kind, considerate, and respectable of other
43 people, especially Elders. She'd do anything for
44 Elders, her aunts, her uncles.

45 They had to ship her body to Vancouver for
46 autopsy, and we couldn't make any arrangements
47 until her body came back. Two weeks later they

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1 ship her back up here. We couldn't -- we
2 couldn't get family members or support to come
3 and see -- see her at the wake because her head
4 was all caved in on one side and on the other
5 side of her head. I notice a mark right by her
6 left -- her right lip looked like a knife wound,
7 and I asked the RCMP, I said, was there any knife
8 involved, and they said no. They said it was
9 just a blunt object, either a stone, big rock, or
10 a two-by-four. I just so happened to walk to the
11 area where they found her and I was looking
12 around, see if I can find anything they
13 overlooked any kind of evidence. And I sat there
14 and I cried.

15 The day of the court -- the preliminary
16 hearing, we had to go through picture by picture
17 from what the pathologist had taken. We had to
18 listen to jurors. We had to pick out jurors. We
19 had to -- we sat in the court from day one 'til
20 it was done. And again, they set it off -- they
21 set the courts off to October 2009. Two days was
22 set for the jurors, picking out the jurors, and
23 we started on the third day with the hearing.

24 The RCMP had arrested the accused two
25 days -- two days after they found my daughter's
26 body, and they put her in jail. But she pleaded
27 not guilty. We were in Whitehorse for almost
28 three and -- three to four weeks. We had to stay
29 in hotels. And our First Nation, the Little
30 Salmon/Carmacks First Nation, were a big support
31 and financially supported my family. They
32 supported us with counsellors, and also support
33 people came and supported my family during the
34 courts.

35 I don't know how I sat through the court and
36 can remember all this because I was crying and
37 crying.

38 We built a relationship with the DA where he
39 would come into a room and we'll talk about the
40 case, and if he left anything out, we'll let him
41 know. We write down things for him, tell him ask
42 her this, ask them this.

43 My granddaughter was so afraid of sleeping,
44 thinking that the accused would somehow break
45 jail and come and get her. She was just afraid.
46 And she would have nightmares about it.

47 On the fourth week, the jurors found her

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1 guilty of second degree. At first they were
2 going to with first degree, but they lessened it
3 to second degree murder, and was sentenced to 25
4 years without parole. No, no, that's wrong. I'm
5 sorry. Fourteen years -- she has to do 14 years
6 before parole, but she was sentenced to 25 years.

7 In that time, I was still angry. My
8 feelings was so hurt. There are times when I see
9 a young woman with long hair that looks just like
10 her, and I'll go, ah, oh my God, is that her?
11 And I stop short and the young girl would turn
12 around and I'd say, oh, my goodness.

13 The accused went to jail for -- 'til two
14 thousand and -- two thousand and -- no. Two
15 thousand and fif -- fourteen? Two thousand and
16 sixteen she was set free. But the year before,
17 2015, she had applied for appeal. She won her
18 appeal. And a few months later she applied for
19 bail. And her family came up with \$13,000 bail
20 to get her out, and she won.

21 And in May of 2016, she -- we were supposed
22 to go back to court, but we didn't know that the
23 two lawyers got together and they made a deal
24 with the accused and she agreed to take a lesser
25 charge of manslaughter, and she was set free
26 because she had served her time.

27 I was so angry. I walked out of that
28 courthouse and I stood outside and I screamed and
29 screamed and cried. But -- ah. During the court
30 the lawyer had mentioned to the judges about the
31 *Gladue* report. I looked up the *Gladue* report
32 right away on -- I googled it because I had no
33 other way of getting information. So she -- I
34 believe that her sentence was lessened because of
35 the *Gladue* report.

36 And I don't mind -- I don't want to say
37 anything bad. I don't want to offend anybody. I
38 don't want anybody to think that I'm against them
39 because of residential school. But *Gladue* report
40 has to be used in a good way but not misused.

41 My healing path. I try to find ways. I ask
42 my -- I asked the DA if it would be possible for
43 my family to go and to counteract in civil court,
44 and he says, you wouldn't get anywhere because
45 she doesn't have no money. I said, well, if she
46 won her bail and can get \$13,000, can't she get
47 something for my granddaughters? It wouldn't --

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1 he just said, no, it would be --
2 My healing path led me to meet one of the
3 Commissioners that's supporting me now, Michèle,
4 Jennifer. I -- Krista, Amanda. I start
5 attending the family gatherings in Ottawa,
6 Winnipeg, and Carmacks -- we started. I want to
7 tell everybody, every family, that we are here to
8 also support you in any way we can because we've
9 been through it. We know what it's like.
10 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Thank you. Bella, I'd like to
11 ask you a few questions, if that's okay.
12 BELLA BRESSE: Okay.
13 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: So when you received that phone
14 call from the police, was that in about June of
15 2008?
16 BELLA BRESSE: Yes.
17 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: And when you talked about a DA,
18 was that the lawyer who was taking the case for
19 the Crown?
20 BELLA BRESSE: Yes.
21 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Okay. And the woman who
22 eventually dealt with the charges against her by
23 pleading guilty to manslaughter, did you know her
24 at all before this incident when she killed your
25 daughter?
26 BELLA BRESSE: I didn't know who she was until my
27 second-oldest daughter -- my daughters had
28 attended school at the same school with her. And
29 she used to badger my daughter, bullied my
30 daughter a lot in school.
31 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: So your daughter told you that,
32 your --
33 BELLA BRESSE: Mm-hm.
34 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: -- another daughter?
35 BELLA BRESSE: Yes.
36 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Okay. And I'm just wondering, in
37 terms of your experience, of going through the
38 court process, other than the *Gladue* that you've
39 already talked about, what else, if you were to
40 do it over again, would you do differently, and
41 what do you think the people around you should
42 have done differently in supporting you after
43 your daughter's death?
44 BELLA BRESSE: [Indiscernible - away from microphone]
45 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: I'm sorry?
46 BELLA BRESSE: I don't understand that. What did you
47 just say?

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1 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Just when you think about from
2 the day that you received that phone call from
3 the police --

4 BELLA BRESSE: Mm-hm. Yeah.

5 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: -- until the end of the case when
6 the manslaughter conviction was registered, when
7 it was done, the case was done --

8 BELLA BRESSE: Mm-hm.

9 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: -- first of all, what would you
10 have done differently if you knew then what you
11 know now?

12 BELLA BRESSE: I -- what I know now and what I would
13 change is the process of the courts. I would
14 change -- I would change not letting the judge
15 know about *Gladue* report. The judge should be
16 well aware of the *Gladue* report before he gets on
17 stand, right?

18 I would be more stronger to handle anything.
19 I would give support to my children the way I'm
20 supposed to. What we need is counselling,
21 grievance -- more into grievance and how to
22 grieve for our loved ones the proper way, and let
23 people know that we're here. We can stay strong
24 together, be together.

25 And if I can change anything, the accused
26 would still be in jail. If I was a judge sitting
27 there I would put her in jail for the crime she
28 did. She took away my daughter. It wasn't my
29 daughter's time.

30 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Thank you. Now, when you were
31 talking about the sentencing part, I gave you --
32 it was actually a judgment from the court that
33 was published, to refresh your memory about the
34 date. So do you remember that? I handed you
35 this.

36 BELLA BRESSE: Yes.

37 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Yeah. So I just wanted to refer
38 to that. That is a case that is reported at
39 2016, YKSC 48 from the Supreme Court of the
40 Yukon, and I have copies for others.

41 One place that we haven't gone yet is before
42 Evangeline died, you tell us that you got the
43 phone call from the police. But when had you
44 last seen Evangeline before the incident?

45 BELLA BRESSE: The last time I saw my daughter was in
46 the picture we just showed you of all of us
47 standing in Dawson. But she would call.

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1 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: I've got a copy of the package.
2 Could you just find that picture and I can just
3 put an X beside it. Okay. Or put "Dawson" --
4 maybe write "Dawson." Thank you, Toni.

5 Okay. And in that picture I see Toni and
6 there's Evangeline and there's Bella and -- and
7 who is this woman again?

8 BELLA BRESSE: Tara.

9 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Tara. And the little boy?

10 BELLA BRESSE: Arkin.

11 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Okay. Thank you. So what was
12 Evangeline's -- what was she up to? What was her
13 life like with her kids and all that back in June
14 of 2008 before she died?

15 BELLA BRESSE: Evangeline loved her children. She
16 always talks about her children. Her children
17 were taken and put into care -- and put into
18 foster care. She come to see them any time she
19 wants and the visitation rights were open to her
20 so -- she lived in Whitehorse most of that time.
21 She was going out with her boyfriend. They
22 stayed in Whitehorse while he worked out in
23 Watson Lake, travelling back and forth. But
24 she -- she had a home here in Whitehorse and her
25 home was spotless. There's always a cup of
26 coffee -- hot cup of coffee for me when I go and
27 visit with her.

28 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Anything else?

29 BELLA BRESSE: No.

30 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Okay. Now, one thing in our
31 discussion before coming to speak to the
32 Commissioners, you had expressed some concern
33 about violence in the Yukon Territory. Is that
34 something you want to talk about at this time?

35 BELLA BRESSE: My daughter died by violence. I'm very
36 much against violence. I'm very much against
37 bully in schools. What I would like to see for
38 Yukon is education in violence. Violence takes
39 away a lot of things. Violence can make you
40 vulnerable to other people. Violence can take
41 the strength, take your identity.

42 And for us, us First Nations, we are strong.
43 We are, I think, about the strongest people
44 nationally. We can stand up. We can say, okay,
45 you hear my voice, you listen to me. We need to
46 do something about violence. Stop the bullying
47 in school. Stop it now, and instead honour and

Hearing - Public**Bella Bresse, Pamela Blanchard, Toni Blanchard, Logan
Blanchard****(Evangeline Billy)**

1 respect to replace the violence.

2 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: And there is a story about rings.
3 Would you like to tell that story, or not so
4 much? About rings, Evangeline's rings.

5 BELLA BRESSE: I --

6 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: It's up to you.

7 BELLA BRESSE: Three weeks ago, I had my
8 granddaughters with me and the RCMP came and they
9 said, I have your daughter's belongings, your
10 daughter's rings. And I looked and I said, who
11 are you, you have what? Like nine years later,
12 he came to the house in Carmacks. He said, "I
13 want to personally come and give you this." So I
14 was saying a little prayer, and I thanked him,
15 told him that it was very nice for him to come
16 all the way. I went into my room. I put my
17 granddaughter down, let her sit with their uncle.
18 I went into their room. I sat down and I held
19 that little white box that had my daughter's
20 rings and her bracelets, and I held it in my
21 hands and I just started crying and crying. I
22 just started crying. I could feel what she had
23 gone through because those are the rings she had
24 on when they found her body.

25 And today I have her rings on, and it's
26 given me strength to sit and speak with you and
27 tell you my story. And it's not going to stop
28 here. I'm going to continue telling her story.
29 and now I think I should give time for my
30 daughters to say something.

31 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Thank you. Pamela perhaps, with
32 the phone.

33 PAMELA BLANCHARD: Yes.

34 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Thank you, Pamela.

35 PAMELA BLANCHARD: Hi. My name is Pamela Blanchard,
36 daughter to Isabelle Bresse and Harold Blanchard,
37 sister to late Evangeline Kris Billy. My Native
38 name is Jessia (phonetic) after our great-
39 grandma, Jessie Alfred (phonetic).

40 I'd like to share my story the way our
41 sister liked poetry. There are many poems I
42 wrote but only a few that she related to. So I
43 took some words and sentences and integrated it
44 into this one poem. I was asked to read two, but
45 I feel this one poem is everything that I want to
46 say. She always told me to keep writing and that
47 one day she hoped to read one of my poems in a

Hearing - Public**Bella Bresse, Pamela Blanchard, Toni Blanchard, Logan
Blanchard****(Evangeline Billy)**

1 published book. Every other day she'd ask if
2 there is anything new and she always made me feel
3 like -- she always made me feel good about
4 writing.

5 When I had my first son, she always made --
6 she always wanted to make sure that I had
7 everything, milk, diapers. She loved her
8 nephews, and I know in my heart if she met her
9 nieces, she would have gone head over heels for
10 them because they're so beautiful.

11 Even though she's looking down on us still
12 she's still missing out on a whole lot. She was
13 taken too soon. Our mom always says God works in
14 mysterious ways. Mysterious for sure, but why
15 that way? No one deserves to go in that manner.

16 So I'm going to read my poem now.

17 Silence dropping, knees shaking. Did I
18 really hear a mistake? No, she was taken
19 and found. I remember always wanting to be
20 around her, to learn from her. She was
21 happy and about to start over.

22
23 I remember she was saying something about
24 staying sober. When I was told, I didn't
25 believe -- I didn't want to believe,
26 blocking it out and drinking more. I never
27 thought of self-harm before. It didn't
28 cross my mind. Shockingly, I went for the
29 knife. I cut my pain and cut my sorrows. I
30 grieved in a way that was horrible. I
31 cried. I fought. I raged. I drank 15
32 years of my life.

33
34 Finally reality smudged my dreams, waking me
35 up to say, "Enough is enough." And look
36 what happened. I've been sober for one year
37 now, recently grieving for another beautiful
38 sister. There's nothing like a broken heart
39 with sadness too much to bear. So much hurt
40 when you care, knowing there won't ever be
41 another like her. There was only her.

42
43 Our lives put on hold while our feelings
44 balancing on a scale. We need to heal, heal
45 our hearts, heal our minds, heal our
46 communities. Trouble forming left and right
47 from the impact of despair.

Hearing - Public**Bella Bresse, Pamela Blanchard, Toni Blanchard, Logan
Blanchard****(Evangeline Billy)**

1
2 Sorrows filling the air. Family and friends
3 keeping it at bay, sending love and prayers
4 our way. Strength being passed along the
5 line. We all see the signs to break the
6 cycle, change the future, minimize the
7 violence, minimize the shadow it casts.

8
9 Our women have something special to bring:
10 strength, love, compassion, and the power to
11 create. A brightness in the heart that
12 shines like a star. Beauty like the Yukon
13 sunset. Happiness that can be felt afar.

14
15 That last bit I just wrote. That's everything.
16 Thanks.

17 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Thank you, Pamela. Toni, are you
18 ready?

19 TONI BLANCHARD: Yes.

20 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Thank you. I understand that
21 both the women, they created a piece and then you
22 added to it. So those who have a piece of paper
23 with something written on it, there's added
24 material.

25 TONI BLANCHARD: K'ama Soothan Toni Blanchard Ushi.
26 Good morning, my name is Toni Blanchard, daughter
27 of Isabelle Bresse and Harold Blanchard, sister
28 to late Kris Evangeline Billy, who liked to be
29 called Evan, was brutally murdered in 2008 here
30 in Whitehorse.

31 I would like you to know that Evan was all
32 about family. She had three beautiful children,
33 Azul Billy, who is graduating this year; and
34 twins, Elijah and Ileana Morrison (phonetic), who
35 we have seen only once since 2009. Evan loved
36 them. She always talked with them and loved them
37 with all her heart and never stopped thinking
38 about them.

39 Growing up with my sister Evan was an
40 experience. She always had a smile. She was
41 always laughing, singing. I remember when I was
42 young we would stay up to all hours of the night
43 playing cards and board games. She was always
44 here for us when we needed her.

45 I would like to tell you guys one funny
46 story that I recall of my beautiful sister. One
47 evening we were having dinner, and where we were

Hearing - Public
Bella Bresse, Pamela Blanchard, Toni Blanchard, Logan
Blanchard
(Evangeline Billy)

1 living we have a mirror mural on the wall so it
2 was like the whole wall's covered in square
3 mirrors. And Evan was beautiful, as you could
4 see in her picture, so she always liked to look
5 at herself while she was walking by the mirror.
6 And she grabbed her plate of dinner and she was
7 walking along the mirror and she was looking,
8 making sure that her hair or makeup was okay, and
9 she tripped. And she fell forward and her hand
10 went out, and when she landed her portions on her
11 plate was in the same place, and she just got up
12 and fixed her hair and her clothes and she walked
13 to her room. (Laughing) She was always doing
14 crazy stuff like that.

15 As my mom said, she always had to make sure
16 she looked good and presentable, even if she had
17 to just throw the garbage out. Evan was
18 compassionate, caring, loving, and again, family
19 was everything to her.

20 When I heard the news of her passing, I went
21 into shock. I didn't believe it. I couldn't
22 believe it. After her funeral I went into a very
23 destructive state that filled my days with
24 depression, drugs, alcohol, and many suicide
25 attempts. I was numb. Even -- even though we
26 were all going through some sort of depression,
27 we tried to make sure we had time for our family.

28 I couldn't believe that someone could harm
29 such a beautiful loving soul, so I started
30 telling myself -- telling myself that she was
31 still alive somewhere in Whitehorse. I thought
32 it so much that I started believing it and the
33 hurt in my heart started to ease. I lived my
34 life thinking that for a long time. In that
35 time, I met my fiancé, Daniel, and was blessed
36 with two daughters, who are two and four years
37 old. I am so sad that my daughters will never be
38 able to meet her lovable auntie.

39 Just recently our family had to witness the
40 passing of our older sister, Georgina Billy, in
41 February of this year, which opened old and
42 created new wounds. I started heading down that
43 dark path with depression and alcohol in my life
44 again.

45 I got a call a few weeks ago by a constable
46 in the Crime Unit telling me that he had my
47 sister Evan's rings and bracelet and that he

Hearing - Public**Bella Bresse, Pamela Blanchard, Toni Blanchard, Logan
Blanchard****(Evangeline Billy)**

1 wanted to return them to my mother. I went into
2 shock again as this was telling me that in fact
3 my sister was indeed gone and that she's not
4 coming back. It hit me very hard, but this time
5 -- this time we have more support people. One in
6 which was with us from the beginning of our
7 journey with Sisters in Spirit is Amanda Buffalo,
8 then Krista Reid, her sister. We have many
9 support family, friends, in Carmacks with the
10 health and social department and chief and
11 council, and many of the women's organizations --
12 Joy O'Brien, Doris Anderson, who has been with
13 us.

14 We always look forward to the family
15 gatherings that are hosted by the women's
16 organizations here in Whitehorse as it helps us
17 in our healing journey to be able to interact
18 with other families that understand what we are
19 going through and vice versa.

20 I think the way for the National Inquiry to
21 honour the missing and murdered Indigenous women
22 and girls is what families and you are doing
23 right now by telling our stories and putting
24 faces to the women and girls, to let people
25 nationally know what these women and girls were
26 daughters, mothers, sisters, grandmothers,
27 granddaughters, and they were loved by all of
28 their loved ones.

29 Mussi cho for listening to my story, to our
30 story.

31 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Thank you. Are there any
32 questions from the Commissioners?

33 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: I'd like to know why
34 Evan's body had to go to Vancouver for the
35 autopsy. Do you know?

36 TONI BLANCHARD: Because Evan's body was in the water,
37 it was so bloated that they couldn't do a proper
38 autopsy here.

39 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Okay. Thank you. The
40 three children -- Elijah, Ileana, Azul -- do you
41 know why you don't see them?

42 BELLA BRESSE: We have contact with Azul. She lives
43 in the same community. But Ileana and Elijah
44 were living with the father and after my daughter
45 had passed on he remarried someone else and his
46 wife wouldn't let us see my grandchildren after
47 they saw the Cinderella movie, where Cinderella

Hearing - Public**Bella Bresse, Pamela Blanchard, Toni Blanchard, Logan
Blanchard****(Evangeline Billy)**

1 had an evil stepmother. They thought I was
2 teaching my grandchildren how to not like
3 stepmothers. And so we were cut off with
4 visitation rights, and we could not see my
5 grandchildren. I saw them at the store, but as
6 soon as the stepmother saw us, she'll take them
7 and go out of the store. So we had no contact
8 whatsoever, no phone calls, nothing.

9 And I went to see the grandmothers --
10 because they said grandmothers have lots of
11 rights. Uh-uh. Uh-uh, they don't. I don't have
12 no rights, or I could have had my grandchildren
13 with me.

14 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Who does Azul live with?

15 BELLA BRESSE: Azul is living with my younger brother
16 and his wife, who are foster parents.

17 CHIEF COMMISSISONER BULLER: Do Azul and the twins see
18 each other?

19 BELLA BRESSE: They did. They secretly -- I shouldn't
20 -- they secretly contact each other. But I
21 believe they do have contact with each other.
22 Not anymore.

23 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Thank you. I have some
24 questions about the court case. Did the lawyers
25 explain to you why they didn't have the retrial
26 and why they negotiated the deal?

27 BELLA BRESSE: The lawyer had met before telling us
28 that the accused agreed to the lesser charge. We
29 had no contact with any lawyers at that time, and
30 she won the case and they let her go. Usually
31 when there are courts, we show up to every court
32 sessions, every meetings with the lawyer. If I
33 have questions, I said, I'll come in to
34 Whitehorse and I'm going to ask you a bunch of
35 questions, so be prepared. But they didn't
36 contact us. It was after the fact when he came
37 to Carmacks and he met with us and told us that
38 they met and she agreed to a lesser charge.

39 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Was all the court in
40 Whitehorse or court in Carmacks as well?

41 BELLA BRESSE: Because they found my daughter in
42 Whitehorse, they automatically have the courts in
43 Whitehorse.

44 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: And how did you and your
45 family get to Whitehorse to be a part of all that
46 process?

47 BELLA BRESSE: We travel from Whitehorse. Like I

Hearing - Public**Bella Bresse, Pamela Blanchard, Toni Blanchard, Logan
Blanchard****(Evangeline Billy)**

1 said, Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation was a
2 very big support financially for us, and the
3 health and social department director who's
4 supporting, sitting in with us, had helped us and
5 supported us all the way. So that's how we get
6 to Whitehorse.

7 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Is the support that they give
8 you part of normal support they provide families,
9 or did they provide something special to you.
10 And that's special in that it's -- I want to know
11 if those services are available for all families
12 as well?

13 BELLA BRESSE: In 2009, the third week of the court
14 that was happening, the court worker had
15 mentioned to me that Victim Services is available
16 and would be able to assist us financially for
17 food and to pay for the rest of our hotel. But
18 the court worker -- I filled out -- she helped me
19 with filling out the forms because I was -- I was
20 just out of it. I couldn't do it, so she -- she
21 asked me questions and I answered, and she wrote
22 it -- wrote them down. She took it over to the
23 Victim Services, and the Victim Services had
24 refused us finance because they needed -- they
25 needed to see documents on guilty charge, and at
26 that time we didn't know whether she -- how the
27 court was going to turn, so I contact the health
28 and social director and we came up with
29 something, and remain here in Whitehorse for the
30 rest of the court.

31 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Thank you. And thank you for
32 your readings, and your poems, and the photos,
33 and sharing with us your memories. Just, thank
34 you so much.

35 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Yes, thank you. So I want to
36 express as well my gratitude to all of you, to
37 Logan, and Pamela, and Bella, and Toni. I'm
38 going to miss you and your words of wisdom and
39 courage, and I wish you the best. And I thank
40 you as well for showing us once again what it
41 feels like to be a human being fully
42 participating in life. Thank you.

43 CHIEF COMMISSIONER BULLER: Because we're so grateful
44 that you came today, we have some small gifts of
45 seeds for you.

46
47 (SEED GIFTING CEREMONY)

Hearing - Public

**Bella Bresse, Pamela Blanchard, Toni Blanchard, Logan
Blanchard
(Evangeline Billy)**

Third Hearing Exhibits

**Bella Bresse, Pamela Blanchard, Toni Blanchard, Logan
Blanchard (Family of Evangeline Billy)**

Exhibit P1: One-page "Family Tree for Evangelina
Billy" [Nota: contains some spelling errors]
Exhibit P2: One-page handwritten poem by Pamela
Blanchard "Silence dropping... knees shaking..."
Exhibit P3: Four-page Statement of Toni Blanchard with
first line "K'ama Soothan Toni Blanchard Ushi,
Good morning, my name is Toni Blanchard"" -
stapled top left corner.
Exhibit P4: Five-page booklet of colour photographs on
8.5 x 11" office paper. First page is a full-
photo of Evangeline Kris Billy; second page
contains two photos, lower photo has word
"Dawson" and a star inscribed above it;
subsequent pages contain mix of black-and-white
and colour family photos. Booklet stapled top
left corner, pages not numbered.
Exhibit P5: Copy of *R v. Murphy*, 2016 YKSC 48. Date:
2016/04/15. S.C. no.: 08-01518A. Eight pages,
numbered.

