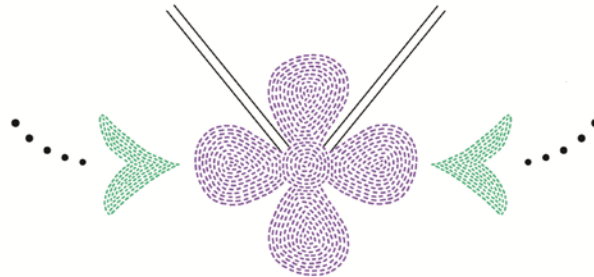


National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls



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 One: Truth gathering sessions
Maison de la famille
Maliotenam/Uashat mak Mani-Utenam, Quebec**



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**Statement - Volume No. 131(a)
Pierre Paul Niquay**

Statement taken by Sheila Mazhari

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Documents provided by the witness: none

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NOTE

The use of square brackets [] in this transcript indicates that modifications have been made to the certified transcript in order to complete certain passages deemed to be inaudible or indecipherable by the original transcriber. The text was completed by listening to the original recording of the session. These modifications were made by Marie-Audrey Girard, legal counsel for the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. The corrections were made by Ms. Girard on July 23, 2018, in Edmonton, Alberta.

1 Maliotenam, Quebec

2 --- The statement begins on Monday, November 27, at 4:00
3 p.m.

4 **Ms. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Hello, my name is Sheila
5 Mazhari, and I work for the National Inquiry into Missing
6 and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. Today is November
7 27, 2017. I am speaking with Pierre Paul Niquay of Manawan.
8 We are in Maliotenam, in Quebec. The other people present
9 are [Edwin Guisma] (inaudible). Your testimony will be
10 recorded with audio and video. Please confirm that you
11 agree to this.

12 **Mr. PIERRE PAUL NIQUAY:** Yes, I agree to this
13 procedure.

14 **Ms. SHEILA MAZHARI:** O.K. When you're ready,
15 you may begin.

16 **Mr. PIERRE PAUL NIQUAY:** All right. My
17 presentation is in two parts. The first part is to complete
18 the ~~Bishaquan~~ [Echaquan] family's presentation from this
19 morning. I ended up acting as an interpreter there, which
20 meant that I was not able to speak during my in-laws'
21 presentation, but I was offered the opportunity to do so in
22 another session, namely this session. And I'd like to
23 expand on what I wasn't able to talk about this morning.
24 The other part will be much more focused on the question of
25 the general violence to which women and girls are subjected

1 in our community in particular, which is Manawan.

2 **Ms. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Manawan.

3 **Mr. PIERRE PAUL NIQUAY:** With that being
4 said, there's an idea or a recommendation that I'd like to
5 make to the commissioners, and to all the governments at
6 the federal, provincial, territorial and indigenous levels.
7 I propose that we declare a special day for the babies who
8 have gone missing. There are women's days, there are
9 National Indigenous Peoples' Days, there's a way to keep
10 this sad reality in our collective memory, and for that we
11 propose an official date for an international indigenous
12 children's day, for the indigenous babies who have been
13 lost. In their memory, in memory of the families, but also
14 in memory of later generations. And with that being said,
15 I'd also like for there to be some official assistance to
16 help the families who have lost their babies to join
17 together, and for them to designate or appoint
18 representatives who will speak for them to avoid any kind
19 of political or administrative distortion on this question
20 of the babies who have been lost. There have been a number
21 of commissions, and we've never seen the recommendations
22 being implemented. Personally, I want to see this approach
23 result in a recommendation being implemented, namely, to
24 continue all the work that has already been started, the
25 work that's happening right now, but that should continue

1 in the future. Once an officially recognized association
2 has been established for the families of the lost babies,
3 I'd like, I hope and I recommend that governments at all
4 levels should collaborate, cooperate to set up permanent
5 special programs to support the survivors in those
6 families. And I might mention Health Canada here. Please,
7 work with families, who will first identify their actual
8 needs, to develop programs that will be there for many
9 years. The same thing for Indian Affairs. There are
10 options, and we know about them because there's a lot of
11 mobilization. We're going to need spaces. We're going to
12 need ways to communicate. We're going to need money for
13 transportation, meals, everything relating to logistics we
14 need... We have an idea, we know it's going to take financial
15 resources because the families have already taken on a
16 large part of it, but there are more and more families who
17 are going to come to us with tragic situations of losing a
18 child, and they have needs. Then, in Universities, there
19 are indigenous people who already have their bachelors'
20 degrees. Let's offer them graduate studies, [Master's], on
21 the subject of (inaudible) [of healing]. We're tired of
22 having white consultants come through, wrecking everything
23 and leaving our communities in chaos. Then they leave, and
24 we're left with more wounds to tend to. We've had more than
25 enough, we call them "the chaos-bringers" now. We don't