(PROCEEDINGS ADJOURNED FOR LUNCH BREAK)
(PROCEEDINGS RECONVENED AT 14:43 P.M.)

COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Am I muted? Hello. Hello.
We're going to resume, so if everybody could be
seated. And a reminder, cell phones on silent,
do not disturb, and thank you very much.
So thank you, and welcome. And, Christa,
you'll be starting our discussion --
CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Yes.
COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: -- with Dorothy?
CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you, Commissioners.
COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Great. Thank you. We're just
going to be taking some notes, and if we have
questions -- so that's why we've got these, just
to let you know.

Fourth Hearing

Dorothy Hayes (family of Elsie Tibbett, Rose Boya,

Hearing - Public**Doroty Hayes****(Elsie Tibbett, Rose Boya, Angel Carlick, Wendy Carlick)**

1 **Angel Carlick, Wendy Carlick) with Christa Big Canoe**
2 **(Commission Counsel)**
3

4 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Commissioners, I'd like to
5 introduce you to Dorothy Hayes. Once Dorothy's
6 actually sworn in she would like to stand
7 throughout her testimony.

8 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Good afternoon, Dorothy.

9 DOROTHY HAYES: Good afternoon.

10 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Good afternoon. So welcome, and I'll
11 just walk you through the oath right now.

12 DOROTHY HAYES: Okay.

13 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay. Do you swear that the evidence
14 you give this afternoon will be the truth, the
15 whole truth, and nothing but the truth so help
16 you God?

17 DOROTHY HAYES: I will.
18

19 DOROTHY HAYES, sworn.
20

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay. Thank you.

22 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So, Dorothy, can you please
23 introduce yourself to the Commissioners and tell
24 them what you're here to speak about today.

25 DOROTHY HAYES: Hello, my name is Dorothy Hayes. I
26 grew up in Lower Post, B.C., and both my parents
27 were in residential school. I did attend some
28 day school residential myself, and during my time
29 growing up in the household that I grew up in was
30 extremely violent in no uncertain terms. I've
31 been dragged around by the hair, kicked, beat up,
32 strung up by the refrigerator by the neck with a
33 butcher knife in my hand -- in my dad's hand.

34 And I fought back. I was always, I guess, a
35 born fighter and our whole household -- I have
36 five -- I have eight siblings, five brothers and
37 two sisters, and they've all -- all had the wrath
38 of our dad at all points when he was not happy,
39 and it didn't take nothing to make him not happy.

40 And we also had our aunties. I had three
41 aunties, and also an uncle. The uncle lived away
42 in another community, but I had aunties that
43 would come over, and their life was filled with
44 abuse, too, 'cause they had extremely abusive
45 husbands, and they would come over with my
46 cousins and be living in the house, and we
47 usually at most all times had an extremely busy

Hearing - Public**Doroty Hayes****(Elsie Tibbett, Rose Boya, Angel Carlick, Wendy Carlick)**

1 household with lots of family members, and
2 they've all seen violence in every which way,
3 shape and form in no uncertain terms. If you
4 could imagine every available abuse that could be
5 done to you, yeah, it's been done, so all my
6 family members have had violence.

7 And through all that, at one point in my
8 life I started talking to RCMP officers about the
9 way our life was at home, and that I needed some
10 help. And this was when I was getting to be an
11 adult and I wanted to see justice for what
12 torment and hell my brothers and sisters had to
13 see and endure, and I took him to court and I
14 gotta a say, much to the dismay of my siblings.
15 And out of my eight siblings, one of them in 2001
16 took his life, and it's probably due to the life
17 that we grew up in. Not probably. Probably more
18 so absolute. And I got physically attacked by my
19 brothers and sisters outside the court, so then
20 was -- the RCMP were forced to provide 24-hours
21 of protection on me.

22 And then unsoundly the night before the
23 trial was to start, I guess they say blood's
24 thicker than water, some of my brothers came and
25 decided -- brothers and sisters decided that they
26 would come there on my behalf, in which they did.
27 But during the trial, as you can't take away from
28 all the disaster and abuse, what they seen and
29 things that happened, there's always that blame
30 -- blame of everything and protect the parents,
31 and I didn't believe in that. What's right is
32 right is when you grow up, you shouldn't have to
33 be beaten up or abused as a kid, doesn't matter
34 under whose hand, in what country, in what
35 generation of people, no matter what you grew up
36 in, don't do it to the next generation.

37 And so during trial, they did speak up to
38 what they had to, four of them. The others
39 didn't. But he was convicted. I did send him
40 away. I was praying he would have got more. Had
41 the other ones spoke up, he would have got 24
42 years, but -- and the Crown prosecutor -- I've
43 gotta say this RCMP officer was fantastic. I
44 went through seven of them before one would
45 believe me, and I don't think that's right. I
46 mean, he just said to me, nobody can give me a
47 story like that unless it was true, and he was

Hearing - Public**Doroty Hayes****(Elsie Tibbett, Rose Boya, Angel Carlick, Wendy Carlick)**

1 gonna look into it, and he did. Bless his heart
2 to this day. I love this man. Thank God that he
3 was ever even sent to me.

4 And the Crown prosecutors from Vancouver
5 were very good. They were ladies, and I'll never
6 forget them. I have pictures of them, and I have
7 pictures of the RCMP officer, and I'm so happy
8 that one of them believed me, but it shouldn't
9 have to be that -- the first officer you talked
10 to should have to believe you or look into
11 something. And so she did -- the Crown
12 prosecutor did say to me, we have an all-white
13 jury, and I said, that's okay. She said, well,
14 you might not make out well. I said, well, it's
15 what is the truth, I will be telling them the
16 truth.

17 So we went into court, the trial went on.
18 When it was done, they said, they're out -- the
19 jury did come back three hours later, which the
20 Crown prosecutor was quite devastated, and she
21 said to me, this might not be good. I said,
22 well, that's okay, whatever, as long as my story
23 is out there.

24 So we went in. Well, the jury -- the judges
25 asked them on every count, I believe there was 30
26 counts, they found him guilty on each and every
27 one of those counts. I just about jumped out of
28 my seat. I was so happy. And as he was being
29 hailed away into a door to be hailed away to
30 prison -- he was sentenced to 12 years but got
31 out in, I think, three or six, and I wasn't
32 notified, but before he walked in that door to go
33 to prison I told him, I forgive you for
34 everything you done because this isn't mine to
35 carry, I didn't do it, not me, it's for you, and
36 when you leave this earthly plain you got
37 somebody to face, and that goes to everybody that
38 walks this earthly plain, and I walked away.

39 But after that I've only still had one
40 family member that talked to me, and he's my
41 younger brother, and he talks to me every day and
42 tells me what I did was right. The others are
43 still angry on and off. I have a sister who
44 suddenly just came and started talking to me
45 three months ago, so I can still see her pain. I
46 can see all their pain and it'll never go away.
47 And as my -- for my brother who committed

Hearing - Public**Doroty Hayes****(Elsie Tibbett, Rose Boya, Angel Carlick, Wendy Carlick)**

1 suicide, he was in a lot of pain, and they all
2 still are, and I just hope they're doing so well
3 with their children.

4 The abuse we suffered just is unbearable.
5 My mom was in residential school for 18 years, so
6 pretty much all her life. They came and took
7 them from my grandfather and threw them to --
8 them to residential school, and I would always
9 jump to my mother's aid. Sometimes my brothers
10 would be sleeping. God, they would sleep through
11 a bombing, I'm sure, but I came to my mom's aid
12 when my dad was beating the hell out of her, and
13 I've done that many times, and she said, don't do
14 that, you get beat up. I said, I don't care,
15 I'll leave this earthly plain but I'll leave a
16 fighter, I won't leave here without fighting for
17 my life, and I still have that in me.

18 And I see the pain of all my relatives. I
19 have aunties. I see -- my auntie that stayed at
20 my house with the two broken arms, her three sons
21 are gone. The other daughter is gone, too, and
22 it's all due to this. They've all either drank
23 themselves to death or drugs.

24 Personally, when I was growing up and
25 fighting back being strung up on a refrigerator
26 at five with a butcher knife to your throat, I
27 landed my feet in the air and knocked my dad
28 right on his ass and I said, from that day
29 forward nobody -- and it was a constant battle,
30 the fight was on. And I just want people to see
31 that you shouldn't have to endure that growing up
32 in a house. But I understand also the other side
33 of them growing up in the residential -- now the
34 residential school part on my dad's side, in
35 school -- I would often wonder where he was from.
36 He said he was from Newcastle, New Brunswick.
37 Well, it wasn't until just maybe a year ago I did
38 some checking. Checked back and can trace my
39 father back to being back -- he's been in six
40 foster homes. I do know that he apparently has
41 15 brothers and sisters, so as to which age he
42 was taken from home, and checking the three
43 foster homes back so far, his name may not be his
44 name, so I -- the name that I have now, Hayes,
45 may not be my actual true name for what his
46 family name may be. But he said he was from
47 Newcastle New Brunswick, so -- and he did end up

Hearing - Public**Doroty Hayes****(Elsie Tibbett, Rose Boya, Angel Carlick, Wendy Carlick)**

1 in residential school there. He did go to
2 residential school there.

3 He came across Canada this way. I don't
4 know if he was running away, but he met my mother
5 here, and my mother did have 15 kids all
6 together. I'm not the oldest girl in my family
7 or nor is my older brother the oldest. Had an
8 older brother, Georgie and an older sister,
9 Gloria. They were murdered and, not quite sure,
10 possibly at the hands of my dad. I tried to do
11 some checking, but there was just not enough --
12 thanks to that RCMP officer again, they did a lot
13 of checking, and those two kids were from my
14 mother's first husband and something happened,
15 don't know the story, but I would definitely find
16 my mother crying at the table at times and go
17 over from -- come home from school and just hug
18 her, like, is everything okay, but I know that's
19 what she was crying over. I know that she had
20 all these kids, I guess, trying to replace what
21 she had lost, I'm not quite sure, but our mother
22 ended up with cancer at a young age. My brother
23 was five when my momma died, my youngest brother,
24 and she battled cancer for three years. She's
25 been gone now over 30 years, and I guess my dad's
26 living somewhere in Kelowna, not sure where. I
27 don't think as I really care.

28 And today, after the court I did move away.
29 I moved to Niagara Falls, Ontario. First job I
30 got there -- I had a little girl and I said she
31 won't grow up here. I want her to see that
32 there's a different life out there. My daughter
33 was a year and a half when I moved away. I moved
34 to Kelowna, spent a little stint there, didn't
35 like it, picked her up one day in February, I
36 think, of '89 and just booked it down the
37 highway, went to Niagara Falls, Ontario. Stopped
38 in, in this hotel in Niagara Falls, said to the
39 lady there, where's your unemployment office, I
40 want to see about getting a job? She said, oh,
41 well I have a full-time bartender's job here open
42 and -- open right now if you wanna start now. I
43 said, okay, let me change my clothes, started
44 working as a bartender. I did that here, too, as
45 well in Whitehorse when I worked here as a
46 waitress. I waitressed and bartended at the old
47 T&M Hotel.

Hearing - Public**Doroty Hayes****(Elsie Tibbett, Rose Boya, Angel Carlick, Wendy Carlick)**

1 And so in Niagara Falls, I was a week there
2 working, seen some construction workers and I
3 heard them over talking how one guy couldn't show
4 up for work 'cause he didn't wanna go up on the
5 high beams to put trusses on a big building they
6 were building. So I said to this guy, I said,
7 "Hey, what, somebody's afraid of heights?" He
8 said, "Yeah," I said, "Well, I'm not." I said,
9 "I don't have a tool belt but I'll gladly get up
10 there and shank up those trusses for you." He
11 said, "You will?" I said, "Yup." So here I was,
12 told my bosses, yeah, I'll be here later on in
13 the evening if you can switch my shift from 3:00
14 to 6:00. I said, I'll construction all day and
15 bartend all night, not a problem. So that's what
16 I did. I built many buildings, churches, malls,
17 you name it. Went from there to framing, to
18 drywall, installer, finish taper, stucco,
19 concrete, I can do it all.

20 And then my family back here needed some
21 help. A sister that I didn't really talk to,
22 found out she had a hip replacement so she was
23 having trouble getting up and walking. And I
24 came back for my one auntie's funeral. This was
25 five years ago, and I seen my sister and she was
26 in bad shape, so I went back to Niagara Falls and
27 told my bosses there, I said, look, I gotta drop
28 everything here, I gotta head back home and help
29 my sister. Of course they were, oh, my God, you
30 can't leave us, but I extended my stay with them
31 for an extra two weeks but said, I gotta go.

32 I came back. I helped my sister. And once
33 again that pinpoint of all the disaster that
34 happened in the family and me taking the dad to
35 court came to the surface, out the door, doesn't
36 talk to me. And a lot of family members -- well,
37 I don't think it was right, and they just gotta
38 stop and look that you gotta grow up in a normal
39 household.

40 I saw normal families when I went to Niagara
41 Falls. I befriended this family that I worked
42 for, for a long time, an Italian family and they
43 were very good to me. Their family household was
44 well rounded, and when I was growing up at five
45 years old, I said I will grow up in a household
46 totally different than this. And I still see
47 that today. And when I see that family, whom

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1 I call my family out there in Ontario, I look and
2 go, I was sent here and blessed to see how the
3 other side lives when you live in just humanity.

4 And so I came back here and now I'm here. I
5 tried so hard to get a job from my community and
6 stuff. I managed to land a flagging job. I have
7 all my tickets for the mines, everything, you
8 name it, not that I didn't have tickets for
9 scissor lifts and all the heavy equipment that I
10 needed to do already, but try and get a job in my
11 Band or where I live right now is an absolute not
12 happening. So I applied at the RCMP detachment
13 as a guard, been there two years now, do very
14 well, and --

15 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Can I ask you -- can I ask you
16 some -- a couple more questions?

17 DOROTHY HAYES: Yes.

18 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Okay. Thank you for everything
19 you've shared.

20 DOROTHY HAYES: Yeah.

21 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: I understand that you also want to
22 talk not just about the violence that you
23 survived but about a death of a particular auntie
24 and other cousins. Can you please share what the
25 story is to the Commissioners about that?

26 DOROTHY HAYES: Yes. I had an auntie, the one I said
27 came and lived with us many times. Her husband
28 would brutally beat her and she's come to our
29 household with broken arms and black eyes and,
30 like I said, her kids -- three of her kids are
31 lost, two of them are still alive but I don't
32 know for how long. I guess she left that abusive
33 husband and she partnered up with somebody else
34 who was probably more abusive than the first one,
35 unfortunately, and she ended up being shot. We
36 say it was him, but I don't believe there was
37 enough investigation done to clearly see that
38 that was a pretty big rifle and I don't think my
39 auntie had that long of arms. I don't think
40 there was a good enough investigation in that
41 situation.

42 He did try to come to her funeral. My
43 brothers picked him up and tossed him right the
44 hell out, and as they should have. He had no
45 right being there. If you take somebody's life,
46 you got no right being at their funeral. If you
47 didn't respect them in life, don't think that you

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1 can be there at their funeral, ever.

2 And I do have another auntie that was
3 missing and murdered.

4 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Sorry. I don't want to interrupt
5 you --

6 DOROTHY HAYES: Yeah.

7 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: -- but can you tell the
8 Commissioners the name of the auntie you were
9 just talking about?

10 DOROTHY HAYES: My Auntie Elsie Tibbet (phonetic), my
11 mom's sister.

12 And I had another auntie that was missing
13 and murdered, too, quite long ago, Rose Boya
14 (phonetic). I'm not sure about the circumstances
15 of that one either. Like I said, I don't think
16 there was really particular investigations into
17 anything really good that had to do with our
18 people.

19 And also, my cousin, Angel Carlick, and her
20 mother, Wendy Carlick, they're my family, too,
21 also murdered.

22 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So, if I understand, you've now
23 listed about four other family members that you
24 believe have been impacted by violence or
25 murdered. Can I just ask you a couple of
26 questions for clarification?

27 DOROTHY HAYES: Absolutely, no problem.

28 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Okay. Your Auntie, was it Tibbet?

29 DOROTHY HAYES: Yes.

30 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Yes. So you had stated that her
31 partner had shot her, but you're not aware of any
32 proceedings or was he ever criminally charged?

33 DOROTHY HAYES: I'm not sure that he was. I'm not
34 sure what the circumstances around that are, but
35 I'd like to find out.

36 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: So is it fair to say in any of the
37 deaths you're talking about with your relatives
38 that you really want to find out more information
39 and learn some more answers?

40 DOROTHY HAYES: I certainly do. That would be a real
41 help and something that I could relay to my
42 cousins who are their -- who are their daughters
43 and sons, so that I could see if I can help them
44 to stay with us as opposed to going down a
45 disastrous trail. I don't wanna see any more of
46 them dying at a young age, and we've had a lot of
47 funerals, eight of them to be exact in a matter

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1 of a couple of weeks, that relays to my family,
2 and it's sad really. I guess they feel like they
3 have no hope, and I guess sometimes it stems
4 down, too, in your communities, your leadership,
5 that's what I believe. I believe if you have
6 good leadership people you care for your people.

7 Where I work as a guard, I see lots of
8 people with mental health issues, serious FAS,
9 Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, serious, because it just
10 doesn't seem to click in their minds that they're
11 doing anything wrong, so there's an issue there.
12 And a lot of them are very, very illiterate. If
13 you can't or were never taught properly in the
14 education system, the basic skills of read,
15 write, spell and count money, all the education
16 system has done is failed all of our people. I
17 do have relatives who have graduated and under a
18 no-fail policy, and I can't fathom they can't
19 even spell the word "the". I mean, that's just
20 the basics of kindergarten, I believe. It's
21 disastrous to them. I think that is a harsh
22 situation.

23 And what I mean by "leadership" is a lot of
24 these people have no fixed address. That means
25 they have no home. I -- that's another
26 disastrous thing to them. And I do -- in each
27 community, Stematoo (phonetic), their leadership
28 has to really be there for the people. You have
29 to take care of your people.

30 And it's like anything else, I understand
31 the residential school, the systems, I guess that
32 you would say they're used to. I just grew up
33 and just wanted to look outside of everything
34 that I grew up in. What I seen in life, if
35 anybody doesn't think that I don't know anything,
36 believe you me all these poor people who are
37 being abused and everything, trust me when I say
38 I know everything about it. Been there, been
39 there, been there, been there. But I know it's
40 hard when it's family members in your
41 communities, but you have to step up to what's
42 right. I will always walk alone if I have to,
43 but what I did by putting my dad in jail for what
44 he's done is the right thing to do. These people
45 who go around and abuse other people, they need
46 help in some manner. There's gotta be some
47 source of something when they're in jail to, why

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1 are you doing this, what happened to you, there's
2 gotta be a bottom underlying issue. Like, I
3 guess I wouldn't have said I would have thought,
4 oh, now, I know what's wrong with my dad, had I
5 known the things that I do now, but still you --
6 when you grow up don't inflict that on -- upon
7 the ones growing up and the generation. It just
8 doesn't belong. It just keeps continuing.
9 Continuing isn't right.

10 I believe any people in leadership in this
11 country, I feel and see that it's wrong for you
12 to be standing as a leader if your people have to
13 come up to you and beg you for the most simple
14 thing in life, to give them help, to help them to
15 be where they need to be. I mean, this is 2017
16 and we're looking at people who can't even speed
17 the word -- read the word "the", I'm sure the
18 countries around the world there, those third-
19 world countries, can read better than some of my
20 people can, and how is that possible? This is
21 Canada. I mean, some things really have to be
22 changed for these people who come in, and not
23 just for the paycheque. I see a lot of them come
24 in for the paycheque. They don't really care
25 who's in front of them, ain't got time for them,
26 yeah, I'm just here for my time and my paycheque,
27 oh, it's a long weekend. I've seen a lot of
28 that, and I myself, I see the ramifications from
29 that as working as a guard I see the people --
30 I've been there, so I know it. I see pain in
31 people's faces. I see pain in my family, 'cause
32 working where I do that's my family. I'm related
33 from Watson Lake right straight across to Ross
34 River, and people all over -- all over I'm
35 related to.

36 So the bare bones of anything is people have
37 gotta start looking outside of the box. Just
38 because something is doesn't mean it has to be.
39 You have to use a different conventional way to
40 do something, try it. You don't know 'til you
41 try it.

42 And then we have the justice system. Well,
43 we have a justice system in Watson. I have to
44 say my -- myself needed some help just before
45 Christmas. My partner and I split. He came down
46 my street probably 15 times a day. I came out,
47 got called to work in the evening about 8:30 and

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1 who's sitting behind my vehicle. I was very
2 angry and upset so I told the officer, so he had
3 a talk with him.

4 Next day, back there, the same thing. Then
5 it went from that to stalking, started stalking
6 me, following me. Told the cops. Then where I
7 live -- I live at a women's shelter, and he
8 blocked me in the one side of the garage three
9 times on the women's shelter property. I think
10 that's wrong. Most men who live in that town
11 know you don't go on that property. Not only was
12 I in danger, he endangered the people that were
13 living there. So got papers and stuff done by
14 the RCMP and went down to the JP to get an
15 order --

16 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Do you mean restraining order?

17 DOROTHY HAYES: Yeah, for him to just stay away from
18 me. The person laughed in my face. I grabbed
19 the documentation, looked at this person, said,
20 "You're a disgrace to the justice system, an
21 absolute disgrace. How dare you say you stand --
22 don't -- you stand for justice," and I walked
23 out, ripped up the documents handed it to police,
24 went home. Hm, I'm a guard at the jail and don't
25 deserve to be protected, how interesting. So I
26 gotta talk about does the justice system look at
27 what these JPs do in the communities once they've
28 lived there long enough to become biased, because
29 I know these people that live in that town there
30 that are the JPs are biased. Young girls go to
31 them beat up, whatever, they don't get help. I
32 think that's wrong. Then they just give up.
33 Then they don't trust the RCMP. Then the trust
34 is gone, and the next thing you know the young
35 girl is dead. And for this to be happening
36 today, I don't know. I live there, I seen it.
37 That's what I got. I thought I could have gotten
38 a little deserving piece of justice, but I guess
39 not, so this tells you there's something wrong
40 there, and highly.

41 And that points me back to some of the
42 people that I see, like I said, young people,
43 it's just sad to think that they've got no fixed
44 address, no one probably I guess who steps up for
45 them. If they need help from the justice system
46 they don't get it, and that is the harsh reality,
47 and a lot of them are hopefully stepping forward

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1 and can be strong enough to know that they do
2 have rights and a right to justice.

3 I know it took me quite awhile to get my
4 justice, but did I really get my justice with
5 that sentence? I guess what I have in my heart
6 is, like I said, when he leaves this earthly
7 plain that'll be his to own up to. You have a
8 maker that you have to answer to. What you don't
9 receive here I guess you'll receive there.

10 I do hope -- have hope, hope that when
11 there's murders or something happens to people
12 that they don't have to beg to get help by RCMP
13 or justice or anything like that. I believe
14 that's owed to each and everyone. And they
15 always say -- they say First People, we are the
16 First People, First Nations, correct me if I'm
17 wrong, is that like number one, you're number one
18 in line, number one in line, right? I actually
19 wanna know why it seems like the First Nations,
20 your First Nations, your first people, they
21 always seem to be in the back of the line. They
22 need to be brought forward because all these
23 people from every area here, including the non-
24 Natives, they're Canadian and first people. They
25 shouldn't be back behind anyone else that comes
26 into this country. Them all here should be
27 first. And it says First Nations, first. We are
28 first.

29 I just -- and I wanna see all these young
30 women, girls, whoever's out there, young men,
31 boys, I want them to stand up and see, you know,
32 you have somebody who thinks about you. And for
33 the rule of justice, and the right of law, I
34 truly believe in it and I wanna believe in it,
35 but it has to change at the levels above us. We
36 should not, as a Canadian person, or any person,
37 have to beg to any leadership for what is your
38 rights at all, basic your right in Canada, and I
39 just don't wanna see any more people dying and
40 thinking someone does not care about them. I
41 certainly do on all levels, all levels of the
42 people as I believe, like I said, in the rule of
43 law and justice. You need to change some factors
44 in there. If you have to have JPs, have them
45 moving JPs around the communities, not one who
46 become biased in a community, and those young
47 girls and young men and stuff can't get help that

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1 they deserve, or the people that need it there
2 can't get it because that person likes that
3 person, and that family is connected with that
4 family, and that is a contingent to, as I'm
5 saying, with the Native people, too, is that pick
6 at that group of people and pick at that group of
7 people, 'cause I know it goes on. I'm in it.
8 I'm in it. I see it, and they really need to, as
9 leadership, any leader, any Chief across this
10 country they absolutely need to step in place for
11 their people.

12 And even our leader, Justin Trudeau, don't
13 make your people in Canada beg for the basic
14 needs and their rights. It's just wrong. Don't
15 call yourself a leader if your people have to beg
16 for you, and you're doing everything for any
17 other country except your people, you don't hear
18 the voice of your people. That's what the RCMP,
19 the justice system, they need to hear the voice
20 of these kids and people what's going on in their
21 lives, because it is what is the problem in their
22 life, and they're trying to tell you and it does
23 not seem like anybody wants to listen. It's
24 called "falling on deaf ears", and I had that
25 many times to be able to take my dad to court, so
26 I know it well. If any of them out there doesn't
27 believe, trust me when I say I've been to hell
28 and back, and still I'm seeing it when I see my
29 family dying when they should have had help at
30 certain levels and never got it.

31 I will say to our top Canada justice system,
32 you know, start putting money into helping these
33 people. Start giving the money where it belongs.
34 You're giving out funding, well, start the
35 funding with these people. Start helping our
36 lawyers, our justice people who want to help the
37 people. Stop keeping these people down here --
38 what I see is what I call keeping all these
39 people down here. If you're not letting the
40 Natives get a proper education, you're keeping
41 your thumb on top of their head; you're setting
42 them up to fail. That's just wrong that there
43 can possibly be failure of education anywhere in
44 Canada, and yet they can say, oh, I'm doing this
45 and that. Well, all to your glory of giving
46 money to this and that and helping these people
47 out there, what about your own? Don't forget

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1 about your first Canadians. The change of
2 justice has to come out of that. It's gotta be
3 up at the top, and if I have to talk to Justin
4 Trudeau, I will. Your people should not have to
5 beg for anything, and I think that's sick to
6 think that if you're somebody in power on any
7 level that somebody has to come and beg to you,
8 no. No, will not as a Native person in this
9 country will I beg for the most basic things,
10 basic human rights, the rule of law and justice
11 for anybody in Canada, anybody.

12 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Thank you, Dorothy. The
13 Commissioners may have some questions for you --

14 DOROTHY HAYES: Yeah.

15 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: -- but I have only one more
16 question.

17 DOROTHY HAYES: Okay.

18 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Can I please ask, why did you want
19 to stand today to provide your evidence to the
20 Commissioners?

21 DOROTHY HAYES: I stand here today because I have a
22 lot of family that are gone and lost. I stand
23 for all the Elders around -- across Canada,
24 around the world. I stand for all the women,
25 men, young boys, young girls. I stand for them
26 all who have missing family and nobody -- you
27 just take a look at the stats in Mexico, you take
28 a look at South America, North America, all
29 around the world, it's not only here, but I'm
30 standing up here for all the people that are
31 unable to have the strength and force to stand up
32 and tell their story. And if my mom was alive
33 today, I can guarantee you she would have been
34 standing here, and you stand up for all the
35 people you respect, and I respect all of those,
36 all the people, and I miss them all.

37 My grandfather -- let me just tell you this
38 about him, he grew up in our family. He was --
39 he can speak English. My grandfather was Amos
40 Alec (phonetic). He was a pretty good guide,
41 mining camps and -- or I mean at guiding camps
42 and stuff. He's pretty well known. I used to
43 hunt with him, and this one time we were walking
44 going fishing and I was about ten, and he said --
45 we're walking a long and I had a pack and a
46 fishing rod and a .22 in my other hand, and we
47 were walking along and I heard this noise and I

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1 said, "Grandpa, what's that?" and we looked over
2 and there was these two cubs, black bear cubs
3 over -- I said, "Oh, oh, Grandpa, there's a mom
4 somewhere," so me and him stood there and turned
5 around. We heard this big growl from behind and
6 Momma black bear is angry and coming at us. He
7 said, "Grandchild," grabbed me by the hand, he
8 said, "On three just step back three steps." He
9 said, "Three," I stepped back three steps. This
10 charging black bear just put on the brakes. The
11 moss and dirt was flying in the air. She ran the
12 other way. The cubs -- she made out a weird
13 growl, and the cubs came running between us, and
14 off they went. My grandfather looked at me and
15 said, "Grandchild, when you panic you die." I
16 said, "Okay, Grandpa."

17 Then he lived with us, and I really love my
18 grandpa. Actually, a few times when we were out
19 camping he pretty well saved me from my psychotic
20 father. He put my dad on his ass for as small as
21 he was, and he said, "Don't you ever touch my
22 grandchild while I'm around." Off we went
23 hunting, and one morning we were gonna go out
24 early and it's still dark out. I'm like,
25 "Grandpa, I'm tired. It's dark." He said,
26 "There's bannock and tea there. You got lots of
27 time to sleep when you're dead." I said, "Okay,
28 Grandpa, okay," and up I had to get.

29 We went out on the trail out hunting. And
30 he also said to me when -- he said, "You're gonna
31 cry when I die," and I said, "I sure will,
32 Grandpa, you better stay around a long time." He
33 said when that day comes you're gonna cry a lot,
34 and I understand that." I said, "Yes." He said,
35 "But I'll tell you this, after I'm in the ground
36 don't cry for me no more." I said, "Okay, why is
37 that?" He said, "Because I want you to leave me
38 at peace." He said, "When I'm gone you leave me
39 at peace," but he said, "Grandchild, when you're
40 in danger I'll come to your aid." So I want
41 people and young people to know and anybody who's
42 lost a loved one, as my grandfather said, cry for
43 them, but once they're in the ground don't cry
44 for them. Don't put yourself -- don't drown
45 yourself in a bottle. Celebrate the fact that
46 you had that person for that long in your life
47 and be happy about it. He said, "Don't cry for

Hearing - Public**Doroty Hayes****(Elsie Tibbett, Rose Boya, Angel Carlick, Wendy Carlick)**

1 them because when you do, you down yourself in
2 sorrows. They would not want that for you. They
3 want you to step up and be strong and go on." So
4 that's a message to a lot of people out there
5 when you have lost loved ones, leave them at
6 peace, don't cry for them. Be happy for the time
7 that they were with you, even if they are missing
8 and murdered. It's a harsh thing, but don't
9 drown yourselves in sorrows and take your life
10 away. We've had too much of that, and when you
11 take your life away you've already set it up for
12 another family member for that to happen to.

13 So, you know, if we can do changes to
14 anything, I hope and pray that it can come with
15 just the most minute -- you know, the most little
16 changes in the world, they mean a lot to some
17 people, and the change to justice is a need,
18 justice and the law.

19 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: So thank you so much for your
20 words and the strength that just oozes out of you
21 as you speak. Thank you, thank you. I have a
22 question about when you were a little girl.

23 DOROTHY HAYES: Yeah.

24 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Did anybody know how badly you
25 were being beaten, nurses, teachers, social
26 workers, school principals --

27 DOROTHY HAYES: No.

28 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: -- neighbours?

29 DOROTHY HAYES: No. No. We lived out of the
30 towns, like, out in tents out -- not close to the
31 communities,
32 like --

33 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Okay.

34 DOROTHY HAYES: -- you know what I mean.

35 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: So nobody could see you.

36 DOROTHY HAYES: What do you call -- hang on, we -- I
37 don't know if you know the area on the McDame's
38 Post. That's where my mom was grown -- born in
39 out that area, and before my grandpa, Amos Alec,
40 when they closed down Hudson Bay they moved them
41 as the first family into Lower Post, and then my
42 cousins, Zaoyas (phonetic), Aboos (phonetic) and
43 Porters and, yeah, we -- do I think they really
44 cared? It just seemed to be the norm because
45 most of them went to residential school, right,
46 at that time.

47 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Yes.

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1 DOROTHY HAYES: So I don't really think --

2 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Yes, that was my question was
3 it normalized?

4 DOROTHY HAYES: Yeah, I don't really -- I didn't have
5 anybody coming to my aid, if that's what you
6 mean.

7 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: That was my question. So you
8 said you went to day school?

9 DOROTHY HAYES: Yeah.

10 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Did you ever go to day school
11 beaten up and have somebody say, what happened to
12 you?

13 DOROTHY HAYES: No.

14 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Okay.

15 DOROTHY HAYES: Like I said, I don't think they really
16 cared.

17 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Okay.

18 DOROTHY HAYES: I just know I got cracked over the
19 knuckles with a yardstick all the time, and there
20 was actually somebody who just brought that to my
21 attention. When I went to take a computer course
22 they had the page like you have there, straight
23 up, and I was, like, "Can you let go of that page
24 so I can sign it, I can't sign it this way?" and
25 she said, "Oh, okay," let go of the page, so I
26 turned the page this way and I could write my
27 name, and she was, like, "Oh," she said, "Did
28 they force you to write right handed?" and I
29 looked at her and said, "I don't know, possible,"
30 'cause it's strange I text with my left hand and
31 I can't text with my right hand, and I can use a
32 computer, but I -- unless -- it's strange, I have
33 to have the computer sideways before I can use
34 it, and I can only use it with one hand 'cause I
35 can't twist my left hand around. So that was
36 brought to my attention, so I remember a
37 yardstick, a yardstick across the hands and the
38 back of the head, and I can't stand the sight of
39 a yardstick. Yet, it's strange, a friend of mine
40 gave me a yardstick from -- an old office
41 yardstick, it's older than me, and I look at it,
42 and I'm, like, I can't throw it away because it's
43 older than me and it was special to this person,
44 so I have it, but maybe it's in a way good
45 therapy. I look at it. I can move it around.
46 Nobody can hit me with it.

47 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Thank you. A couple more

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1 questions about your aunt --

2 DOROTHY HAYES: Yeah.

3 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: -- I'm just thinking about --

4 or your two aunts, I'm just thinking about if

5 there were any documents available, any court

6 records, that kind of thing, do you have -- do

7 you know when your aunt died? Do you know --

8 DOROTHY HAYES: I'll see about getting that

9 information and getting it back to --

10 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Christa?

11 DOROTHY HAYES: -- and see what happens out of that.

12 It would just be good for my cousins. That was

13 my mom's sister, so for my brothers to toss him

14 out of the funeral, well, that says it all there.

15 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Okay. Thank you again so much.

16 Anybody else have questions?

17 COMMISSIONER AUDETTE: Merci beaucoup. Thank you very

18 much for your courage and your strength, and to

19 conclude on my side I have to say that we have

20 this inquiry, the mandate, I guess we say, to

21 hear also what the women and young girls went

22 through on just all kind of form of violence --

23 DOROTHY HAYES: Yeah.

24 COMMISSIONER AUDETTE: -- and --

25 DOROTHY HAYES: Extreme.

26 COMMISSIONER AUDETTE: Yeah.

27 DOROTHY HAYES: It was extreme in both of -- both being

28 -- my parents both being in there, and I think my

29 mom really felt beat down. When she could defend

30 herself, oh, yeah, no question, but it just got

31 to a point where I believe she just took so much

32 over the years, but she just had enough and just

33 -- I don't know if it was gave up, I'm not sure.

34 Maybe getting sick had a lot to do with it, and I

35 know her pain from losing my older brother and

36 sister. And, like I said, she had 15 kids, but

37 the other ones were stillborn, so I think that

38 was pain to her. She loved kids, and she pretty

39 much fed everybody in the neighbourhood and

40 everything where we lived, and she did say, no

41 matter how poor you are whatever you have give it

42 to somebody. She said, you know, something

43 happens to you tomorrow you can't take it with

44 you, and I'm in firm belief of that.

45 COMMISSIONER AUDETTE: Mm-hm.

46 DOROTHY HAYES: And I -- we all watched her suffer for

47 three years. We all took care of her at

Hearing - Public**Dorothy Hayes****(Elsie Tibbett, Rose Boya, Angel Carlick, Wendy Carlick)**

1 different times. It was a battle, but I could
2 see all her pain, pain of losing her kids, pain
3 of being beaten, the -- just ruthless --
4 COMMISSIONER AUDETTE: Mm-hm.
5 DOROTHY HAYES: -- ruthless. I used to call him
6 Charles Manson. I mean, it was just -- but
7 that's what I mean by no matter what you grow up
8 in don't inflict it upon the next generation --
9 COMMISSIONER AUDETTE: Mm-hm.
10 DOROTHY HAYES: -- don't. This is -- it's gotta stop
11 at some point, just stop the violence --
12 COMMISSIONER AUDETTE: Mm-hm.
13 DOROTHY HAYES: -- against all. [indiscernible]
14 should [indiscernible] men and boys, no. But I
15 understand the residential thing. Trust me, I
16 see both sides. I see the pain of all my family
17 members even now. Even now I see it all.
18 COMMISSIONER AUDETTE: That was my question, you
19 talked about it seemed -- my understanding that
20 it was normalized --
21 DOROTHY HAYES: Yes.
22 COMMISSIONER AUDETTE: -- back in those days?
23 DOROTHY HAYES: Yes.
24 COMMISSIONER AUDETTE: But today in 2017 or this --
25 DOROTHY HAYES: Yeah, it's --
26 COMMISSIONER AUDETTE: -- or this generation, do you
27 think it's still normalized?
28 DOROTHY HAYES: It's still -- it is still
29 absolute, no question, no question.
30 COMMISSIONER AUDETTE: Merci.
31 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: I want to thank you as well
32 for your words and your strength. "Oozes out" is
33 a very good description. It's -- I can feel it.
34 I wanted to ask you if you could share with us
35 some thoughts you have about the help that's
36 needed. You said that, you know, people should
37 not have to beg our leaders for help --
38 DOROTHY HAYES: Yeah.
39 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: -- and also with the
40 normalization of violence in the community now,
41 what do you think is needed, sort of, some
42 specific things you would like?
43 DOROTHY HAYES: Number one thing --
44 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Right.
45 DOROTHY HAYES: -- for these people who come in here
46 to give any help to any of our people, do not
47 shove those Bibles down their throats. The way

Hearing - Public**Doroty Hayes****(Elsie Tibbett, Rose Boya, Angel Carlick, Wendy Carlick)**

1 of Jesus is not gonna help them. I mean, if
2 that's the first words out of their mouths to
3 them, wrong. You're talking residential people
4 here. All I have to do is read their history --

5 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Yeah.

6 DOROTHY HAYES: -- read their history. And they --
7 when they come in, don't come down here just for
8 the big old, woo-hoo, look at the big paycheque
9 I'm getting --

10 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Mm-hm.

11 DOROTHY HAYES: -- and not actually care for the
12 people. And I see a lot of that, too. Like I
13 said, it's all about the holidays and the money,
14 you know, and it's about -- it's about the people
15 have to be -- I mean, they go to Corrections,
16 they must see that the person has FAS.

17 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Mm-hm.

18 DOROTHY HAYES: They must see the person has mental
19 health issues. I'm not even in any of those
20 categories and I can see something's not right,
21 probably because where I was in Niagara Falls I
22 had friends of mine who had -- and they had kids,
23 and they just told me, oh, yeah, this, this,
24 this, oh, okay. I knew they weren't acting
25 normal, but they -- now I see. And then I come
26 here and I see it. Like, I'm seeing it and I'm
27 not even -- how is it possible that they cannot
28 see that where they are incarcerated. There's
29 something
30 -- how's that not possible? But see, that's what
31 I'm saying, where's the caring?

32 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Mm-hm.

33 DOROTHY HAYES: Oh, yeah, you're here, hm, just
34 another number, just another number. There's a
35 number on them. There's a number on our status
36 cards when we were born. We were born with a
37 number but it's never first, and I hear we're
38 First Nations. That's first. I believe I can
39 pretty well spell right and count money in that
40 factor, and I wanna see that addressed, 'cause if
41 you don't address those bottom-line issues -- and
42 then the issue of having somebody come in and
43 talk to these people about what's their
44 underlying problem, but don't throw the Bible at
45 them. That's outrageous to me. Find out what
46 the issues are, then once they get better if they
47 want to go to a church then so be it, but don't

Hearing - Public**Doroty Hayes****(Elsie Tibbett, Rose Boya, Angel Carlick, Wendy Carlick)**

1 tell them that, oh, the Bible is the end-all and
2 be-all. It wasn't in residential school, was it,
3 or we wouldn't be here today.

4 So --

5 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Thank you.

6 DOROTHY HAYES: -- I believe that when it comes down
7 to justice, they don't get enough funding from
8 the higher up. Would that be Justin Trudeau and
9 his people? I guess if I have to talk to them, I
10 guess I will because everyone deserves their
11 rights, law and justice in this country, each and
12 every person that's in Canada. We're supposed to
13 be first, so that brings the Canadian people that
14 are living here, they should be first. If you
15 can send billions of dollars out there, you can
16 first put it in your country to first help your
17 people, because what we have here -- even my
18 community's homelessness, no fixed address, how
19 does that help somebody to even do anything when
20 they've got no home? And because there's no
21 housing, I've been in and out of that women's
22 shelter probably for three and a half years.
23 How's that possible? I really can't tell you.
24 That's a good question. I mean, this country
25 could do really well if there was actually
26 housing for people. And they can't keep bringing
27 people over here, and over here, and keep
28 bringing people over here and there's no housing
29 for them, it doesn't even make one ounce of sense
30 to me. So, you know, it's a matter of those, it
31 starts stemming right from the bottom bare bones.

32 And education is the other thing. How it is
33 somebody can graduate from school and be
34 absolutely illiterate is beyond me. Don't call
35 yourself an educator or a teacher, don't. No-
36 fail policy, get a grip on your lives. That's
37 just wrong. You're setting all these poor kids
38 up to fail as everywhere you go you gotta use a
39 computer. If you're unable to spell you
40 certainly can't punch what you need into that
41 computer. It's logical. You go to a job, you
42 certainly want your family members and whoever to
43 be able to see if they're not being ripped off by
44 their boss, you know, and stuff like that. Those
45 are the bare bones of making something work.
46 Once they're educated they're able to -- you
47 know, and they find out the issues that's

Hearing - Public**Doroty Hayes****(Elsie Tibbett, Rose Boya, Angel Carlick, Wendy Carlick)**

1 bothering them. It's like a building, if you
2 keep doing this, this and this and it ain't
3 working you gotta try something else, because if
4 you've got that foundation and you got one
5 footing keep giving out, keep giving out, the
6 second one's gonna give out and you're still
7 gonna be back to square one, right back to square
8 one. It's the matters of immediate mental health
9 issues, education and definite funding to this
10 country for the people, for the lawyers and
11 whoever they need, 'cause everything's a mess
12 from where I'm sitting, I don't know about
13 anybody else, and I think I did pretty well for
14 the life I grew up in, 'cause I said I was not
15 going to grow up in that life, I was going to
16 have opposite. But is it really opposite? I am
17 not sure. When I still see all these poor people
18 dying, young people, young, whether they're my
19 family or not, right across the board, there's an
20 underlying issue, certainly an underlying issue.
21 Until you kind of address under those underlying
22 problems to get the steps up, it's just gonna
23 fail, you're just gonna keep -- it's like a
24 building foundation, collapse.

25 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Do you guys have any other
26 questions? Do you have anything else you want to
27 say? [indiscernible].

28 DOROTHY HAYES: Okay. Well, good. It's been nice
29 talking to you, and I've gotta say I've spoken
30 for all the Elders and those people who couldn't
31 and are unable to speak 'cause of their trauma.
32 I've been there, know it very well, and I just
33 want them to know build up that strength in the
34 middle of your gut, step up and don't go down
35 that road. Don't go down that road to alcohol
36 and drugs 'cause you wanna know what, you got a
37 lot of power. You really do. You got a lot of
38 power. You had power enough to struggle through
39 everything you went through growing up. You can
40 make it. Anybody can.

41 And I just wanna thank definitely each and
42 every Elder. I just love Elders because if my
43 mom was alive today she would be 74, and I just
44 wanted to know -- she's been gone over 30 years.
45 I just thought to myself, I look at Elders and I
46 just say, I wonder if my mom would have been like
47 her, or I wonder if my mom would have been like

Hearing - Public**Doroty Hayes****(Elsie Tibbett, Rose Boya, Angel Carlick, Wendy Carlick)**

1 that one over there, so I just want a lot of them
2 to know heads up, stand tall, you're first, that
3 means number one, number one in this country, not
4 last, and I stand for that in a rule of law and
5 justice, number one in the rule of law and
6 justice. And that's for all Canadians, but the
7 first people, First Nation, we are number one,
8 number one. Thank you.

9 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: To honour the laws of
10 reciprocity, you've given us a gift of your words
11 and your teachings, and we'd like to give to you
12 some seeds, a small gift of seeds, and thank you.

13
14 (SEED GIFTING CEREMONY)

15
16 CHRISTA BIG CANOE: Commissioners, could we just call
17 a recess?

18 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: Yeah, just going to figure out
19 what time we'll be back. We'll have a quick
20 break, and we'll come back at 4:10. Thank you.

21
22 (PROCEEDINGS ADJOURNED)

23 (PROCEEDINGS RECONVENED AT 16:37 P.M.)

24
25 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: So we're going to get started,
26 and we're going to start with a prayer from the
27 family.

28
29 (PRAYER SPOKEN IN ABORIGINAL LANGUAGE)

30
31 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: So any time you want to get
32 started, Counsel, maybe introduce some people to
33 us and let us -- so we're going to get started,
34 and we'll start with talking about who's in the
35 room, and then we'll do the oath, and I
36 understand you have some people selected to speak
37 and so we'll do some oaths with the people who've
38 been selected.

Fifth Hearing**Diane Lilley, Florence Washpan, Joy O'Brien,****Judith Kuster, Sa-Na-Kerri O'Brien (Family of Tina****Washpan) with Wendy van Tongeren (Commission Counsel)**

44
45 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Yes. Yes. Thank you. So the
46 primary speaker is Diane Lilley, L-i-l-l-e-y, and
47 I've canvassed with the people in attendance,

Hearing - Public**Diane Lilley, Florence Washpan****Joy O'Brien, Judith Kuster, Sa-Na-Kerri O'Brien****(Tina Washpan)**

1 others who anticipate speaking, and there's a
2 Sa-Na-Kerri O'Brien, O-b -- O, apostrophe, B-r-i-
3 e-n, and Florence -- oh, sorry, Judith, is it
4 Kuster?

5 JUDITH KUSTER: Yes, it is.

6 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: K-u-s-t-e-r. Florence Washpan,
7 W-a-s-h-p-a-n, Joy O'Brien spelt the same way, O,
8 apostrophe, B-r-i-e-n. And some participants are
9 prepared to be affirmed together holding a
10 feather, and that is Florence and Diane and Joy,
11 and so I think we could start there.

12 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay. Here's the -- here's the eagle
13 feather. I'll pass that to you, Florence. Okay.
14 So we've got Florence, and we've got Diane and
15 Joy. Okay, so Florence, Diane and Joy, do you
16 solemnly affirm that the evidence you will give
17 today will be the truth, the whole truth and
18 nothing but the truth?

19 DIANE LILLEY: [inaudible].

20 FLORENCE WASHPAN: [inaudible].

21 JOY O'BRIEN: [inaudible].

22
23 DIANE LILLEY, FLORENCE WASHPAN,
24 JOY O'BRIEN, affirmed.
25

26 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Okay. Thank you. You can hold the
27 -- you can hold that. You can hold the eagle
28 feather if you'd like to, during -- okay. Thank
29 you.

30 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: And Sa-Na-Kerri O'Brien and
31 Judith Kuster have told me that they basically
32 are relying on an understanding that they will
33 tell the truth, or would you like to speak on
34 your behalf?

35 JUDITH KUSTER: Our creator is watching as we gather
36 here. Our creator is our judge. He will guide
37 us. He will stand with us and hold our hands,
38 and we know we have to speak the truth, and we
39 will speak the truth in front of our creator.

40 BRYAN ZANDBERG: Great. Thank you.

41 JUDITH KUSTER: (Aboriginal language spoken).

42 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: And so is there anything you'd
43 like to say, or you're basically with Judith
44 in --

45 SA-NA-KERRI O'BRIEN: [no audible response].

46 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Okay. Thank you so much. Okay.
47 And you have your sage?

Hearing - Public**Diane Lilley, Florence Washpan****Joy O'Brien, Judith Kuster, Sa-Na-Kerri O'Brien****(Tina Washpan)**

1 DIANE LILLEY: Yes.

2 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Okay. And we need a microphone
3 for you as well, Diane. Hi, Diane. Is it all
4 right if I call you Diane?

5 DIANE LILLEY: Yes.

6 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Thank you. So we've met before?

7 DIANE LILLEY: Yes, we did.

8 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Mm-hm. Back -- it started in
9 April, April 13th, in the Sacred Room?

10 DIANE LILLEY: Yeah. It was, yeah.

11 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Okay.

12 DIANE LILLEY: Yes.

13 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: And I feel honoured to be able to
14 actually sit beside you now and hear you speak
15 again. So I'm going to ask you a starting
16 question --

17 DIANE LILLEY: Yes.

18 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: -- which is, I know that you've
19 decided to be part not only of this inquiry but
20 of a very large conversation about bringing
21 justice to Indigenous women in Canada, and I'd
22 like to ask you what is it, what are the topics
23 that you are going to touch upon when you speak
24 to the Commissioners today?

25 DIANE LILLEY: One of my topics, well, number one will
26 be my sister because she was taken (sic) from us
27 violently, and another one will be the history of
28 our upbringing and a little bit of history about
29 our past and how we got taken. And I have some
30 -- what do you call it --

31 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Recommendations?

32 DIANE LILLEY: -- recommendations to bring forth, too.

33 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: All right. So we can start right
34 in with this, or if there's anything that you
35 would like to start by way of kind of a context
36 or a background of who you are, maybe, you know,
37 where you live or a little about --

38 DIANE LILLEY: Okay.

39 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: -- your history.

40 DIANE LILLEY: Okay. My name is Diane Lilley, birth
41 name -- maiden name, Washpan. I'm a member of
42 the Carmacks/Little Salmon First Nation. My
43 given name is Hugluwah and it means Little Mouse.
44 And I'm a Wolf Clan, part of the Wolf Clan, and I
45 reside now in Marsh Lake, at Marsh Lake, by the
46 lake there, and I stay in Whitehorse now.

47 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Okay. So just reiterating what

Hearing - Public**Diane Lilley, Florence Washpan****Joy O'Brien, Judith Kuster, Sa-Na-Kerri O'Brien****(Tina Washpan)**

1 you said, you're going to be talking about your
2 sister and history of the upbringing of you and
3 your sisters, and the history of the past and how
4 the children were taken away, and then making
5 recommendations?

6 DIANE LILLEY: Yes.

7 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: So are you ready to begin?

8 DIANE LILLEY: Yes.

9 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: So you -- you've been with me
10 before, so you know how I do this. I -- it's
11 important to me that you do most of the talking.

12 DIANE LILLEY: Yes.

13 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: So when you have finished talking
14 I'll either try to sort that out, or you just
15 glance at me and that's a signal to me.

16 DIANE LILLEY: Okay.

17 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: And if you need any help with
18 anything, as well, then I'm here to help.

19 DIANE LILLEY: Yeah.

20 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Okay?

21 DIANE LILLEY: Okay. I will be starting with our
22 history. I can remember as far back as when we
23 used to live in Carmacks with our mom, and at
24 that time there was -- like the whole community
25 was drinking, not just my mom. There was -- a
26 lot of people had drinking problems in our
27 communities and all over, and one day the social
28 workers came and they took us from our mother.
29 They came in an orange car and with the RCMP from
30 the cabin we lived in that our stepdad and my
31 brother built, and when they came to get us they
32 took myself -- I'm the eldest of the smaller
33 ones. There was my sister, myself, my sister
34 Vivian, my sister Hillary, my sister Janelle, and
35 my baby sister Tina. They put us in the car.
36 And then I had two older siblings that was there
37 with us, which was Barbara and David, and when
38 they would put us in the car because we're -- I
39 can't remember how old I was, but we were young,
40 and then when they put us in the car my older
41 siblings, Barbara and David, took off. They ran.
42 And when they were chasing my sister through the
43 bush my brother, David, came back around and he
44 opened that door for us to let us out, and then I
45 took my younger sisters and we ran, and we made a
46 fort. We made a little fort in the bush there,
47 and we ran and we went there, we hid away, and we

Hearing - Public**Diane Lilley, Florence Washpan****Joy O'Brien, Judith Kuster, Sa-Na-Kerri O'Brien****(Tina Washpan)**

1 tried to hide so that they wouldn't take us.

2 And they found us because Tina, she was a
3 baby, she was just tiny and she started crying,
4 and that's how they found us. And then they came
5 and got us and took us again. They put us in the
6 car, and we never saw our mother after that.
7 They told us that we were -- we would -- they're
8 taking us to a safe place.

9 So they brought us into Whitehorse and they
10 split us up, and that was the last time they put
11 us in different homes, and that was the last time
12 I ever saw my sister, Tina.

13 And then they took Janelle away from us,
14 too, and -- because my sister Vivian was next to
15 me, and my sister, Hillary, was next to her, and
16 everywhere -- they put us in -- the first place
17 Coudert Residence, which is a residential school,
18 and we -- the first thing they did to us was I
19 call sterilizing because -- I say that because
20 they cut our hairs off and washed our hair with
21 low shampoo and washed our body down and really
22 scrubbed us hard, and that was -- that was the
23 introductory, the beginning of a -- what I call a
24 bad, bad situation, a bad mishap because they put
25 us in school, we went to school, but all the time
26 I kept asking for them, for my younger sisters,
27 where did they go, where are they, and they said,
28 they told me not to worry about my sister Tina
29 and Janelle.

30 And so I had these two, Vivian and Hillary,
31 with me all through everything and I used to take
32 them and I used to -- instead of going to school
33 I'd wait for them and I would run away with them
34 to go -- to try and go home to my mom, to find my
35 mom. I wanted to go home, and we would always
36 make it just to the bridge, then there would be
37 cops waiting by the bridge there in Riverdale,
38 and they would pick us up and bring us back to
39 school, and then we'd be punished. So they
40 talked to us and they told us that we would be
41 going home in the summertime when school was
42 over. So I hung on and kept close with my two
43 younger sisters there, Vivian and Hillary.

44 And after that, we went -- they put us over
45 to Yukon Hall because Coudert closed down. So we
46 got moved over there, and in there -- but, you
47 know, it -- when we went over there and then

Hearing - Public**Diane Lilley, Florence Washpan****Joy O'Brien, Judith Kuster, Sa-Na-Kerri O'Brien
(Tina Washpan)**

1 school was over, we never went home. We never,
2 ever saw our mother. Not once did we see our
3 mother since they took us. And my younger
4 sisters would always cry to me and say, I wanna
5 go home to Mom, and I'd tell them, we're gonna go
6 home pretty soon, schools almost over, but that
7 never happened.

8 They took us and they started putting us in
9 group homes, and we've been -- there was a lot of
10 abuse we went through. In Yukon Hall we were --
11 like, there was, like, quite a bit of other kids
12 there and it was, like -- it was really awful to
13 be away, to be taken from our mom, and my younger
14 siblings kept crying all the time, and I wasn't
15 allowed to be with them. I wasn't, because in
16 Yukon Hall there was juniors, intermediates,
17 seniors and I can't remember what else there was.
18 Like, it was different levels of age groups, so
19 my younger sisters were put in with the juniors,
20 and I was in with the -- I can't remember if it
21 was --

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Intermediate.

23 DIANE LILLEY: -- intermediates, and we weren't
24 allowed to be in contact. Well, we did at
25 lunchtime, breakfast and stuff like that, and we
26 got to go outside and play. But nighttime,
27 because at home they slept -- we all slept
28 together, you know, and we sleep by each other,
29 and at nights was the worst because my younger
30 sisters would get up and they would walk down the
31 hall and look for me because I wasn't there with
32 them, and they would get in trouble. They would
33 get spankings. They would get hit, and a lot of
34 things -- like, a lot of bad things would happen
35 with them, and a lot of it -- and one time one of
36 the workers, I -- like, I was rebellious, I
37 guess. I was starting to -- it was starting to
38 sink into me that we weren't going home, we're
39 never going home, and that we -- I started being
40 rebellious and I started talking back to the
41 supervisors, and I started doing things with the
42 other kids. Like, I started being -- I learned
43 how to swear. I learned how to -- you know, I was
44 learning all these stuff from other kids like how
45 to -- you know, to talk back, how to swear, how
46 to -- you know, if they say, do this, I wouldn't
47 do it. I would tell them, "You do it," you know,

Hearing - Public**Diane Lilley, Florence Washpan****Joy O'Brien, Judith Kuster, Sa-Na-Kerri O'Brien****(Tina Washpan)**

1 and then I would, you know, mouth-off, as they
2 would say, and then they would hit me.

3 One of the supervisors there, she would,
4 like, always -- like, she was really mean to
5 everybody, and she would hit us so hard sometimes
6 we'd fly to the ground. And I saw her one time
7 did that to my sister, Hillary, because she was
8 out of her area. And she came, she saw me and we
9 met in the hall, and that supervisor came and she
10 just grabbed my sister and dragged her. And then
11 my sister was fighting, being resistant. She was
12 resisting her and she was crying for me, and I
13 tried to go and grab her, and then she turned
14 around, this lady, this supervisor, she hit my
15 sister so I went running -- I saw this and I went
16 running to her and I just -- I pushed her, and
17 then I grabbed my sister, Hillary, and I held her
18 and I said, "You're gonna be okay. I'm here, I'm
19 here." And then she had called -- this woman had
20 called the other workers there, and they came and
21 they took me. They took me away, and they took
22 her in her room and I never saw her for at least
23 -- like, about a couple days I never saw her.

24 And then from there, we went into group
25 homes on holidays. Christmas Holidays, any kind
26 of a holiday, summer holidays, we never ever went
27 home. And some of the workers, too, at the
28 residential school would tell us, well, you're
29 here, you're in a better place, you're being
30 cared for, you got a better life, you got --
31 you're clean, you're -- you know, you're clean
32 and you're fed three meals a day, and all this
33 kind of stuff, and they said, you should be
34 grateful for that, you should be happy, your
35 mother is a drunk and she doesn't care for you,
36 she only likes her drinks, that's why we took
37 you, that's why you were taken away. And this
38 was the beginning of things I would hear for --
39 you know, up until I've become an adult.

40 We would be put in group homes, but they
41 tried to break us up. They tried to put my two
42 younger sisters -- they took them away from me.
43 And when they put me in a group home I wouldn't
44 eat. I stopped eating. I stopped doing
45 everything. I wouldn't drink any water. I
46 wouldn't -- I would stay in a room and I wouldn't
47 do anything. I refused to eat. I refused

Hearing - Public**Diane Lilley, Florence Washpan****Joy O'Brien, Judith Kuster, Sa-Na-Kerri O'Brien****(Tina Washpan)**

1 everything because they took away my younger
2 sisters, Vivian and Hillary, from me. I said,
3 you guys already took away my other two sisters,
4 you took us away from my mom, and now you want to
5 take away my two sisters that are close to me, I
6 said, no.

7 And so the foster parents, they had -- they
8 phoned the welfare -- the social worker. I can't
9 remember her name, but I can always remember what
10 she looked like today. I'll never forget her
11 face. She came and met with the parents or the
12 caretakers of us -- of me, and so they told me
13 that they were gonna bring my two sisters to me
14 and they would be staying with me, and I was
15 really happy for that because, you know, they
16 were the only two that I had. And so I waited,
17 and that same evening they came, and soon as they
18 saw me they just ran right to me and they were
19 crying, and they said, "We're scared, we're
20 scared." They said, "Why can't we go home to
21 Mom?" That's all they kept saying to me, and I
22 said, "We can't go home to Mom. They're not
23 gonna let us see our mom again." I said -- and I
24 said, "You have me. I'm your older sister. I
25 will be there." I told them, I said, "I would
26 never leave you. I would never let them take you
27 away from me again," I said.

28 And so they kept us in this group home, and
29 it was all right, but these people were getting
30 paid for us. To look after us they were getting
31 money. And they had their own kids, too, and
32 their kids would get everything brand new.
33 Everything would go for their kids. They would
34 good -- get everything, and we were like
35 Cinderellas in this group home to this family.
36 We were -- had to do all the chores. We had to
37 do -- as young as we were we had to do dishes, we
38 had to sweep, we had to do everything they said.

39 And all our clothes were not brand new. All
40 our clothes we got from these people secondhand.
41 We never ever, ever got anything new, and
42 everything new went to their own kids. And their
43 kids would taunt us. My younger sisters -- they
44 had, you know, brand new little Barbies. They
45 had, you know, brand new little, you know, shoes
46 and dress clothes and dresses and stuff, and they
47 would haunt us -- they would taunt us about it.

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1 They were, like, oh, yeah, you guys are -- you
2 guys get all old stuff and we get everything
3 brand new, that's because that's my mom and dad
4 that's looking after you, and your mom or your
5 dad don't care and that's why you're here. Like,
6 even the kids were telling us this, their kids.
7 And then we would tell them -- talk to them and
8 tell them, and they would say -- they would say,
9 no, you're lying, you know, and things like that.
10 They wouldn't listen to us and, you know, it was
11 really hard. I had a hard time, like, coping and
12 yet I had to be the grown up one for my younger
13 two sisters that I had with me. This would go on
14 for awhile until they took us again.

15 The foster parents couldn't handle me
16 because I was what they call a troublemaker. I
17 was fighting. I started learning to fight, so I
18 was a troublemaker, and I would beat up -- every
19 time their kids would taunt my young -- and fight
20 and bother my younger sisters, I would beat them
21 up. I learned to fight and I would beat them up
22 all the time, and so they called the welfare
23 again and they removed us from this place into
24 another one.

25 I think we'd been -- in that summer I think
26 we'd been through -- one summer about ten
27 different group homes, foster homes and foster
28 parents we had. And, you know, some of them were
29 very, very good, and some of them were really,
30 really bad, and I kept asking the social worker
31 when are we gonna go home, when am I gonna see --
32 where did you take my younger sister, where did
33 you take my baby sister, where are they, are they
34 here, are they -- are they okay? Like, you know,
35 for a young girl at a very young age to have to
36 worry and -- about their younger siblings, you
37 know, that's -- I must say, I never ever had a
38 childhood. I was a parent before I was a child.
39 I never had that. I never ever had a real
40 enjoyment of play and just being a kid. I never
41 had that. I was always worried about going home.
42 I was worried about my mom, where is my mom and,
43 you know, things were going through my head and
44 yet I had to be strong and had to be -- I kept --
45 I was building walls up, I guess, against --
46 around me, defensive walls to protect my younger
47 sisters that were with me, and I would, you know,

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1 always tell them -- I always told them but they
2 would always cry, especially at nighttime. And
3 we were in group homes, we had to sleep in
4 separate beds and sometimes my younger sister,
5 Hillary, she -- and she would get up in the
6 middle of the night and she would come to me and
7 crawl in my bed and I would hold her. And she'd
8 be crying, and she'd be saying, "You think Mom
9 miss us?" like, you know, and things like that
10 they would ask me, and I said -- I'd tell her,
11 "Yeah, Mom probably wonders where we're at and,
12 yes, she did -- she does miss us," and I said, "I
13 know our mom loves us, I know." I said -- you
14 know, I told them, I said, "We're going to go
15 home one day." I said, "We're going to go home."
16 I said, "They told us, they told us that we're
17 gonna go home to our mom." I said, "Just wait,"
18 I said, "Mom will come and get us," but that
19 never happened. It never happened. We kept
20 getting removed, placed in homes, group homes,
21 and all the time I was the one that was the
22 troublemaker. I was labelled a troublemaker.

23 And then it -- and then we went to Yukon
24 Hall and kept that up for quite a few years. And
25 then in one group home -- I was there in a group
26 home, and I was a little bit older, and same
27 thing, we had chores, and I wouldn't do the
28 dishes because it wasn't my night, it wasn't my
29 night on the list because they had other kids
30 there, and I wouldn't -- I refused to do the
31 dishes because I said, it's not my night, it's
32 not my night for dishes. And the guy of the
33 group home, the caretaker, the man, he grabbed me
34 and he grabbed me by my neck back here and he
35 just walked me, he held me up like this and
36 walked me like this to the kitchen, and he pushed
37 me, and I went flying against the counter, and
38 then he said, "You're gonna stand there, even if
39 it's all night, you're gonna do the dishes, you
40 understand?" He said, "I am your -- you're here
41 with my family and me, and you're going to do
42 what we say and you're told to do," and I turned
43 around and already by then I have learned to
44 swear, learned to fight, I learned all this, so I
45 turned around and I looked at him. I told him,
46 "Fuck you." That was the first words that came
47 out, and he grabbed me and held me and just

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1 started hitting me. And then I learned to fight
2 by then, and I looked at him and I -- when I did
3 that, I was -- like, I turned around and I tried
4 to get loose from him, and I started fighting
5 back with him, and it somehow ended up that he
6 was sitting on me in the kitchen and holding me
7 down restraining me down, and I was, like, really
8 fighting. I lost it, I think, with him, and I
9 was really fighting him. And this guy was
10 sitting on top of me, and then I said, "You F'in
11 asshole, you wait 'til I grow up, I'm gonna find
12 you, I'm gonna find you, and you're gonna pay for
13 this. I'm gonna -- I'm gonna do everything to
14 you that you will regret what you done to me." I
15 told him that, and I said, "I know who you are.
16 I know your name" and I said, "and you wait up,
17 you wait up," I said, "I will be back." I said,
18 "When I grow up, and I will grow up, I will come
19 back for you," I told him. I said, "And if you
20 ever touch my sisters I will kill you," and this
21 is, like, a little kid thinking this, and that
22 was the anger, it's in me.

23 And then from there, instead of going back
24 to Yukon Hall, to anywhere, they put me in
25 juvenile home because then I was -- I was
26 labelled -- I was labelled an angry,
27 uncontrollable troublemaker. And this is what I
28 was told when I went to -- it was then Wolf
29 Creek. They sent me there, and that was what I
30 was labelled. And they put me in there, and they
31 took my two younger sisters, Vivian and Hillary,
32 and put them in another -- they moved them from
33 that place and put them in another home, and they
34 did not tell me where, so I started -- like, I
35 went to this place, and it was like a jail, and I
36 found out it was a jail actually for children and
37 youth, and that was what it was for. And I asked
38 them -- the director, he sat us down and -- sat
39 me down and talked to me and said, you know, this
40 is why you're here is because you're
41 uncontrollable, and then they started me on --
42 they were giving me needles in there. I don't
43 know, it was to keep me calm. They started
44 giving me needles to keep me calm because I was
45 -- like, I was always mad. I was always mouthing
46 off back to them, and no matter where I would be
47 I would get angry.

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1 And then finally, they took me out of there,
2 or I ran away, actually, from there. And then
3 when the RCMPs found me this time I told them, I
4 said, I'm not going back there, I don't want to
5 go back there. I said, that's a jail, I didn't
6 do anything wrong, I want my sisters, I want to
7 be with my younger sisters. So they actually put
8 us in a home, and it was summertime. They sent
9 us to Kluane Lake because there we had no contact
10 with any family members or anybody that the
11 welfare would say influenced me. And so they
12 took us to a home there, and from there the
13 people were really nice. Like, they were awesome
14 with us. They owned RV park, a restaurant, a
15 motel and a gas station, and they were really
16 good to us. They looked after us like we were
17 their own kids.

18 And by that time I was unaware what the
19 social workers had done or any contact with our
20 mother, and I was not aware of any of that. We
21 were never told anything about our mother. We
22 were never ever -- you know, we were never told
23 anything about any of our family, and I'd ask
24 again, where is my sister -- my baby sister,
25 Tina, and my other sister, Janelle, where are
26 they, and they said, they're okay. That's all
27 they'd keep telling me. They wouldn't tell me
28 anything else. They kept telling me, they're
29 okay, they're gonna be good, they're in a well --
30 they got a really good family now. And I looked
31 at them and I said, a really good family, I said
32 -- I said, that's not their family. I said, our
33 family -- our mom is in Carmacks, my family, my
34 sisters are here, I have older brothers and
35 sisters that are at home. That's our family,
36 that's our family, that's where we belong, we
37 wanna go home. And they said, no.

38 And then this young couple from United
39 States came, and my two younger sisters they
40 befriended first, and they took them into the RV
41 -- in their RV and they -- you know, the lady,
42 her name is Leslie, and his name is Jim Warner,
43 and so they stayed there, and they -- we got to
44 know them, and they were really awesome. Like,
45 they really were good with us, and then I guess
46 they fell in love with us, and when they were
47 leaving we cried. We said, you know, we'll never

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1 see you again. We cried. And then here I guess
2 they inquired about us with our foster parents
3 there, and then I guess at that time I wasn't
4 aware that my mother had signed -- my mother was
5 illiterate. She cannot read, write or speak
6 English. She only spoke her language. And there
7 was no translators in them times, and she
8 understood a little bit of English but not a
9 whole bunch, like, not a whole lot, and I guess
10 -- when we were there I guess the social workers
11 had a meeting with her, and they had told her
12 that if she signed these papers for her kids to
13 be in care, and it was only gonna be for one
14 year, if she went back home and cleaned up her
15 life is how they told her what they told her,
16 cleaned up her life meaning sober up and, you
17 know, sober up so that she can get us back in one
18 year, and that's what the welfares and the
19 courthouse has told her in Whitehorse, and so
20 they told her this before they gave her that
21 piece of paper to sign, and because she could not
22 read or write they said to her, well, you're
23 gonna get your kids back in one year, so can you
24 sign this, and she only put an "X" there. That
25 was all. That was her signature, an "X".

26 So she went home, and in the process, in the
27 meantime, while she was doing her healing we were
28 still at -- in Kluane Lake. And then summer came
29 and went, and we went -- we left. The welfares
30 came and got us. My two sisters and I, they came
31 and got us, and then they took us in and I
32 thought this time we're gonna go back to the
33 school, to residential school, but we didn't.
34 They took us and they brought us in, and they
35 brought us to the airport. They took us to the
36 airport, and they said to us -- I said, I thought
37 we were gonna go back to school, I thought we
38 were gonna go, you know, back to Yukon Hall, and
39 I said, why are we here, you know, and they said,
40 well -- and this is how they got me on the plane
41 with my younger sisters, they said, we're going
42 to -- you're gonna go on holidays, you remember
43 those young couple that you met, Leslie and Jim,
44 in Kluane Lake, and I said, yes, I said, they
45 were really good people, you know. I said that
46 to them, and they said, well, I'm glad you feel
47 that way because we're gonna take you and you're

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1 gonna go down -- they live in the United States,
2 St. Paul, Minnesota -- Minneapolis. And so this
3 is what they told me, that we're gonna go down
4 there for holidays, two-week holidays to spend
5 with them, and then we were gonna come back, they
6 were gonna bring us back. And I was so happy,
7 you know. I told my two younger sisters, I said,
8 they're gonna take us on holidays, they're gonna
9 take us on holidays, and then we're gonna come
10 home, we're gonna go back to school and then
11 we're gonna go home to our mom, you know.

12 And when we got down to the States, Jim and
13 Leslie were waiting at the airport for us, and
14 they had, like, gifts and everything for us, eh.
15 And then my two younger sisters recognized him,
16 and they looked and they ran to them and they
17 hugged them, and then they came over to me, and
18 then the social worker came with us, and we all
19 jumped in a vehicle and then we went, and we went
20 with these two, which is to be our adopted
21 parents, and we were never told that we were
22 being given up for adoption, that they were
23 adopting us. We were never told that. And
24 that's how they got us on the plane, they said
25 that we were gonna go on holidays. Welfare again
26 lied.

27 And so when we got -- we went with these --
28 this young couple. They brought us to their
29 house, and they had our bedrooms and everything
30 made up like -- and they said -- and then they
31 sat us down. They cooked and everything, and I
32 said -- and I said, oh, when are we gonna go
33 home, I wanna know when are we leaving, when are
34 we going home, and she said, oh, well, before you
35 guys -- before anything -- she said, before, you
36 know, we eat or anything, and she said, I want
37 you to know, I have to tell you that you're not
38 going home, you're never going home, we adopted
39 you. And at that time I didn't know what
40 adoption was. I didn't know, you know, that
41 anyone could actually sign a piece of paper and
42 have someone else's child as theirs as a legal --
43 you know, I never knew that. And I asked her,
44 what's adoption, what are you talking about? And
45 then she explained to me that we are legally --
46 we're -- I'm your mother, so you call me Mom, Jim
47 is your dad, that's your dad, that's what we're

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1 talking about that we're your new mom and dad,
2 and you're never ever gonna go home, you're here
3 with us, you're -- we're gonna be your new
4 parents. And I looked at her, and I got up, I
5 jumped up off of the kitchen table and I looked
6 at her and I said, no, no, no, no. I said, that
7 welfare lady said we're here on holidays, how can
8 you be my mom, how can you be my dad, I don't
9 even know you people, you're not -- you're not my
10 mom and dad, I have a mom, my sisters and I we
11 have a mom, we don't have our dad, but we have
12 our stepdad, we have a mom and dad, that welfare
13 lady told us that -- by then I was breaking down
14 and I was crying, and I said, no, no, no, no. I
15 said, no, and I looked at -- and then she started
16 putting plates for dinner, and I looked at her
17 and I just went, wham. Everything went flying
18 off of the table, and Jim got up and he said --
19 he grabbed me and he said -- he didn't like, you
20 know, really grab me, like, he just, like, held
21 around me, and he said -- he said, it's okay,
22 you're gonna be okay, you're safe. He said,
23 we'll look after you now. He said, you can't go
24 home, and this is what they said to us. I said,
25 why can't we go home, why? And this is their
26 answer to us, or to me that I can remember was
27 that they said, your family back in Canada, your
28 mom and the rest of your family, your mom is a
29 drunk and the rest of your family are all drunks,
30 and they're all drug addicts, they don't want
31 you, that's why we took you, they don't want you,
32 they love their alcohol and drugs more than you,
33 and that's why we adopted you. And I said, no,
34 no, no, no. I said, that welfare lady, that
35 caretaker, that welfare lady, she said that we're
36 only gonna be here for two weeks, and it never
37 happened, we never ever came home. I never ever
38 saw my mom until I found my way back.

39 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Should we take a few-minute
40 break, Florence? Are you -- would you like to
41 have a few minutes to just get up and go outside,
42 and --

43 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you.

44 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Yes. Let's take a ten-minute
45 adjournment.

46
47

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1 (PROCEEDINGS ADJOURNED)

2 (PROCEEDINGS RECONVENED)

3
4 DIANE LILLEY, FLORENCE WASHPAN,
5 JOY O'BRIEN, witnesses recalled.
6

7 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Okay. So if everybody would
8 like to take a seat, and I'll just ask if you're
9 comfortable proceeding and you're prepared to
10 keep telling your story, are you good to go
11 again?

12 DIANE LILLEY: Yes, I am.

13 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Thank you very much, and just
14 in the future as well, like, if people need a
15 break, just -- if anybody needs a break, please,
16 please feel free to ask about that, okay?

17 DIANE LILLEY: Okay. Okay, I left off at -- I forgot
18 to mention one era. I didn't wanna mention it
19 because my older sister was here, and she is
20 sick. She was diagnosed with cancer and I didn't
21 want to mention anything very stressful because I
22 don't want her stress level to go up and her
23 getting more sick and I lose another sister. I
24 forgot to mention that when I was in residential
25 school in Yukon Hall I was molested. I was being
26 molested by a woman caretaker that would come and
27 get me in the odd hours of the morning and take
28 me down to the infirmary, and she would put me on
29 the table and she would -- she would strip me
30 down and she would tell me that she was checking
31 me, but she would make me touch her, touch her
32 breasts, touch her private, and she would do the
33 same to me, and she would be putting her hands in
34 my private between me, and I wouldn't -- I didn't
35 understand what she was doing to me. I didn't
36 mention that because of my sister.

37 I'll go back to my story. When I found my
38 way back from the States, I went looking for my
39 family, and the welfares came and met me at the
40 airport again, and they put me in a home, another
41 home here in Yukon, and then I took off, I ran
42 away. I went to find my mom, and I went walking
43 around downtown and I saw these people from
44 Carmacks and they said that they were going back
45 to Carmacks, and I said, well, I wanna come with
46 you. By then I was a runaway from the group
47 home, and I said, I wanna go with you, I wanna go

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1 -- I wanna go see my mom, I want my mom to -- I
2 wanna see my mom. So she said, jump in, then.
3 So I jumped in with them and they gave me a ride
4 to Carmacks, and they took me right to my mom,
5 where my mom lived then. It wasn't in the same
6 area when we left.

7 By then she had straightened out her life.
8 She had quit drinking, and she was living with a
9 guy she had met. His name is Gunter (phonetic),
10 and she had a little -- she had a baby, a little
11 boy. They had a little boy, Delainy (phonetic),
12 who is today my baby brother. But when I came
13 home I knocked on her door and I walked in, and I
14 looked at her and I said, "Mom?" and she looked
15 at me and she just started crying, and I started
16 crying, and I held her and I said, I found you, I
17 found you. I said, all these years, Mom, I often
18 wondered -- I wondered if you were still alive,
19 if you were okay, if -- you know, what you're
20 doing. We all talk of it all the time. And then
21 she was so happy, so overwhelmed that she
22 couldn't stop crying. And then I didn't see my
23 little brother then. He came out of the room.
24 He heard Mom crying. Like, she just [makes vocal
25 sound], like, you know, and just, oh, thank you,
26 God, you bring my baby girl back home, and she
27 just held me, and -- and when we were crying, and
28 then she'd tell me, sit down. So I sat down on
29 her couch, and I sat there, and then I saw this
30 little boy come running out, and she was crying,
31 and crying, and crying.

32 And my stepdad then, I just met him then
33 because I never knew him, eh, and he was there,
34 and he was holding her, and then she told him who
35 I was, I was one of her kids that got taken away
36 and now I'm home, she was telling him. And then
37 in the meantime, this little boy, he was I think
38 about four years old, he came out of the back
39 room and he came right up to me and he just
40 kicked me in the shins right here, and he said to
41 me, "I don't know who you are but you made my
42 mommy cry. You leave right now. You get out,
43 go," he said, "and don't come back, and never
44 make my mommy cry again." And I looked at him
45 and I looked at my mom and I said, who are you
46 babysitting for, Mom, who's the -- and then I --
47 and then it dawned on me he said, "Mom," and I

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1 looked at Mom and she said, "This is your baby
2 brother, your little brother that's still -- his
3 name is Delainy." And I looked at him, and I
4 leaned down. Then she grabbed him and she said,
5 "That's your sister. Don't treat your sister
6 like that. That's your big sister." And she
7 said, "I told you, you have bigger sisters that,
8 you know, are gonna come home one day and you're
9 gonna meet them," and she said, "This is one of
10 them, the oldest of them all," and then she said,
11 "You've gotta love your sister," she told him.
12 And I leaned -- he didn't want nothing do with
13 me, but he -- I leaned down and I said, "Hi, I'm
14 your bigger sister, Diane," I told him, and he
15 went back and he looked at me and he said, "I
16 don't know who you are," he said, "but my mom
17 says you're my sister." I said, "Yeah, I'm your
18 sister. I got taken away," I said, and, "I was
19 given away," I said, "but now I've come back. I
20 found my mom. I found my family."

21 And then I found out different -- I started
22 meeting the rest of my family, my relatives, and
23 I stayed here. The welfares -- I ran away again
24 to stay with my family and my mom. They were
25 never gonna take me away this time, and so I ran
26 away. And they did actually -- the cops and the
27 welfares came to my mother's. They took me again
28 from there, and then they brought me back into
29 Whitehorse. They put me in a group home again,
30 so I jumped out the window and I ran away. About
31 three o'clock in the morning I climbed out and I
32 ran, and I was determined this time that they
33 were never ever gonna bring me back to any homes
34 anywhere, and so I stayed on the street and I met
35 another girl who was in similar situation, and we
36 became best friends, and today we are still best
37 friends.

38 We lived on the streets. We made -- at that
39 time under the clay cliffs there was a lot of
40 bush up there. We made a bush camp, and that's
41 where we would stay at nights. At daytime we'd
42 go there and sleep, and then we'd wake up
43 nighttime and roam around nighttime, so that
44 nobody we know -- the social workers' office
45 closed at 5:00, so we wouldn't -- they wouldn't
46 be looking for us at that hour, so -- and we
47 would shop and get our clothes off of

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1 clotheslines, and we'd steal from -- to get our
2 food we'd steal from Food Fair (phonetic). It
3 was then down in the Horwitz (phonetic) Mall in
4 them days at the waterfront -- near the
5 waterfront on Main Street. We would go in there
6 and steal so we could eat.

7 And then when I got older after all this, I
8 was of age and I continued -- I started like
9 drinking and getting into drugs. And then I met
10 -- I met my husband. I was 17, going onto 18. I
11 met this -- I went to Carmacks, Tina and I, and
12 we started partying around, and I met my husband
13 in Carmacks. And then after that, we went around
14 together for a couple of years, and we ended up
15 getting married when I was 20. And then 19 I was
16 pregnant. I found out I was pregnant. So I went
17 up to him. He was sitting in Sunset, and I said,
18 I'm pregnant, I'm gonna have a baby. I said, and
19 it's up to you if you want to be responsible and
20 be with me or you can leave, it's your choice. I
21 said, I won't hold anything on you. And he got
22 up right in the bar and he started, "Yahoo,"
23 jumping around. He said, "We're gonna -- I'm
24 gonna have a baby, I'm gonna have a baby," and I
25 looked at him. And then after that, like, that's
26 what he said, "I'm gonna have a baby, I'm gonna
27 have a baby."

28 So I went down -- I was really scared.
29 Twenty years old, I turned 20. I was really
30 scared. I went to see my mom, and I sat down,
31 and my cousin, Darlene -- her and Darlene, my
32 cousin, were really close, and they were there.
33 Darlene was there, and then I came in and I, "Hi,
34 Mom." I peeked in the door. I said, "Hi, Mom,"
35 and I looked at Darlene. I always called her
36 "Dash", eh, "Hey, Dash," I said. And they were,
37 like, "Why are you --" she's, like, "Why are you
38 peeking around?" I said -- okay, so came in, and
39 then I ate. I sat down at the table. Then I sat
40 there. My mom was busy. She always loved to
41 bake, eh, and she baked -- she still didn't read
42 or write, you know, English, but she would taste
43 the cake and she would go home and make the exact
44 same cake, exactly. She was such a wonderful
45 woman, and I got to know her when I came back.
46 But, you know, when I told her I was -- I sat
47 down, and I looked at her. I was scared. I was

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1 20 years old. I said, Mom, I have to tell you
2 something, and she turned around and I said, I
3 think you better sit down, and she sat down, and
4 Darlene was on this side, and I looked at her,
5 and I went over and I was just shaking. I put my
6 hands on hers and I said, Mom, you're gonna be a
7 grandma, I'm pregnant. And she looked at me and
8 she said, I knew you were pregnant. I know, she
9 told me, she said, but I was just waiting for you
10 to tell me. And then by then Ed came in the
11 door, and he -- right in front of my mom and
12 everybody he kneeled down and he said, Diane, he
13 said, we're gonna have a baby, and I wanna ask
14 your hand in marriage, and I looked at him and I
15 said, is this -- like, are you kidding me or is
16 this for real? And he said, mo, I want you to be
17 my wife. I wanna marry you, he said. So I said,
18 I'll have to think about it. So I asked Mom, I
19 talked to Darlene, and Mom -- I said, you know,
20 Mom, really I was really scared to tell you I was
21 pregnant, and she looked at me, she said, well, I
22 guess you're old enough to have a baby, you're 20
23 years old now, and I said, yeah, Mom, and then I
24 said, well, I think I'm gonna marry Ed. So I got
25 married 1980 -- what year we got married? 1981
26 we got married.

27 And then I kept in contact. We moved to
28 Carmacks. I stayed there for awhile. I stayed
29 there. We bought property and everything. I had
30 my baby, who I named her Judith. She's named
31 after my auntie, and I named her Judith, Judith
32 Marie. And my mom, she really cherished my kids.
33 She was really close to them.

34 And then all of a sudden we're talking and I
35 said, you know, I wonder, Mom, I said, you know,
36 I wonder where Janelle and Tina are at, I wonder
37 if they ever, you know, if they ever, ever want
38 to find us, I wonder, you know, if they know they
39 have family here and that you're still well and
40 alive, Mom. I said, you know, I said -- I said,
41 do you ever -- do you know -- and I started
42 questioning her then about, you know, our -- what
43 happened, why were -- I said, Mom, I asked her, I
44 said, I wanna ask you one question, and she said,
45 yes. We were by the campfire and she was
46 working. She does moose hide. She was tanning
47 -- doing her moose hide, her skin, working on it,

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1 and I said, Mom, I said, I wanna ask you why you
2 gave us away for adoption, why you gave us away
3 and you kept my older ones, the other rest? And
4 she said, I didn't give you away. I did not give
5 you away, she said, and that's when I found out
6 about the story where the social workers and the
7 courts told her to sign the paper. That's when
8 she told me that.

9 And then we started talking away about Tina
10 and Janelle, and I often wondered, like, it
11 always crossed my mind where are they, you know,
12 if I'm ever gonna see them in my life. And then
13 all of a sudden, we were sitting down -- this is
14 like after Judy, I think she was born, and then
15 about -- Judy, I think, was about three or four
16 years old, I think. No, she was older. But
17 anyway, I can't remember how old she was, but
18 this phone -- my mom's phone ring, and it was
19 Tina. It was Tina. When I was there I answered
20 it, and she didn't -- she didn't call herself
21 Tina because when they took her away and legally
22 adopted her they changed her name also. They
23 changed her name to Cynthia Burk, Cynthia, and
24 her adopted family's last name were Burk, so they
25 changed her name to Cynthia. And I think my kids
26 were pretty well grown up by then, but anyways, I
27 said, who is this, when I answered it. Mom said,
28 answer it, and she said, hi, she said, I'm
29 looking for -- is this Dorothy Washpan? And I
30 said, no, I said, it's -- I'm Dorothy's daughter,
31 can -- my mom's very busy. I said, she's my
32 mother. I said, can I -- can I ask who this is?
33 She said -- she said, my name is Cindy, and
34 Dorothy Washpan is my daughter (sic), and I said,
35 what, what? Cindy. Cindy. And I said, I don't
36 recall having a sister named Cindy, and then she
37 said -- she said, well, my adopted mom told me
38 that they changed my name, but I'm so used to
39 calling myself Cindy, I grew up being called
40 Cindy, but she said, my name is Tina, and I just
41 cried. I looked at Mom and I said, Mom, Mom,
42 it's Tina, it's Tina, she found us. I said, my
43 baby sister, I said, she found us.

44 And then she was phoning from somewhere down
45 south. I don't know where, but --

46 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Saskatchewan.

47 DIANE LILLEY: Is it Saskatchewan? Well, she was

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1 phoning -- but I said, Mom, come here, come here.
2 I said -- I said, talk to her, tell her you're
3 here, let her know, you know, you're okay, you're
4 alive. And so Mom talked to her, and Mom was
5 crying, and I sat down and I was just crying
6 'cause we were just talking about her and
7 Janelle, and she said, I'm gonna come up, I'm
8 gonna come up to the Yukon, I know you're in
9 Carmacks, but I'm gonna come there, I'm gonna
10 find my way there. And so was it between that
11 call -- not even two weeks, I think, she was --
12 she was with us. And she had blonde hair. She
13 had blonde hair and a little packsack, and she
14 had hitchhiked up to us.

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: She took [indiscernible].

16 DIANE LILLEY: Or she took the bus? Okay, well, she
17 took the bus, and she came to us, and she came
18 right to Mom's, and I just cried. I held her.
19 Mom couldn't believe it. Mom -- all Mom did was
20 just cried and cried and said, thank you, thank
21 you, you're bringing all my kids home to me. She
22 said, they're coming home, then she held onto
23 both of us, and I was holding onto Tina. And I
24 was calling her Tina because that's all I knew,
25 and when I would call her Tina she wouldn't
26 respond because -- and then I'd finally say,
27 Cindy, and then she'd respond right away. And
28 then I said, you know, I said, when you were
29 taken from us, I said, your name -- your real
30 name is Tina Selena Washpan. I said, your name
31 Selena come from our grandma, my Grandma Selena.
32 I told her about our past, our history and what
33 happened, and Mom talked to her.

34 And then she sort of -- like, you know, she
35 hung around. She stayed for awhile in Carmacks
36 with us, and then she had met a local guy in
37 Carmacks and she started going out with him. She
38 started dating him, and they dated each other I
39 think for, what, a couple of years, or a year, or
40 six months or something. And so he got a job in
41 Fort Nelson, and she said, I'm gonna move with
42 him. And he was very abusive, really abusive,
43 controlling, abusive, jealous, all that, but she
44 wasn't telling us that. She was covering up, and
45 she said, I'm going -- we're moving, he's got a
46 job in Fort Nelson Mine, I'm moving down with
47 him. So they left, and we never saw her.

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1 And then when she was down there -- and she
2 came back, and then finally she spilled the beans
3 that how abusive and how he was treating her, and
4 so she stayed for awhile again and she got into
5 drinking and -- you know, and I guess, you know,
6 like myself I always felt like, you know, I
7 didn't belong. I always -- even today, I still
8 have a sense of not belonging to any place, to
9 anyone because I was always handed around, and I
10 guess she's been feeling that way and to her --
11 because she was brought up in Regina, her adopted
12 mother died, and when I was talking to her at
13 that time I asked her, I said -- you know,
14 because she looked so good, and I thought she had
15 a really good life, but when she had turned 11 or
16 12 her adopted father sent her adopted siblings
17 away and the mother was working, and she would
18 work nightshift, and he would send her sisters
19 and brothers away, his biological, and then he
20 molested her, he raped her.

21 And then it started then, and so this went
22 on for awhile, and he would threaten her, and he
23 would give her money and buy her stuff. And she
24 would -- every time her mother would go he would
25 -- she would lock her door, and he would put
26 money -- he would unlock the door, molest her,
27 and then he would give her money to keep her
28 quiet, and he'd tell her if you ever told anyone
29 I would kill you, I'm gonna kill you and I'm
30 gonna tell your sisters and brothers that you ran
31 away and we don't know what happened to you, you
32 vanished. So she kept it quiet. She never said
33 nothing, even to her adopted mother. And finally
34 she broke down and she brought it out. She
35 couldn't take it anymore. It finally overwhelmed
36 her, she said, and she finally told her adopted
37 mother.

38 And then that caused their marriage
39 breakdown. So the mother took all the kids and
40 her and left and divorced the father. And I
41 don't know if he's ever, ever been charged or
42 anything like that. I don't know what -- she
43 never mentioned none of that. And then her
44 mother was diagnosed with cancer, and she passed
45 on, and this is what she said, she said, this is
46 why I knew I had family, but my mother told me to
47 go back to your family and find them in the

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1 Yukon, that's where you belong, from Carmacks.
2 Her mother did tell her that, and then her mother
3 passed on.

4 So she couldn't go back to her adopted dad,
5 and her brothers and sisters, they all disowned
6 her. All -- everybody disowned her because of
7 the marriage breakup and everything, and they
8 said, it was your fault, your fault that, you
9 know, all this happened. And so she -- that's
10 how she found us. She phoned and she found us.
11 I don't know how, for the life of me, she got a
12 hold of my mother's phone, her number, but that's
13 when she -- we first got the first call from her,
14 then she found her way.

15 And then after that, she came back to us
16 when she left her husband or her boyfriend
17 because of abuse. Then he came back up and then
18 they went back down. And I told her, I said,
19 phone, phone every week where you're at, phone
20 us, you know, every week we want your call. And
21 I guess she went down the highway to escape her
22 deal -- her abusive relationship with this guy,
23 so instead of coming home to us, she was
24 hitchhiking south again back to Saskatchewan, and
25 on the way there she never made it. The phone
26 calls stopped, and then I started getting worried
27 because two weeks came and went, there was
28 nothing. And Mom was getting really worried, and
29 she said -- she said, I wonder where Tina is at,
30 I wonder how she's doing, how come she didn't
31 phone? And then she started telling me, phone
32 the cops, phone the RCMPs there in Fort St. John
33 (sic) and find out, see if they can go and check
34 on her, look for her.

35 So I phoned the RCMPs there, and they said
36 because of her lifestyle, which is -- she was
37 taught to survive, and the only way of her
38 survival was hooking, and she was, you know,
39 hooking and stealing and things like that to
40 survive, and that was -- she was taught that by
41 her adopted dad, that was a way to make money to
42 sell her body.

43 And she never phoned, she never phoned, so
44 the cops in Fort Nelson said because of her
45 lifestyle -- so they went up and they talked to
46 her boyfriend, I guess, at the mine, and I guess
47 he knew -- she told him -- she trusted him and

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1 she told him everything about her upbringing and
2 everything, and then the guy told the RCMPs, oh,
3 well, she's probably out selling her body, she's
4 probably out hooking, and that was what he said.
5 So the cops phoned us back and they said, well,
6 we had -- his name is Stuart -- and we had
7 contact Stuart to find out about her, and this is
8 what he told us, so they told me the exact words.
9 I said, no, no, no, I said, there's something
10 wrong, I said, there's something wrong. And then
11 they said, no -- I said, you guys gotta, you
12 know, look for her, put out a search warrant or
13 something, she's a missing person, I know
14 something happened, and I said, because she was
15 supposed to phone us.

16 And then when they got back to us it was
17 already pretty well a month when the RCMP got
18 back to us. They had gone up to the mine to talk
19 to Stuart, and that's all his response was. And
20 so they phoned us about -- it was a month, and
21 then that's what he told me, he said, and because
22 of her lifestyle, you know, being a streetwalker,
23 being a hooker, you know, she could be any place,
24 she could be in Vancouver, she could be in any
25 cities. And I said, no. I said, you know, I
26 told her to phone my mom, and I told her to phone
27 wherever she's at every week, and I said, well,
28 can you like, you know, at least put out a
29 missing persons report or something on her, and
30 he said -- he said, no, we can't do that yet,
31 maybe give her another week or two and see if she
32 contacts you, and I said, okay.

33 So I told Mom, and we sat, and sat, and
34 waited. Mom didn't wanna go -- Mom didn't wanna
35 go away from the phone. She sat there, and I
36 kept checking on her every day, and I was working
37 at that time, too, for the government. She kept
38 -- we kept checking on her -- or I kept checking
39 on my mother, and there was nothing. I would
40 ask, did Tina phone yet, did Tina phone? And she
41 said, no -- she said, no, phone the cops again,
42 it's been two weeks, phone them and tell them,
43 put up -- you know, look for her, and I said,
44 okay.

45 So I phoned the RCMPs back and they said,
46 oh, okay, then, it's been like pretty well now
47 then a month and a half, and then they said -- I

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1 said, our two weeks is up and there wasn't one
2 phone call for my mother, there wasn't one phone
3 call from her, something happened, something I
4 know is wrong. I said, you guys gotta put up a
5 missing persons report for her, look for her, let
6 every city and RCMPs in all the cities know,
7 like, you know, we need help to find her,
8 something's happening. And then we never heard
9 back. We never got any response, nothing from
10 the RCMPs.

11 And then she was missing for about -- was it
12 six -- six months. There was nothing for six
13 months, and nothing, no calls back from any
14 RCMPs, no updates on anything. And then I guess
15 I get this call -- my mother and I get this call
16 six months later from the RCMPs in -- it was then
17 in Dawson Creek, and they said -- they asked for
18 my mother, and I said, why are you wanting to
19 talk to my mother for? And they said, well,
20 we're really -- we have to tell you then right
21 now, they said, we found -- we found remains and
22 it's -- we don't know, we're sending it out for
23 autopsy to see if we could identify this body,
24 and we don't know if it's your sister's. So --
25 and so they sent her remains out, I guess, for
26 autopsy. Then I handed the phone to my mom and I
27 was in shock, and the first thing I said, I
28 looked up -- I held my mom and I looked at her
29 and I looked up. It was like I was in shock.
30 Ice cold water went through my body like somebody
31 threw ice bucket on me. And they told my mom
32 about -- they told my mom what they told me, and
33 they said, we can't really -- we can't -- the
34 body is so -- so unrecognizable because we found
35 the remains in a shallow grave, and in a field in
36 a part which is called --

37 JUDITH KUSTER: Kiskatinaw.

38 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You better say it for her.

39 JUDITH KUSTER: Kiskatinaw, just outside of Dawson
40 Creek off the old Alaska Highway on the edge of a
41 farm.

42 DIANE LILLEY: And when the RCMPs told me and my
43 mother that they had found the body in that area,
44 but the remains were so unrecognizable that it
45 was already -- like she was decomposing really
46 badly. And how they found her was that the lady
47 who owns the farm, her and her dog, she said they

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1 decided to go for a walk, and I don't know, she
2 said -- I had met her in court, and she said to
3 me, when we found the remains, she said, for some
4 reason I had a strong will and strong feeling to
5 walk to that corner, and then my dog went running
6 over and started barking like crazy and
7 scratching. And then she called her dog. She
8 thought her dog was, you know, scratching for
9 like, you know -- you know, what do you call
10 them?

11 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Big rodents?

12 DIANE LILLEY: Groundhogs or rodents, and that's what
13 she thought. So she called her dog, and her dog
14 didn't come, and he kept standing there and
15 barking, she said. And then she went over to
16 see, and then she saw he dug up partial part of
17 her arm. She scratched it up and he was barking
18 and barking. And then there she went, she went
19 running all the way with her dog back. She threw
20 her coat down there so she knew the spot. And
21 this is what she said, she said she phoned the
22 RCMPs, and then they came, I guess, and the
23 forensic and everybody came, the M Division, they
24 all came I guess and they didn't really tell me
25 about when -- you know, they never talked about
26 when they first found the remains and -- you
27 know, and all they talked after that was when
28 they -- they did their thing there, their
29 investigations and forensic investigations and
30 everything, and they talked to the lady. She did
31 her statement.

32 And then when they could not identify her,
33 they didn't know who she was, and they had -- the
34 city or the town of Dawson Creek, they bought her
35 a casket and because she was unidentifiable that
36 they buried her remains in Prince George under
37 "Jane Doe". And just by luck when this happened
38 -- just by luck that we were phoning with the
39 RCMP saying, you know, is there any way, like, --
40 you know, I know for a fact they can identify
41 through dental and fingerprinting, and I told the
42 RCMPs, and by then it was transferred to Dawson
43 Creek, the case, and -- excuse me -- and when
44 they said we had buried the remains in Prince
45 George under "Jane Doe", I said, well, you know
46 what, I said, my sister is still never found, my
47 sister still never contact us, I know -- I am

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1 sure that might be her. I said, I know -- is
2 there any possibility that we can find out, and
3 they said, well, we'll have to exhume the body
4 and do a DNA and also -- and thank you, thank you
5 for, you know, whoever invented the computer
6 fingerprinting, because when they exhumed her
7 they did DNA, and then also the United States
8 sent the computer over -- the fingerprinting, the
9 computer fingerprinting over, and thankfully they
10 looked at her fingers really good and there was
11 one finger, one finger that wasn't decomposed.
12 It still had prints, and so they said, well,
13 we're going to try this, and this is the very
14 first time it's ever, ever been introduced in
15 Canada. And so they did that with her, and they
16 ran that through the computer for ID and, yes, it
17 turned up to be my sister. It matched my sister,
18 Tina.

19 Then they phoned us and they told us, and
20 then because she was legally adopted to the Burk
21 Family, the investigators phoned, and M Division,
22 they phoned her adopted dad, who was still alive,
23 and they said, we have found your adopted
24 daughter's remains, and we would like to know,
25 you know, if you're gonna -- if you want her
26 remains back home with you so that you can bury
27 her, give her a proper burial. And what he told
28 the investigator that talked to him, he just
29 said, I don't give a fuck what happens to her, I
30 never gave a fuck, she ruined my family, she
31 wrecked my life, and I don't give a fuck what you
32 do with her body, far as I'm concerned you can
33 throw her in the dump pile, don't ever fuckin'
34 phone me again, and he hung up, slammed the phone
35 down. So they found out that she was our
36 biological -- my biological sister, so they
37 phoned my mother and I and my cousin, Darlene, in
38 Carmacks, and then we said, yes, bring her home,
39 bring her home where she belonged.

40 And then comes the financial problem because
41 when -- they put her back in the casket, but to
42 bring her home we had to fly her on the plane,
43 and we had to get a special sealed casket, a
44 steel one made up because she was already, like,
45 really decomposed, and they were putting her
46 under in the cargo on the plane. And with that
47 our family -- and thank you, you know, for -- my

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1 family for this, and we had to get money together
2 and pay for a regular person that's travelling on
3 the plane, we had to pay for that, and then plus
4 cargo, the space and the weight of her casket,
5 and it was over -- was it over 12,000, wasn't it,
6 to transfer her back here from -- from -- I can't
7 remember the amount, but I know it was quite
8 high. And the First Nation of Little Salmon,
9 they helped us and they supported us financially,
10 and we had to get money together to bring her
11 home. And we did it. As a family, we did it, we
12 brought her home.

13 And then we had a traditional burial for
14 her, and then we put a spirit house on her. And
15 then I had to research her date of birth, and
16 then from the time her date of birth -- we didn't
17 know -- nobody knew the exact date she died, but
18 what we put on there was when she was found,
19 right. That's the date, we marked it her death.

20 But, you know, when we were taken away we
21 were told we were going to a safer place, and my
22 family were all split up. I never ever knew my
23 family, and it really broke my mother's heart.
24 She was so devastated when we buried her, and
25 then I spent all that time with my mother, and my
26 mother, she had -- she had -- she had a lot of
27 hurt, mixed emotion. She was angry, and she was
28 hurt. It was all different jumping all over, her
29 emotions.

30 And then my mom, she had quit drinking for a
31 long time, and then she started drinking. She
32 started drinking -- after all this, she started
33 drinking, and she drank for awhile. And then in
34 '94 she was diagnosed with cancer, and on her
35 deathbed she told my aunties, my cousin and I to
36 keep phoning, keep phoning the cops, keep phoning
37 every week, keep phoning, and that's what her and
38 I did after we buried my sister. We kept
39 phoning, we kept phoning the investigators, and
40 then we got a contact. We found out the lead
41 investigator was -- his name is Bob Blahun, and
42 we started talking and communicating with him on
43 the phone, and we told him, any little thing, any
44 little -- any leads, anything different, please
45 phone us and let us know, but -- and he kept
46 phoning us, kept phoning us, and then when my
47 mother got sick and passed on in '94, she told

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1 us, don't give up, keep phoning, keep at it, keep
2 on them 'til they find her killer, and she had
3 passed on not knowing if they ever found the
4 killer.

5 And then from the time her remains were
6 found there was quite a span, and then I -- I'd
7 started drinking heavily after my marriage had
8 broken up. My kids were with their dad, and he
9 kidnapped them away from me, and all this was
10 falling down, so I started drinking real heavy,
11 and that's all I did for a long time was drank,
12 so I lost contact of everything because there was
13 no more calls, no more leads or anything, and I
14 thought like, you know, to myself I said, they
15 don't care, they don't give a shit, nobody cares.
16 You know, I said, my sister, you know, she's
17 gone, I just got to know her for a little time.
18 Nobody cares, I said, so what the hell's -- why
19 am I -- you know, why am I here, what's going on,
20 why am I -- you know, why am I here, why am I
21 going through all this stuff, what's happening
22 with my family? And I was drinking. I started
23 drinking real heavy. Every day I would get up.
24 My day would start 5:00 in the morning with a
25 bottle in front of me. It would end, I don't
26 remember because most times I would be so, so, so
27 drunk that I would be in the blank stage.

28 And then in the process of all this I
29 started getting into trouble with alcohol. I
30 started again fighting, and I got into trouble
31 with all this. And I met my -- I met a guy in
32 Carmacks, and we started dating in '95, and we
33 lived together, and even then he was working but
34 he was giving me money because I would drink
35 every day. And he would work, and I would meet
36 him at his job site. He would give me money, and
37 first place I would go is open up the bar, and I
38 would stay drunk when he would come home. He
39 would be -- you know, I wouldn't cook or
40 anything. I wouldn't do none of that. I would
41 be just down in the bottle. I would be drinking.
42 I would be drunk most times when he come back,
43 and sometimes I wonder, you know, to myself how
44 he ever put up with me in those times, eh, but,
45 you know -- and he -- we were together for about
46 20 years, eh. We were together from '95. And
47 then all of a sudden in -- what year was that

Hearing - Public**Diane Lilley, Florence Washpan****Joy O'Brien, Judith Kuster, Sa-Na-Kerri O'Brien****(Tina Washpan)**

1 when I was working for Kwanlin Dun when they
2 phoned me? What year was that, 2000?

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: [indiscernible].

4 DIANE LILLEY: Hey?

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: 2006.

6 DIANE LILLEY: Okay. Him and I, we moved from
7 Carmacks. We moved to Whitehorse. And I sobered
8 up. I started in my healing journey then, and I
9 got a job with Kwanlin Dun as custodian for their
10 daycare. And this was like, you know, I -- it
11 would stick on my mind, but I would put it on the
12 back shelf, you know, about my sister, Tina. And
13 I went to work one evening in 2006 and the phone
14 was ringing, and ringing, and ringing. All that
15 time, though, I must say in between, Bob Blahun
16 was in contact with my Auntie Vivian and my
17 cousin Darlene, who now are both passed on, but
18 he kept in contact with them because at that time
19 I was a full-blown alcoholic, and I was also into
20 drugs and nothing mattered to me, nothing. I
21 didn't care about anything anymore. I'd given
22 up.

23 And so when I met Mike, we moved -- from
24 Carmacks we moved to Whitehorse, and I started
25 working and then I started sobering up, and I got
26 a job. And then 20 years later -- it took 20
27 years for them to find the killer.

28 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: [inaudible].

29 DIANE LILLEY: No, 20, because by the time they
30 contacted me. I know. I was at work, and my
31 thoughts were, you know, those RCMPs
32 investigators, they don't care. They don't give
33 a shit because of my sister's lifestyle. You
34 know, my thoughts were -- when I had talked to
35 the RCMPs in Fort Nelson, I thought all of them
36 were the same. That's what I categorized. So
37 when I started drinking I said to myself, I kept
38 telling myself they don't give a shit, they're
39 not even looking, they're not even doing their
40 investigation, they're not doing their job.

41 And then finally my auntie and my cousin,
42 they started talking to me, and my cousin
43 Darlene, who she was a counsellor, alcoholic/drug
44 counsellor, and I started doing work with her and
45 she started -- then we became close and we
46 started -- like, I started my sobriety. I
47 started getting out of drugs and everything, and

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1 then I got a job at the -- and then I get this
2 phone call. One evening, the phone kept ringing
3 and ringing. And finally I said, ah, I said I
4 was frustrated because I was wanting to get my
5 job -- like, you know, I wanted to finish before
6 midnight. But anyways, I pick up the phone
7 'cause I thought it was my daughter, or my son,
8 or one of my family, and here they said, "Hi, may
9 I speak with Diane Lilley? I'm looking for Diane
10 Lilley." And I said, "Speaking." And he said --
11 this guy said, "It's the M Division from
12 Vancouver." And I said, "What, where?" And he
13 said, "It's the M Division." He told me his
14 name, but I forgot his name, and he said, "We
15 found you now," he said, "We were wondering if we
16 could fly up tomorrow and meet with you and your
17 family," and my thoughts right away, my sister,
18 they found the killer. And Mike was right beside
19 me, and I turned around and I looked at him and I
20 said, "That was the M Division," and I just
21 started crying. I said, "They found the killer.
22 They found someone. I know it. That's why they
23 wanna meet."

24 And then I phoned my daughter and then she
25 got in contact with -- and I phoned the rest of
26 my family, and I said, "The M Division phoned me
27 just not very long ago and they want to meet with
28 us tomorrow. They're gonna fly up. They wanna
29 meet with us with the RCMPs. They're gonna bring
30 them up to us and they're gonna meet with us." I
31 said, "I know they've found the killer,"
32 remember? And I was crying, and I said, they
33 found the killer, they found someone, I know it,
34 for my sister. That's the only reason why they
35 would come. I said, oh -- I looked up. I said,
36 please, I said, let them -- let them have whoever
37 done this, that person has to pay for taking my
38 sister's life.

39 And they flew up the next day, and sure
40 enough they said, yeah, we charged somebody. And
41 then he told -- they told -- like, they sat with
42 our family, eh, and talked with us for that day.
43 And then they flew back down to -- down to B.C.
44 And then I kept in contact with them again, and
45 by then Bob Blahun had retired.

46 And then after all this, we started going
47 through -- they said the prelim was going to be

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1 held in Fort St. John, the preliminary hearing
2 was gonna be held in Fort St. John on this date
3 because I guess that man was from Fort St. John.
4 He was residing in Fort St. John, so the prelim
5 went there. So the First Nations -- and at that
6 time I had some money, so my cousin and I, we
7 went down, we drove down, my cousin Darlene, her
8 son Shawn and myself, and my partner then was
9 Mike. We drove down for the prelim.

10 And then that's where -- I never met Bob or
11 any of the investigators. I just talked with the
12 courts, you know, the lawyers and the
13 prosecutors, and I had a lot of questions. I had
14 a lot of questions for -- you know, for all this,
15 you know. I wanted to know first off who was
16 this guy, or is it a guy or a girl, or who, you
17 know. And they said it was a man, and they told
18 me his name was Paul Deleno Felker. That was his
19 name, Paul Deleno Felker. And it had been, like,
20 20-year span, and then when they picked him up
21 and actually charged him they -- he was already
22 an elder. He was older.

23 And so we went down for the prelim, and we
24 came back -- excuse me -- and then we came back.

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: [inaudible].

26 DIANE LILLEY: We came back -- we came back and we
27 went up, Darlene and I, we walked up to Tina's --
28 to Tina's grave and we told her, we said, we
29 found -- they found the killer, they found the
30 guy who did this to you, and I said to her, he's
31 gonna pay for it, he's gonna pay for what he's
32 done.

33 And then I don't know how long, I can't
34 remember what the span was before the next case
35 for her court for this guy. And then it got
36 moved from there I think it was to Dawson Creek
37 or --

38 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: [inaudible].

39 DIANE LILLEY: Hm?

40 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: [inaudible].

41 DIANE LILLEY: No. It got moved from Fort St. John to
42 Dawson Creek next because when they moved him was
43 because he was getting death threats in prison,
44 in jail, and plus because this man was -- he was
45 I guess when they were investigating into him, he
46 was sitting on a school board committee in Fort
47 St. John. He was volunteering at all the

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1 shelters, the food banks. He was doing all this
2 things for those "X" amount of years. And
3 apparently when we went to Dawson Creek for the
4 second -- for the beginning of the court, he
5 didn't -- he wasn't there. His lawyer spoke, so
6 we never got to see him, and I never ever got to
7 see him until the actual trial. I don't know who
8 he -- what he was or who he looked like, but we
9 went to that -- again we were having problems
10 again, and thank you again to my First Nations
11 and family that we pooled the money together, and
12 then we went down to Dawson Creek next. And I
13 questioned the prosecutor. I said, why is it --
14 like, why are they moving him? And this is what
15 they told me, he's been getting death threats in
16 jail. And then there was a protest, I guess,
17 outside when they had him in Fort St. John
18 because I guess he was an upstanding guy there,
19 and a lot of family from schools -- because he
20 was sitting on the committee board and
21 everything, and they were shocked. They said
22 that there was a protest going on outside, so
23 they had to take him out of there and then fly
24 him out for his -- for his safety. And my
25 thoughts were like, you know, why are you guys
26 protecting this guy, he took my sister's life,
27 she will never come back, I will never ever see
28 her again, why are you guys protecting him? And
29 so anyways, I let it go, and we never saw him
30 again.

31 And in that time for the trial, the trial --
32 they moved him again. This time to Prince
33 George, Prince George, B.C., and the trial was
34 there. It was set. The trial was set. And so
35 in that time I was not working, had no money. My
36 cousin was financially strapped, too. And so I
37 had a truck that -- I sold my truck. I sold a
38 lot of my things, not only my vehicle, just so I
39 can make it down for my sister's trial. And then
40 we had the First Nations, they helped us. They
41 supported us. Carmacks/Little Salmon First
42 Nations supported us. And then we were getting,
43 you know, donations when we were down -- we made
44 it to Prince George -- or -- yeah, Prince George,
45 and then we got a hotel room, and because it
46 happened on the Highway of Tears her life was
47 taken and stolen from us, that there was -- the

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(Tina Washpan)**

1 medias found out which room we were in hotel, so
2 they kept phoning, kept phoning, and so the hotel
3 owners, the hotel managers, they said, you know
4 what, they said, I think you guys have to move
5 your family because it's affecting the other --
6 the other customers, they're not knowing what
7 happened, they're not knowing what's going on, so
8 we had to move. We moved, and we got a motel,
9 but it was, like, a secured off one, and so we
10 stayed in there.

11 And the trial started and, you know, I --
12 and then my cousin, Joy, and where she was
13 working at that time -- where were you working
14 when you made that T-shirt for me?

15 JOY O'BRIEN: At Skookum Jim's.

16 DIANE LILLEY: At that time she was working at Skookum
17 Jim's, and they got a picture of Tina, and they
18 made a shirt for me. It had her picture in the
19 front here, and on top of -- on top of the top it
20 says, "Justice for," and her birth name, "Tina
21 Selena Washpan." On one side it had eagle
22 feathers hanging down, and on the other side it
23 had a wolf, and I used it right from the day --
24 the beginning, the first day of the trial, and I
25 stood right behind this guy, and all the time I
26 stood up, I held her picture, I held -- I pulled
27 my shirt straight so he could see her picture.
28 And when I saw him walk in that door from the
29 jail, I looked at him, and he looked right at me,
30 and I looked at him and I just pulled this -- my
31 shirt down -- you know, the picture, I held it
32 out so he can see her. And every day I sat
33 behind him. Every day I sat there at the same
34 spot. And every day we came into court we have
35 to be searched for guns or any weapons. And they
36 had him in a protected glass, sealed off
37 protected glass, and they also had guards around
38 him, RCMPs with -- and they were watching
39 everything we did. When I wanted to go bathroom,
40 I got up and I walked out, and they would come to
41 me and follow me. And every time we went to the
42 bathroom and back in we would be searched for
43 weapons for this guy.

44 And they showed everything. It was a big
45 screen on the wall, and they showed -- her body
46 was so unrecognizable. I broke down and I cried
47 when I looked at these pictures they were showing

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1 in the courthouse. And all the time I was
2 watching this guy, too, to see if I see anything,
3 any reaction, any emotions or anything, and this
4 guy just sat there. He looked at her. And then
5 when they were talking to him, they would never
6 ever -- I noticed this, too, and I caught it, and
7 in the prelim they brought -- they used her name.
8 In the hearing in Dawson Creek, they said her
9 name right from -- right, like, in the beginning,
10 but it started there that they kept referring to
11 her as "this hooker", "that prostitute", "this
12 hooker". And then when we went to the trial it
13 continued, and all during the trial I was sitting
14 there listening to all of them, the prosecutors,
15 the lawyers, the Crown prosecutor, the lawyers,
16 the defence, all of them, and including him when
17 they questioned him, they would never ever use
18 her name, call her by a name. They would always
19 refer to her as "this hooker", "that prostitute".
20 I was so upset. It really, really hurt me. I
21 was so upset.

22 And finally, I got up and I put my hands in
23 the air, and my cousin Darlene was sitting right
24 beside me, and she grabbed me, and she -- I
25 leaned down like this, and I wanted to hear what
26 she was telling me. She said, you know, she
27 said, this is a trial, it's in Supreme Court,
28 it's a trial, Diane, you should sit down, you're
29 interrupting the court, and that -- and that
30 you're gonna be charged for disruptive of court.
31 And I looked at her, and I went like this to her,
32 like, you know, pulled myself away, and I said, I
33 don't care, she's my sister, they need to hear
34 this. So I stood there again, and the judge, he
35 looked over at me and he said, we'll take a few
36 minutes there, and he said, you got your hands
37 up, I notice. He said, may I ask who you are?
38 And I stood up and I said, yes. I said, Tina,
39 who you guys are referring to her as "this
40 hooker", "that prostitute", "this slut", "that
41 whore", you never ever once used her name, she
42 does have a name. I am her sister, I said, and
43 doesn't matter if you can charge me, do whatever
44 you want with me, but I would ask you to please
45 have respect, her cousin's here, my cousin, we're
46 here, we're family, she is loved regardless of
47 what she did for a living, that was her survival

Hearing - Public**Diane Lilley, Florence Washpan****Joy O'Brien, Judith Kuster, Sa-Na-Kerri O'Brien****(Tina Washpan)**

1 mechanism, those safe homes they put us in taught
2 her that, I said, and could you please refer her
3 -- she is a human, she is loved, could you please
4 refer to Tina Selena Washpan, that's her name. I
5 said, I would -- you know, I would be -- it'd be
6 more respectful for me and my family because
7 hearing you call her and putting her down, she
8 did not ask to be a hooker, she did not ask for
9 all her mishaps in her life, Your Honour, and I'm
10 very sorry I interrupted your court case, but I
11 had to say this because I love her, my cousin
12 here loves her, in the short span of time we had
13 her with us at home she is a beautiful woman, she
14 is loved, so please have respect for us. I said,
15 that's all I have to say, and I sat back down,
16 and I went, "Continue," you know.

17 And they did, they did refer to her as Tina
18 after, you know, because for me that was so
19 disrespectful, that was inhuman, you know what I
20 mean, inhuman, inhumane to say stuff like that,
21 to call -- you know, every human, especially
22 women, they have to have respect. They have to
23 be respected regardless of who they are, what
24 they done. For me, it's a survival mechanism
25 that they learned. That's the only way they knew
26 and they were taught to survive. And lots of,
27 lots of like, you know, discrimination,
28 discrimination's in the court system, lots of
29 disrespect. But that's what I did, I finally got
30 my courage up to say that to them.

31 And then the guy got life in prison without
32 parole. And then we'd been down there -- it
33 lasted a month. The trial lasted a month. And
34 we had supports from the Friendship Centre in
35 Prince George. They came, and there was a lot of
36 donations because we were financially strapped.
37 We were down to our last few bucks, and we were
38 trying to, you know, eat, you know, as little as
39 possible, spend less money on food every day near
40 the ending because we only had enough money to
41 get home, which is from Prince George to
42 Carmacks. And I thank -- you know, from the
43 bottom of my heart I thank the Prince George
44 Friendship Centre. They sent the resources over
45 to support us. They were there in the courthouse
46 with us.

47 And even then I never met Bob Blahun. Then

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(Tina Washpan)**

1 I've heard of him. He was the lead investigator
2 that kept my sister's case going, and Bob Blahun
3 was the one that kept her case going. And only
4 once, I think, I had actually talked to him on
5 the phone, and I'd asked him, I said, you know,
6 I'm really, really grateful from the bottom of my
7 heart, I owe you lots, my family owes you a whole
8 bunch because, number one, you kept the
9 investigation going, and then he had respect for
10 her. And him and I started talking on the phone,
11 and then I said, one question, Bob, and he said,
12 yes? I said, do you mind if I call you Bob? And
13 he said, yes? And I said, tell me something, why
14 did you keep her case going? Even when he
15 retired he told the new investigators, keep it
16 going, keep it going 'til you find the killer,
17 keep it open, keep it active, I want you -- the
18 family really needs this closure, he said. And
19 so when I had asked him, I said, why did you --
20 you know, did you keep it going even in -- you
21 know, even after you retired you kept on the new
22 investigators to keep it going. I said, could
23 you -- could you tell me why you were, you know,
24 so taken by my sister, like, to keep -- to keep
25 the case strongly going and strongly active, that
26 was my question to him, and he said to me, well,
27 you know what, Diane, he said, I feel for your
28 mother, I talked to your mother, your auntie and
29 your cousin, and I actually never really talked
30 to you, I mostly kept in contact with your
31 mother, and he said, but the reason why is
32 because I have a daughter your sister's age, and
33 I put myself -- being an RCMP and an
34 investigator, I put myself in your family,
35 especially your mother, her shoes, to have a
36 child that was taken, and I was blown away by
37 that answer. Like, I was shocked and I said,
38 well, you know what, Bob, I have to meet you one
39 day, I would like to meet you, I would like to
40 see you, meet you and thank you personally for
41 doing this for my family because after everything
42 was done, the trial, everything, I told him, I
43 said, I really want to meet you. I said, I am
44 really, really grateful from the bottom of my
45 heart, Bob, I owe you anything, everything, I owe
46 you, you bring closure. I said, my mother is not
47 here, but she's with my sister, my sister

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1 probably told her everything. I said, but, you
2 know, Bob, I said, thank you, thank you from the
3 bottom of my heart for keeping it active and I
4 wanna meet you one day, Bob. I said, that would
5 be, you know, completion for me because you bring
6 closure and peace. Now we can let her go to rest
7 in peace now.

8 And after all that, it sort of quieted down
9 there for awhile there, and then my sister -- my
10 cousin, was it three years ago, she passed on?

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: [inaudible].

12 DIANE LILLEY: Yeah, three years ago she passed on,
13 and then she stood right by my side after
14 everything. We buried my sister, and the trial
15 was over, and I started drinking again. Then she
16 stood by me and she helped me. She helped me and
17 then my healing journey began. I started getting
18 counselling. I started getting help, and I never
19 ever heard of -- well, to me I was -- I was told
20 -- suggested to go see a psychiatrist or a
21 psychologist, and I leaned over -- this person
22 that told me this was actually a friend of mine,
23 and he said -- he looked at me and he said, do
24 you ever talk to a psychologist or psychiatrist,
25 and I leaned over and I looked at him and I said,
26 I'm not crazy, that's only for crazy people, and
27 I'm not crazy. And he looked at me, he said, no,
28 Diane, he said, I know you're getting -- I said,
29 I'm getting counselling right now.

30 I put myself in treatment and I did a lot of
31 that stuff, and I was taking every kind of
32 workshop possible to help me heal, and then when
33 I ran into him I guess it was meant to be. And
34 then he said, no, he said, you're not crazy, you
35 don't have to be crazy to go see a psychologist.
36 He said, do you know what's wrong, he said, I'm
37 dealing with the same thing, it stems out from
38 your upbringing, your childhood up, what happened
39 to you in your past, everything that happened to
40 you, you carrying it with you, but us as human
41 beings we block out all our traumas, we block it
42 out. We have, he said, a self -- a self-
43 protection so that we don't actually lose and go
44 crazy, fall off the deep end in our minds. He
45 said, we have it in us to do that and block it
46 out, and put it in the back to never deal with
47 it. But now, he said, I think for my suggestion

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(Tina Washpan)**

1 to you is that, you know, you've gone through
2 counselling, I know you're taking ongoing
3 counselling, you went into treatment, you're
4 doing programs and everything, but you know what,
5 he said, he said to me, I really think you
6 should, you know, I did that, I was the exact
7 same way as you, Diane, I was feeling and dealing
8 with whatever you're dealing with, what you're
9 going through, always in trouble with the law,
10 always in trouble drinking, drugs, you know, not
11 caring. And he said, and then I went to a
12 psychologist and it helped me.

13 So I finally got brave. I said, well, I'll
14 think about it then. And he said, it doesn't
15 mean you're crazy. He said, you have all this
16 you're carrying all your life, everything that
17 happened to you, it happens, he said, and it's
18 all for a purpose, he told me.

19 And so I did, I started going. I made an
20 appointment with a -- I looked in the book and I
21 got referred to Bill Stewart. So I started
22 working with Bill Stewart, and we did -- I think
23 I went to see him for about three years, three
24 years every two weeks. And I started -- all this
25 started coming out in me, and then I realized
26 that, you know, what my friend told me was right,
27 you know.

28 And yet I still -- like, when I'm talking
29 now I still carry -- I still feel all that pain,
30 all that hurt. For the rest of my life I will be
31 -- it will be with me, but I am strong enough now
32 that I don't have to medicate myself with alcohol
33 or drugs anymore. I haven't drank now for 17
34 years, and I've been clean of actually needle --
35 in October will be 29 years for me.

36 And I still have to sometimes -- you know, I
37 still don't have the up and Adams in the
38 mornings. Lots of times I would have to make
39 myself do things. I'd have to push me, force
40 myself to do it just -- sometimes just to wake
41 up. And sometimes I won't even do that. I turn
42 on my TV today and shut it off. I leave it on
43 for noise just so that I wouldn't -- and then
44 that would help me sleep nighttimes. I would
45 have to do that 'til this day.

46 I was so traumatized by my sexual abuse and
47 my physical abuse in residential school that when

Hearing - Public**Diane Lilley, Florence Washpan****Joy O'Brien, Judith Kuster, Sa-Na-Kerri O'Brien
(Tina Washpan)**

1 I was a teenager I used to always run around with
2 real baggy clothes so nobody would look at me,
3 nobody would ever touch me again, you know. And
4 I carried the shame, the guilt, all these hurt,
5 everything for something I didn't do. I carried
6 all that. And even today, I get angry when I
7 hear about kids being abused. It just triggers
8 me. And also for sexual abuse, because I carried
9 that and kept it for a long time, and it was an
10 ongoing thing in residential school, and then I
11 started running away from there. That's the
12 reason why I started running and taking my
13 younger sisters. And I would ask them, too,
14 Vivian and Hillary, if anybody would go into
15 their room. Because they were in a separate area
16 from me, I would ask them did anybody bother you,
17 did anybody touch you where they're not supposed
18 to, I told them. And they were like, no. I
19 said, did anybody come and get you in the middle
20 of the night and take you away from your bed or
21 anything and from your dorm, and they would say,
22 no. I said, don't lie to me, please. I said,
23 tell me, tell me. I said, let me know if anybody
24 does that. And then I said, we're gonna run
25 away, and I started running, and -- but I was
26 scared. I never ever told anyone anything of it,
27 and even today I try to block it out, but it's
28 still -- it sneaks up on me all the time.

29 So I do -- when I came back from the States
30 and met my family, I went to the land -- I went
31 -- I met my grandma and grandpa. I went to stay
32 with them on the trap line, and started learning
33 my tradition. I started learning how to set
34 snares. My grandma would speak to me in our
35 language, and I couldn't understand. I never
36 ever understood a word she would say. And my
37 grandpa, because he spoke English and understood
38 it and spoke her language, he was translator for
39 me. I would always say, Grandpa, don't go away
40 from grandma and I so that I know what she's
41 saying, you know.

42 It was a big loss to myself and my family.
43 I still have today two sisters that are in the
44 States. I had three. And my sister next to me,
45 which was Vivian, I had left them there when I
46 came back, and I told them when I left that when
47 I get older, I'm gonna come back, I'm gonna get

Hearing - Public**Diane Lilley, Florence Washpan****Joy O'Brien, Judith Kuster, Sa-Na-Kerri O'Brien****(Tina Washpan)**

1 you, I'm gonna bring you home. I told them that.
2 I said, that is my promise, and it never turned
3 out that way.

4 My sister, I have another one in Georgia.
5 She actually found us, too, Janelle. She
6 contacted us through my sisters in St. Paul.
7 That's how they found each other. And then my
8 sister, Vivian, knew -- she was, I guess, old
9 enough to know that -- where we're from, and she
10 told Janelle and somehow Janelle tracked us down,
11 eh, and I got to meet all my siblings and I'm
12 really thankful for that. Janelle did come up,
13 but only for a short time just to visit and meet
14 with us, but I didn't think she ever met mom.
15 No, my mother had passed on by then when she came
16 up. She never ever met my mother, but she did --
17 we told her a lot about Mom.

18 And my sister, Vivian and Hillary, are still
19 -- Hillary is still alive, but my sister, Vivian,
20 she got into drugs. She was -- she became a
21 hooker, a streetwalker and she was homeless, an
22 alcoholic. Her and I, though, I gave her my
23 phone number and she kept in contact with me, and
24 we were all going through the residential
25 lawsuit?

26 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Mm-hm.

27 DIANE LILLEY: Lawsuit. And I said -- my two sisters
28 in the States, too, they were with me. They were
29 with me in Yukon Hall, and so I said to my
30 lawyer, can they do this, too, I want them
31 because they were with me, and she said, yeah,
32 sure, so I told them and then they did it. And
33 then finally, you know, they were flown back and
34 forth from United States to Canada, but they
35 wouldn't come to the Yukon. The lawyers would
36 fly to Vancouver and meet them. They wouldn't
37 meet them here. They would pay for their way
38 from the States to Vancouver, and that's as far
39 as they would -- they would go, and then back
40 after their testimony.

41 And then last year they received their
42 money, and my sister, Vivian, who was closest to
43 me, she phoned me and she said, "Sister," she
44 said -- she said, "Ah," and she was crying, she
45 said, "I got my money. I got my money, girl."
46 She always calls me, girl, eh, American accent
47 street words, street talk. She says to me,

Hearing - Public

Diane Lilley, Florence Washpan

Joy O'Brien, Judith Kuster, Sa-Na-Kerri O'Brien

(Tina Washpan)

1 "Well, girl, I'm gonna be up there with you," she
2 told me, eh. "I'm gonna come up and I'm gonna
3 move back to you. I'm gonna move back home to
4 Canada, to Carmacks, to the Yukon wherever you're
5 at. I'm gonna come home to you. I got this
6 money now, but --" she said, "but I'm gonna -- I
7 put my name so I can go into rehab," and I said,
8 "Right on, I'm looking forward to this. I'm
9 looking forward to this. I'm so excited." I was
10 so happy, so excited because she -- July is my
11 birthday, July month is my birthday. And this
12 was near the end of June, and she was doing her
13 program down there, and she phoned me from the
14 treatment or the rehab centre, and that's when
15 she said, I'm in treatment, I'm going to come
16 home, I'm gonna come back as soon as I'm done
17 this, I want to be straight without drugs when I
18 come home to you and see you because I know you
19 don't drink, you don't do drugs or anything
20 anymore, but I wanna come home to you. I said,
21 ah, I'm so excited, I'm looking forward to --
22 that's the best birthday present ever, I said.
23 If you come back to me, if you come home that'll
24 be -- make my birthday the best and the greatest
25 this year, I told her. And then after she said,
26 well, I only got a short time I'm allowed to
27 talk, so I won't talk to you for awhile, I'll
28 phone you, I'll phone you, okay, when I'm ready.
29 And I said, okay, make sure you phone me 'cause I
30 wanna go right to the airport and just swing you
31 around. I don't care how big you are, I wanna
32 grab you and swing you around and kiss you all
33 over, I said, on your forehead, everywhere.
34 And she never made it home. She phoned me.
35 I don't know, she was really distraught. She
36 phoned me again. She phoned me again from the
37 rehab centre and she was really crying. She was
38 really upset, and she said to me, "Sister,
39 please," she said, "I wanna come home, please."
40 She said, "I don't want to die here alone. I
41 don't wanna die here. I wanna come home." And I
42 said, "Well, just leave there. You got your
43 money, get on a plane tomorrow. Get on that
44 plane. Book yourself here, get here as soon as
45 you can." I said, "I want you to come home."
46 And she was crying and crying, and she said that
47 -- she said, "I don't want to die here, Sister."

Hearing - Public**Diane Lilley, Florence Washpan****Joy O'Brien, Judith Kuster, Sa-Na-Kerri O'Brien****(Tina Washpan)**

1 She said, "Please," she said, "I wanna come
2 home." And I said, "Well, get on that plane.
3 Nevermind your rehab, nevermind everything, I
4 just want you home, too. I want you to come
5 home. I really miss you. I love you. I miss
6 you." I said, "I wanna see you." I said, "Just
7 nevermind all that, come here and then I'll help
8 you. I'll be with you." I said, "I'll always be
9 by your side, anything you need, support,
10 anything, with alcohol." "But I'm -- I have a
11 drinking problem, I have a drug problem." I
12 said, "I don't care. I don't care what you have.
13 I want you home. Come home, then." And she
14 said, "Well, I wanna come home, but I don't wanna
15 die here, but you know what, Sister, I think I'm
16 gonna stay and finish my program and then I'll
17 come home. I'll be stronger from drugs." I
18 said, "Are you sure?" I said, "Phone me again if
19 anything should happen," but that never happened.
20 Two weeks after she phoned -- that phone call,
21 she passed on in rehab. She died in rehab. I
22 got this call from my daughter and the RCMPs.
23 They told me that she had passed on in rehab.

24 And now she has two beautiful daughters down
25 there, Christine and Sarah, and they're old
26 enough to be on their own but, you know, I've
27 never -- I met them once. She brought them to
28 Canada when they were, like, little girls five
29 years old, and that was the last time I saw them.
30 And when my sister passed on in rehab, she was --
31 Christina was the only one there with her mother.
32 She was supporting her mother even, you know, on
33 the streets and stuff. And I would be sending
34 her money through, what do you call that?

35 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: [inaudible].

36 DIANE LILLEY: Yeah, Western Union. I would send her
37 money all the time because my sister would phone
38 me and say, "Sister, I would need money. I need
39 money. I'm homeless. I'm sleeping under a
40 bridge. I need money. I gotta eat. I don't
41 have anything." And so I would always send her
42 money unknowing that she was right into drugs and
43 that was where her money was going. And then
44 finally, her daughter, Christine, phoned me and
45 said, "Are you the aunt that's sending my mom
46 money?" And I said, Yes, I am," and I said,
47 "Why?" I said, you know, "How is she doing?"

Hearing - Public**Diane Lilley, Florence Washpan****Joy O'Brien, Judith Kuster, Sa-Na-Kerri O'Brien****(Tina Washpan)**

1 Where is she?" She said, "Well, could you do me
2 a favour, please?" And I said, "What?" And she
3 said, "Don't send my mom any more money because
4 she's using it -- you're supporting her drug
5 habit." And I didn't know at that time that she
6 was right heavy into it, and so I said to
7 Christina, I said, "Yes, I will, then, I will do
8 this, but are you with her? Is anybody with her?
9 Like, where is she, how is she?" And then she
10 told me -- she keeps -- she phones me all the
11 time, eh, and tells me this. So I quit sending
12 her money. But she always loved cheezies,
13 because when she came up she always -- she had
14 cheezies, Smarties and pink popcorn. They don't
15 get that in the United States. It's not allowed
16 there. It's not in the United States. It's only
17 in Canada. So I used to always send her -- she
18 would always ask me -- phone me. Sometimes she
19 would phone me just to say hi. My sister,
20 Vivian, she would phone me just to say hi and
21 tell me she loved me, and just so she could order
22 and I would buy all this for her and then wrap it
23 and carry pack it, and then send it down to her.
24 And then I'd say, when you get this package you
25 phone me right away.

26 And then she had a boyfriend, and she said,
27 here's my boyfriend, we're eating the cheezies
28 right now, and he's, like, crunch, crunch, crunch
29 on the phone, and I'm talking to him, eh, and he
30 said, how awesome. We're living on cheezies
31 right now, but it's the best snack I ever had, he
32 said. Your sister gave it to me, he said, what
33 you sent her, everything, he said, and we don't
34 get those down here. And I met him, but him,
35 too, I guess I just talked to him for that, like,
36 brief moment, eh. Then I said, well, can you put
37 my sister back on, you know, I want to talk to my
38 sister?

39 And -- you know, and -- but, you know, when
40 she passed on, when they told me I cried and
41 cried. And then her daughter phoned me,
42 Christina, she got a hold of me and she said, my
43 mom wanted a traditional burial, and because she
44 was living on the streets she had lost all her
45 IDs. She had no credentials. She would call it
46 "credentials". "I'm gonna get my credentials and
47 I'll come see you," she would say. "Okay, you

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1 hurry up and get your credentials," I used to
2 tell her. But she had nothing. When she went
3 into rehab she was just in the process of
4 applying again to get her IDs and everything so
5 she can come home. And that never happened. Two
6 weeks after she passed on in rehab. Her liver
7 failed her. Her heart failed. All her organs
8 shut down.

9 Then when I talked to her daughter,
10 Christina, she said that she wanted her mom and
11 -- to have -- and this is what her mom said, she
12 wanted a traditional burial, but it never
13 happened because she had no identification, she
14 had no IDs. They put her in -- she was in the
15 morgue, and then I asked her to find out -- phone
16 that morgue and give me -- tell them to phone me,
17 so I was in contact working from here phoning to
18 the States to see if I can bring her back over
19 the border, but that was -- no, I can't, even
20 today. So I told Christina, I said, well, get
21 her cremated, so I got the morgue -- mortuary to
22 phone me and I asked them how much it is to
23 cremate her, or how much they, you know, charge
24 down there in the States for cremation. And
25 everything already -- because she had died they
26 froze everything, all her assets, everything, her
27 bank, all her money she got, and she never even
28 got to spend a cent out of that money. She just
29 put it in a bank.

30 And so when I talked to Christina I said --
31 you know, it's been like already like about four
32 days -- I think about four days that she -- they
33 had her in the morgue, and she had passed on four
34 days. And then the fifth day came and the
35 mortuary man, he phoned me and he said, well, you
36 know what, he said, we have to decide what we're
37 gonna do, so now that -- you know, she was also
38 -- like, you know, she's not gonna -- you know,
39 her remains are not gonna stay intact for long,
40 she is decomposing now. And he said, you know,
41 you ever think about -- you know, we talked about
42 cremation, and I said, well, how much does that
43 cost, how much are you gonna charge? And he
44 said, we charge \$1500, and I said, well -- I
45 phoned Christine and I told her that. She was --
46 she didn't want that at all, so I said, well,
47 we're gonna have to do with her body and remains

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1 what we did with Tina. We have to get money
2 together somehow and fly her back here and then
3 get her through the border somehow. And, no,
4 that never happened. So I phoned Christine and I
5 said there was too much red tape, there was a lot
6 of red tape to go through for this process, and
7 then I found out that for the -- what the
8 mortuary said for the special casket again, steel
9 casket, and the casket itself, the original
10 casket would cost you over \$20,000 to bring it
11 from United States back to Canada and then to
12 Carmacks. It would cost us over 20,000 just to
13 bring her back. And I said, well, you know what,
14 I'll talk to her daughter and then I'll get her
15 to phone you.

16 So I phoned Christine and I told her all
17 this, and she was -- she was crying to me saying,
18 Auntie, Auntie, I need someone with me, I'm here
19 by myself. I said, I know. I said, I'm here on
20 the phone right now, and you can phone me all the
21 time. I said, I'll always be here for you. I
22 said, what we're gonna have to do is because
23 we're financially strapped we're gonna have to
24 get her cremated, and then that way you go and
25 you get her, you keep her, and then I'll see in
26 the meantime -- you're the one there, you're her
27 child, you have all her rights for everything,
28 you can access her credentials, she would say,
29 her IDs, access all that, and then I can bring
30 her ashes back, and then we can spread her up by
31 my mother, by my mom's lake and by -- with her.
32 But right now I'm having a lot of trouble with
33 the government with the border passing with her,
34 and to have to sell my truck for my sister's
35 case, it threw me back financially. And for all
36 the burial costs and expenses of everything, all
37 that is -- I'm financially strapped.

38 So now I'm also in with the Sixties Scoop,
39 and my sister -- my two remaining sisters down in
40 the States were inquiring me about that, and they
41 said they want to know if they can do this, too,
42 because we were stolen from our family, my
43 mother. We were never given away. My mother did
44 not give us up. So I'm in the process of dealing
45 with the Sixties Scoop now, the class action
46 lawsuit. I'm in that now. I'm dealing with it
47 myself. But my two sisters in the States do not

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1 qualify because they're not in Canada. They said
2 to qualify for this they have to remain in
3 Canada. Well, what about all the kids that are
4 adopted out? Like, I've heard, like, there are
5 children in Europe, children given away, taken
6 away from Yukon that are residing in Europe. We
7 were just handed around, given out for adoption
8 like, you know, we're some -- bought on a store
9 -- on a store shelf. And I'm having problems to
10 bring her back now, and I would like her home,
11 her ashes home. And this July it'll be one year,
12 and it was the saddest birthday -- I don't ever
13 celebrate my birthday anymore. I don't celebrate
14 -- I never celebrated my birthday because my
15 sister, Tina, when she was found -- was it in
16 July? It was in July again, just a couple days
17 before my birthday there, too, so I never
18 celebrate my birthday. And then my sister,
19 Vivian, now, same thing, it was in July again,
20 and you know what, myself personally, I think the
21 Government of Canada who freely handed us and
22 stole us should be responsible for bringing my
23 sister back. They should be held accountable for
24 this. They have ruined my life, my sister's
25 life, my whole family and the community I come
26 from, it affected them dearly. They put -- I had
27 and my sisters had and dealt with a lot of
28 traumas.

29 Until this day I still get nightmares about
30 my sexual abuse. I get -- I'm always on the
31 watch, looking over my shoulder. If anyone
32 raised their hands around me, I'd be like right
33 away just, like, in a defensive mode because of
34 all my abuse. It really traumatized and it
35 robbed me. It robbed me of my childhood. It
36 robbed me of my family. It robbed me of my
37 culture, and to send us away out of our own
38 country, it was a cultural shock to my sisters
39 and I. And that was the very, very first time in
40 our life we ever saw black people, and we were
41 scared. We didn't know. And where we were
42 adopted out in the States -- in the States it's
43 all, you know, black people, and my sisters were
44 really devastated.

45 We were scared because, you know, we never
46 ever, ever -- I don't know if they ever have --
47 like, if they're -- you know, the adopted family,

Hearing - Public**Diane Lilley, Florence Washpan****Joy O'Brien, Judith Kuster, Sa-Na-Kerri O'Brien****(Tina Washpan)**

1 or parents, or adopted parents ever hold them. I
2 never was ever held. It took me a long time to
3 have contact with anyone or to allow anyone to
4 touch me because of my sexual abuse. It not only
5 happened in residential school at a very young
6 age by a woman, one of the workers, it also
7 happened in the group homes by other older --

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: [inaudible].

9 DIANE LILLEY: Hm?

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Groupies.

11 DIANE LILLEY: Other older groupies, I would say. You
12 know, it happened in there, too. But all this I
13 kept away. I never ever, you know, talk of it.
14 I blanked it all out. I didn't want to face it,
15 but I knew one day and -- you know, that I would
16 have to come out and deal with it and talk with
17 it, you know.

18 And, you know, it's -- still every day is a
19 struggle for me, every day. I like to -- I don't
20 like to live in the cities. I like to live -- I
21 spend a lot of time -- I have two little dogs and
22 I call them Twenty-two and Thirty-Thirty because
23 they're my protectors in the bush. I spend a lot
24 of time fishing. I spend a lot of time back with
25 my traditional life again, and I speak and I
26 learned a little bit of my language, my First
27 Nation language, I learned a little bit.

28 And now I have two kids, a son and my
29 daughter, and I really, really never ever talked
30 to them of my past history. I didn't want them
31 to know what happened to me because when they
32 were growing up they were young, you know, and I
33 didn't want them to know of everything that
34 happened to me, so I protected them. And as they
35 got older, I started slowly telling them about my
36 history. And now they're both working, they're
37 doing really well, and they know about everything
38 now that they're older. I sat them down and
39 talked to them about it, and I told them about my
40 past.

41 And when my daughter started getting into
42 drinking with her friends, I packed her up and
43 removed her and moved her into town to my cousin.
44 And she was angry. She swore and everything at
45 me, and I said, "Nope, just go." And I never
46 said nothing -- at the time I was working for
47 Forestry and I never packed -- like, my cousin

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1 just came and took her, who is Rick, and he put
2 her in the truck and he locked her in there and
3 took her, and she's like, "Mom, what about my
4 clothes, I have to pack up." I said, "You don't
5 worry about that. I'll bring it in to you. I'll
6 come in after work and I'll bring it to you, just
7 go."

8 So she stayed in town with him and I -- you
9 know, I paid rent for everything she needed. And
10 then she was pregnant. She got pregnant very
11 young. She was pregnant at 15, and I supported
12 her through. I gave her three options because
13 she was very young. Her dad phoned me and said,
14 "You make her have abortion. She is too young."
15 And I said, "Ed, she is with me and I will not
16 force her into anything that she's gonna have to
17 live with and regret the rest of her life. It's
18 her choice." So I told her, I said, you know, I
19 know you're pregnant and, I said, there is -- you
20 know, you can keep the baby, and by then I
21 registered her in that teen parenting school
22 here, which is for teenagers who are pregnant at
23 a young age but they continue their education,
24 and they have, like, the daycare and everything
25 set up there for them, so I applied for that for
26 her, and she got accepted so she went there and
27 she had baby, and I was there. I was right
28 there, and that was so awesome for me to see my
29 grandchild being born and to hold her. And the
30 doctor handed me the scissors. He said, "Cut the
31 umbilical cord." And I looked at him and I said
32 -- I was scared. I said, "No, I don't wanna hurt
33 them." "Oh, they won't feel nothing," he said.
34 "Come on," he said, "You're the grandma," and I
35 did it. I did it, and it was so awesome. And he
36 wrapped baby up, and it was a little girl.

37 And I talked to her before my granddaughter
38 was born. I said, you have options. There's, I
39 said, adoption, but if you put her for adoption I
40 would like her -- like the baby, if it's your
41 choice, I want you to get the baby adopted into a
42 family member, which Darlene at that time talked
43 about it with me, and my cousin was gonna take
44 the baby. That was our agreement if she was
45 gonna go up for -- or if the baby was gonna go up
46 for adoption. And I said, there is adoption,
47 abortion or else you can either keep the baby and

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1 I will help you raise the baby, or you can let me
2 have the baby and then when you feel you're ready
3 I can give the baby to you again, but I will not
4 ever see my grandchild in the welfare system, my
5 kids or my grandchildren. And so I said, you
6 think about it, you think about it, you know.

7 So she thought about it. She went to
8 school, everything, did her thing. She came back
9 and she said, Mom, I don't wanna -- I don't wanna
10 have an abortion because the baby is alive, she's
11 already got a -- the baby's already got spirit,
12 it's murder. She said to me, I'm murdering my
13 baby, no, I'm not gonna have an abortion, I'm
14 going to have my baby, and you know what, Mom,
15 I've decided I'm gonna keep her. So she did, and
16 today my granddaughter is 21 years old. And my
17 daughter is so wonderful. She did have mishaps.

18 But my son, he met a girl down -- when he
19 went down to Alberta. He's an insulator. He
20 works -- he got a job as an insulator for oil
21 well companies down there. And he left, and I
22 didn't want him to go. I even went way ahead
23 when he's -- when he had married -- met a girl --
24 a local girl from the Yukon, and then they moved
25 down because of his job, and he had then a little
26 girl with her. Her name is Taylor. And my
27 daughter's daughter, her name is Cheyenne
28 (phonetic). And so when he left, I dashed way up
29 to Carcross Cutoff and I parked there, and I
30 waited for him. I waved, and I was just crying,
31 and it was really weird because it brought me
32 back to leaving -- being taken from my family,
33 and by then I was strong. You know, I knew -- I
34 could sense my triggers, and I've learned about
35 them. And I just stood there and I cried and I
36 waved. And when he left, he left with one little
37 girl, and then next thing I know, the following
38 year I heard that he's had a boy, Tristan. So
39 they got along there.

40 They lived there for about seven years -- or
41 six years. And then his wife started going out
42 drinking and leaving him home and stuff with the
43 kids after work, and then so he -- she started
44 fooling around on him, started having an affair.
45 He found out, so he left her and he got the kids
46 -- custody of the kids. And then on one of her
47 visitations she kidnapped them back here. So now

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1 they are here, but we don't have contact because
2 she doesn't -- she is angry that then he met
3 another woman down in Alberta, then she got
4 pregnant and my grandson, his name is Jacob --
5 and today because the mother was very
6 dysfunctional, she is not a First Nations, she is
7 Caucasian, and that she -- she is a drug addict.
8 She is into heavy drugs and an alcoholic. And
9 from what my son -- I only -- he only brought her
10 back to meet me when she was eight months
11 pregnant with baby, and my son told me -- like,
12 you know, I said, you know, there's something not
13 right with your wife, I told him, eh. And he
14 said, you know, Mom, he said, she had a hard
15 upbringing, she had a rough life, hard life. And
16 I said, oh, okay, I said, but you know, son, we
17 all had a hard life. And then she had baby in
18 Whitehorse General here, and then not even a
19 month -- when he was a month and a half year old
20 -- or a month and a half old, my son was working
21 and she got into drinking and drugs, and my son
22 (sic) got apprehended, and I promised myself that
23 none of my kids or any of my grandchildren would
24 ever have issues or ever be taken into custody of
25 welfare.

26 So my daughter finds this out. The welfare
27 phones her because my son had her number, and he
28 told -- they phoned him and then he came back
29 from work. And the mother -- they apprehended my
30 grandchild. He was only a month and a half. And
31 my daughter said, don't take him anywhere, my mom
32 -- I'm gonna get my mom right now. And at that
33 time I had no vehicle. I had no transportation,
34 so she came out to Marsh Lake, Judas Creek and
35 told me and said, "Mom, you have to come in, you
36 have to, they're gonna take baby," so I said,
37 "No, they're not, they're not taking my grandson,
38 any of my grandchildren." So I came in and I
39 took him. I said -- I grabbed him and I looked
40 at those two social workers that were there. I
41 said, "No," I said, "This is my grandson. My
42 name is Diane. I'm the biological grandmother.
43 My son is working," and I said, "I am gonna take
44 my grandson with me home," so I did.

45 And then I had him for eight months then his
46 mother in the process did 28-day program for
47 everything, and then she got him back. Four days

Hearing - Public**Diane Lilley, Florence Washpan****Joy O'Brien, Judith Kuster, Sa-Na-Kerri O'Brien
(Tina Washpan)**

1 later they apprehended him again from her, and
2 this time the social worker said that they were
3 putting him in a home in Whitehorse so that his
4 mother -- because I was -- like, I would allow
5 her to come and visit and stay for the weekends.
6 If she wasn't drinking or, you know, into drugs
7 she could come for the weekend and, you know,
8 keep that bond, but that never happened. So one
9 day I apprehended him again. They told myself
10 and my family, the social worker said, he has to
11 bond with his mother again, so your family can't
12 have any access, you can't have any visitations
13 at least for up to three months, you can't see
14 him. And it triggered me again back, so with
15 this I did as much as I can. I went to his boss.
16 I went to everywhere, and I never got him back.
17 Our family never got to see him.

18 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Diane?

19 DIANE LILLEY: Yeah.

20 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: How are you feeling?

21 DIANE LILLEY: I'm feeling good. I'm feeling all
22 right, but I'm -- I think I better quit here --

23 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Okay.

24 DIANE LILLEY: -- you know.

25 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Do you feel you have more to say?

26 DIANE LILLEY: No, actually I'm just disappointed
27 like, you know, that right now my son is dealing
28 -- is going through what I've lived through, and
29 that I have -- but my son has full custody now --
30 we got full custody -- he got full custody last
31 month. But, you know, I'm really happy for that
32 but, you know, it was like a long process for --
33 and it threw me back to when we were taken and my
34 family was broken up.

35 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Yeah, I can see there being a
36 number of things about that situation that would
37 be triggering and be very emotional for you.
38 Now, I have been taking notes as you've been
39 talking and I have a number of questions, but I'm
40 not going to ask them now --

41 DIANE LILLEY: Okay.

42 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: -- because it's eight o'clock.

43 DIANE LILLEY: Yeah.

44 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: And we -- I'll talk to you
45 because there might be another way that I can ask
46 those questions --

47 DIANE LILLEY: Yeah.

Hearing - Public**Diane Lilley, Florence Washpan****Joy O'Brien, Judith Kuster, Sa-Na-Kerri O'Brien
(Tina Washpan)**

1 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: -- maybe with a statement taker
2 or something --
3 DIANE LILLEY: Yes.
4 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: -- so that they're on the record,
5 and they're just clarification of certain
6 things --
7 DIANE LILLEY: Yeah,
8 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: -- that you've said, so -- but
9 I'm going to suggest to the Commissioners that we
10 call this a day in terms of Diane Lilley's
11 testimony.
12 DIANE LILLEY: What about this?
13 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Well, I'm going to see what the
14 Commissioners have to say --
15 DIANE LILLEY: Okay.
16 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: -- so it's not totally my
17 decision. Hello. Hello.
18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: [inaudible].
19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Oh, yeah.
20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah, but it's eight o'clock.
21 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Yeah. Yeah. So you've got the
22 recommendations, is that what it is, that you
23 haven't said yet?
24 DIANE LILLEY: Yeah.
25 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Okay.
26 DIANE LILLEY: But can I just say one more thing? You
27 know, when was it that we did this? I can't
28 remember. I actually --
29 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Two years ago.
30 DIANE LILLEY: Two years ago, I actually got a hold of
31 Bob Blahun. I had talked to him --
32 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That was my question.
33 DIANE LILLEY: Yes, and I actually got to meet him,
34 and I had requested for him to come up so that my
35 family and I would like to meet him personally
36 and to thank you for bringing closure to myself
37 and my family. And we had -- with Kayreen
38 Britner (phonetic) over here, with her assistance
39 they -- we got together and we flew him and his
40 wife up here, and we had a gathering with all my
41 family and him, and we presented him with gifts,
42 and it was so awesome. It was the best moment
43 I've ever had to shake the man hands, you know,
44 who kept this going and bring closure to my
45 family -- for my family.
46 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: I think there was a newspaper
47 article about that with a picture?

Hearing - Public**Diane Lilley, Florence Washpan****Joy O'Brien, Judith Kuster, Sa-Na-Kerri O'Brien
(Tina Washpan)**

1 DIANE LILLEY: Yes, I do have it, but I don't have it
2 here. So, yeah, yeah, there is. I actually was
3 presented with the pictures, and the album
4 actually was made up as a gift for me from
5 Kayreen and the RCMPs here, and they actually
6 told me this is the first that anyone has ever
7 done this to any investigators. That's what I
8 was hearing. So I don't know, but for me it was
9 a great thing to do to honour him, and it was the
10 best thing ever to shake his hand --

11 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: I bet.

12 DIANE LILLEY: -- and hug him. And I cried. I cried.
13 It brought lots of tears to my eyes for this.
14 And I had all my family there, all my family
15 members, and some of the other RCMPs in the
16 detachment were there, too, and the
17 investigators, the M Division, they were all
18 there, and I -- we invited them all, too, for
19 this because for me it was something I wanted to
20 do. And that's all I have to say.

21 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Wow, that is the most amazing
22 story. I just -- what a sister, what a sister
23 you are. I can't even imagine the strength it
24 must have taken to be the sister that you are,
25 the grandma that you are, the mother that you
26 are. I just really, really want to honour
27 everything you've done from being a little girl.
28 I have lots of questions about how old you
29 were when you were apprehended, when you were in
30 the care in the different schools, when you went
31 to the United States, so I'm going to make sure
32 that your -- that counsel asks all those
33 questions to you. We'll get those dates
34 specifically, okay?

35 DIANE LILLEY: Yes.

36 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Okay.

37 DIANE LILLEY: Yeah.

38 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: I can't leave tonight without
39 knowing about your little brother. Where is he?

40 DIANE LILLEY: My little brother --

41 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Yeah.

42 DIANE LILLEY: -- Delainy?

43 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Yeah.

44 DIANE LILLEY: He is now in Carmacks.

45 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Uh-huh.

46 DIANE LILLEY: I go see him all the time.

47 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Okay.

Hearing - Public**Diane Lilley, Florence Washpan****Joy O'Brien, Judith Kuster, Sa-Na-Kerri O'Brien****(Tina Washpan)**

1 DIANE LILLEY: I go visit him all the time.
2 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Okay.
3 DIANE LILLEY: But right now he is in -- he's living
4 in Carmacks. He's living in my mother's house.
5 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Uh-huh.
6 DIANE LILLEY: He got that. Because he was the baby I
7 feel that it's only right that he gets it, he
8 gets everything from her.
9 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Okay.
10 DIANE LILLEY: So he's doing good. And when I went
11 down this past weekend for -- we did -- my
12 cousin, Darlene, and her son, we had their
13 headstone potlatch --
14 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Ah.
15 DIANE LILLEY: -- and that was like -- you know, it
16 was like bang, bang, bang for me. I've been
17 going. And I went down Friday and I thought,
18 right on, I can go see my brother and spend time
19 with him. But he wasn't there. He actually put
20 himself in wilderness camp --
21 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Oh.
22 DIANE LILLEY: -- up in Pelly, in the bush, so I never
23 got to see him, and then I came right back Sunday
24 after everything was done in Carmacks.
25 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: And, Diane, did you tell -- did
26 you say that your mother didn't speak English?
27 DIANE LILLEY: No, she was the eldest of her siblings
28 --
29 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Okay.
30 DIANE LILLEY: -- and she never spoke English or write
31 until later on.
32 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Okay.
33 DIANE LILLEY: What year was it that she went to
34 school? I can't remember. She went to school.
35 They had school.
36 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: [inaudible] 1978 to 1980
37 [inaudible].
38 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Okay.
39 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: [inaudible].
40 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Okay.
41 DIANE LILLEY: Okay.
42 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Okay.
43 DIANE LILLEY: In Carmacks. It was 1978 to 19 --
44 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: '80.
45 DIANE LILLEY: -- '80s they had classes. Like, then
46 it was called vocational --
47 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Yes.

Hearing - Public

Diane Lilley, Florence Washpan

Joy O'Brien, Judith Kuster, Sa-Na-Kerri O'Brien

(Tina Washpan)

1 DIANE LILLEY: -- Not Yukon --
2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: [inaudible].
3 DIANE LILLEY: Blade (phonetic) School.
4 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Okay.
5 DIANE LILLEY: It was called Blade School. And so all
6 the Elders there went to school --
7 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Okay.
8 DIANE LILLEY: -- to learn to speak English.
9 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Okay.
10 DIANE LILLEY: And my mother, she went there. She
11 learned to speak English, and she learned to sign
12 her
13 name --
14 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Okay.
15 DIANE LILLEY: -- and she learned to -- and started
16 reading.
17 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: And started to read?
18 DIANE LILLEY: Yeah, she learned to start reading,
19 too, but that was very difficult for her --
20 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Okay.
21 DIANE LILLEY: -- because, you know, she was an Elder
22 then.
23 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: It's a hard language to --
24 DIANE LILLEY: But I'm very proud of her. You know,
25 she was a strong woman through everything.
26 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Mm-hm.
27 DIANE LILLEY: She is a very wonderful woman. You
28 know, I always thought, you know, what goes
29 through my head is that sometimes I wonder what
30 my life would be like if I was raised by my
31 mother instead of going through all of this --
32 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Mm-hm.
33 DIANE LILLEY: -- you know?
34 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Mm-hm.
35 DIANE LILLEY: But when I came back from the States
36 and I met my mother, I found her to be a very
37 loving, caring, wonderful woman, a great teacher
38 for me because the first thing I said to her was,
39 "No matter what I went through, Mom, I love you."
40 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Mm-hm.
41 DIANE LILLEY: "With all my heart, I loved you,
42 even when I was gone, I was going through
43 everything, I loved you. I always love you
44 because you gave me life. You're the one that
45 carried me, and that's why. If it weren't for
46 you today I wouldn't be here." I always told her
47 that. Even in her death bed I told her I always

Hearing - Public**Diane Lilley, Florence Washpan****Joy O'Brien, Judith Kuster, Sa-Na-Kerri O'Brien****(Tina Washpan)**

1 loved her no matter what.

2 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: So when you came to the meeting
3 the last time we were in Whitehorse, you told the
4 story about having to sell everything to get to
5 go to the trial and to just be able to stay
6 there, and I remember that story so well because
7 I'm thinking where are -- and do you remember I
8 said to you, who are the Rosa Parks of Canada?
9 Who -- Rosa Parks was a woman in the United
10 States that said I'm not sitting in the back of
11 the bus anymore, and she just said I demand to be
12 treated as well as everybody else. And the day
13 that you stood up in court and said I demand that
14 you use my sister's name, I loved her, she's a
15 human being, you need to address her with her
16 name, I just will never forget that. That's
17 strength, and voice, and courage, and I just -- I
18 just want to commend you again for that and just
19 say thank you, thank you for being strong enough
20 to say don't take my sisters, where are my
21 sisters, you can't have my grandchildren, I'm --
22 I just -- I just want the women and families
23 hearing this to hear that part of your story.

24 And the other piece that I just want to
25 highlight is the fact that you're talking about
26 the police officers that we rely on that do the
27 work that needs to be done, and that you needed
28 him, you needed him to be that person, and that
29 he turned it into a question, a story that said,
30 what would I do if that was my child, and so I
31 just want to put an extra thank you out there for
32 sharing that. Thank you so much.

33 DIANE LILLEY: Yeah, thank you.

34 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Kiya (phonetic), do you have
35 any questions or comments.

36 KIYA: No, I don't. Thank you.

37 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: A lot of the questions I had
38 as well are questions that we can follow up with,
39 you know.

40 DIANE LILLEY: Yeah.

41 COMMISSIONER ROBINSON: But I do want to thank you
42 very much for coming and sharing with us.

43 DIANE LILLEY: Okay.

44 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Counsel will also deal with the
45 fact that there are other people here who wanted
46 to share and make sure that we listen to them and
47 find a way that that will happen down the road,

Hearing - Public**Diane Lilley, Florence Washpan****Joy O'Brien, Judith Kuster, Sa-Na-Kerri O'Brien****(Tina Washpan)**

1 perhaps.

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: [inaudible].

3 DIANE LILLEY: Can I read these out?

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: [inaudible].

5 DIANE LILLEY: No, I wanna do it now.

6 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: She wants to read it out.

7 DIANE LILLEY: [indiscernible] do it now because I am

8 here now, so --

9 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: It's not for me to argue with

10 this lady.

11 DIANE LILLEY: -- and I don't wanna -- what was it you

12 said, now?

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: [inaudible].

14 DIANE LILLEY: Okay. These are the recommendations I
15 wrote down. I would like to read it. Number one
16 I put on here, financial support for missing and
17 murdered families' family members, and travel,
18 rooms, meals and phone minutes and every other
19 support through -- because when I was going
20 through this I had to sell all -- a lot of stuff,
21 my truck, everything so that I could just make it
22 for the trial and for court. And I asked for
23 that, for financial support for the families is
24 because I had a hard time and we struggled, but
25 we did it.

26 And another one is ongoing counselling
27 support and 24 hours for the family members.

28 And a more serious investigation by RCMPs
29 and the justice system, that's another one.

30 And regular updates by the RCMPs, open
31 conversations.

32 I also have, c), collaborative solutions
33 team. I have "e.g." beside that that's -- under
34 "e.g." I have mental health, Victim -- Victim
35 Services, probation officers, [indiscernible],
36 alcohol and drug services, social services, legal
37 counsellors, First Nation court workers,
38 Corrections rep, they should be all working
39 together in this, and a liaison navigator, and
40 respect and compassion for the family members.

41 And last but not least, stop using
42 dehumanizing language during investigations,
43 court or documents. Have respect for all people.
44 And we, as First Nations Women's (sic), are
45 dealing with lots, and we need respect. We need
46 to stop the violence. We need to focus on that
47 in Canada -- not only in Canada, it's going on

Hearing - Public**Diane Lilley, Florence Washpan****Joy O'Brien, Judith Kuster, Sa-Na-Kerri O'Brien
(Tina Washpan)**

1 all around the world. We need to start educating
2 about violence in the school system. We need to
3 start from there. From our babies at a young
4 age, we need to start teaching them to stop
5 violence and stop hurting our women's because
6 women are -- they are the life -- they're the
7 life-givers. They give life, and they also are
8 the caregivers of the family. They're the
9 pedestal. They're what holds the family
10 together, and we need our women's and children
11 First Nation to be safe no matter where we're at.

12 And I'd like to thank you for being here,
13 and thank you, it was a long time coming, and
14 thank you very much for coming to hear our story.
15 Thank you.

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: [inaudible].

17 DIANE LILLEY: Oh, yeah. Now I'm going on holidays.

18 WENDY VAN TONGEREN: Thank you very much, Diane.

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: [inaudible].

20 DIANE LILLEY: She was 21 -- she was 21 when her life
21 was taken, she was stolen from us. And this is
22 the only picture I have of her --

23 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Wow.

24 DIANE LILLEY: And other that that, I treasure it. I
25 treasure it. I have it -- this picture is
26 sitting in my living room, and every morning I'd
27 get up, I'd go to look at her and I said, you
28 know, I'm gonna see you one day again. You know,
29 I pray and I believe in my creator, my higher
30 power, and I believe, you know, that everything
31 has happened for a purpose, you know, for a
32 reason. But I love my sister. She is loved, and
33 her family will always love her. We'll always
34 love her. She'll always be in memories and in my
35 heart. Thank you, that's all I have to say.

Fifth Hearing Exhibit**Diane Lilley, Florence Washpan, Joy O'Brien,
39 Judith Kuster, Sa-Na-Kerri O'Brien (Family of Tina
40 Washpan)**

41
42 Exhibit P1: Colour photograph of young First Nations
43 woman in white coat or shirt; young woman said to
44 be Tina Washpan, approx. 9 x 12 inches.

45
46 COMMISSIONER POITRAS: Okay. Thank you so much, and

Hearing - Public**Diane Lilley, Florence Washpan****Joy O'Brien, Judith Kuster, Sa-Na-Kerri O'Brien****(Tina Washpan)**

1 just to end, we're going -- we're going to give
2 you ladies a packet of seeds. So we didn't get
3 to hear from everybody, but we want to hear from
4 everybody, and so Wendy is going to talk to you
5 about how to get your stories to us, how we can
6 do that.

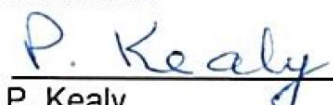
7 The seeds are just the Commission's just
8 really gentle way to say thank you for the
9 stories, and it's our gift back to you.

10 We're going to adjourn for the day. See
11 everybody at nine...

12
13 (PROCEEDINGS ADJOURNED TO JUNE 1, 2017 AT
14 9:00 A.M.)
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LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST'S CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that this is a true and accurate transcript of these proceedings recorded on sound recording apparatus, transcribed to the best of my skill and ability in accordance with applicable standards.



P. Kealy
Court Transcriber

May 31, 2017