1 want them in our communities anymore. We have our own
2 healers and our own people who have the ability, the skill.
3 We just need to enrich that resource, and it will make a
4 much better contribution because they'll be working with
5 their families. Nobody, no reasonable indigenous person I
6 know is going to intentionally go in and create chaos and
7 then leave. So with that said: I'm ready. I've got my
8 bachelor's. I'm ready to take action and I want to get a
9 master's degree in the field of healing. Let's encourage
10 that. I'm a survivor of the residential schools, and my in-
11 laws have someone, a baby that they lost, and I also have a
12 female cousin who was murdered 40 years ago. I think I have
13 enough elements to put together a life plan that aims at
14 bringing harmony back to my family and the community and,
15 by extension, to the nation, and work hard to develop as
16 well, I've been doing it for twenty years in the field of
17 healing. Mr. Gabikeshemunts helped me to develop those
18 resources. We've got healing ceremonies. We can't find much
19 money. We ask ourselves how it can be that a consultant who
20 goes and gives a two-hour conference gets paid \$5000. We
21 pay for two days' travel and all of his meals, his lodging,
22 and we also give him a very valuable gift, whereas
23 indigenous people, often, we go somewhere to help and we
24 have trouble on the road, we have trouble getting back home
25 because they say there aren't enough financial resources. I

1 feel it would be much better to make big changes in
2 policies in order to favour the use of indigenous
3 resources. The skills are already there. So, personally,
4 I'd also like to see us make improvements to the program
5 for community ~~centre~~ [health] representatives. This program
6 was recommended in the 60's by the World Health
7 Organization, and there have been cuts to it for a number
8 of years now. There was a national organization of Indian
9 and Inuit representatives, and they've made cuts to that.
10 I've been told that certain communities have gotten rid of
11 this position. Why... After all, we have experience, we have
12 knowledge, and I believe in this program. So much so that
13 we even want to enhance it with a territorial aspect. So,
14 community and territorial health representatives. The other
15 thing that I want to recommend as far as missing and
16 murdered people go has to do with misuse of the Internet,
17 which often causes trouble in families because these social
18 media networks have become a powerful influence in our
19 collective consciousness. In our experience, this results
20 in harmful behaviour that has a public aspect, and this
21 harmful behaviour becomes a hindrance to police search
22 efforts. One of my nephews went missing seven years ago,
23 and there was a certain level of confusion on social media.
24 It's the same thing for Lemantachi. About a month ago, and
25 the things people are saying on social media are

1 outrageous. They are hurtful and even insulting. So we need
2 some guidelines and at all levels in communities, in all
3 communities, but also for the province and the country. We
4 have an obligation to face this reality. For me, it's a
5 system of individual responsibilities, but also one of
6 collective responsibilities. So, the Internet can make a
7 positive contribution by sending out alerts, like a code-
8 orange alert when a woman is missing, whether it's in
9 Saskatchewan or in Quebec, or any person who's reported
10 missing, so that people know that someone has been reported
11 missing. There are other tools, we have some education to
12 do in this area. I think they (~~inaudible~~) [have a term for
13 this]: the "net ticket." So, a code of conduct for our
14 digital lives. I'm in favour of that. So, that covers the
15 part that I had wanted to contribute this morning, and for
16 the other point that I want to... My father-in-law and my
17 mother-in-law are often sick, they're older. They travel
18 from Manawan to Joliette, and often my mother-in-law has
19 more days where she has to stay in the hospital, and they
20 tell my father-in-law: Hey, you've got to go back home,
21 there's no money, we can't pay. After what they did to them
22 regarding their child, ~~Teneshekwan~~ [Laurianne Echaquan]. I
23 think that as a minimum level of respect, Health Canada
24 needs to review their criteria, their policies. They say
25 that my father-in-law is too old to take care of my mother-

1 in-law. He is old, and he's able to take care of himself
2 and take care of my mother-in-law. That criterion becomes a
3 form of negative discrimination, and he suffers from it. It
4 seems to me that each case should be evaluated to see if
5 the people are able to take care of their spouses, and
6 that's the criterion that should take precedence instead of
7 saying: You're over 65 years old, you can't accompany your
8 spouse anymore. Especially in cases with couples who have
9 lost their child, possibly due to government
10 irresponsibility. So, I don't want to blame anyone or make
11 any judgements, but let's acknowledge the facts and
12 determine what actions we need to take. It's realism, pure
13 and simple, but so beneficial. So, for now, that completes
14 the first part of my testimony. And I hope that you listen
15 in a way that reflects the greatness of our country, which
16 [up until] now hasn't been the case. I have a little
17 message: my grandmother taught me something about the
18 truth, which is what we're looking for right now. She told
19 me: Never put a lie between you and me, because that lie is
20 going to swallow up your life, and you won't be the master
21 of your life anymore, you'll be a slave to your own lies.
22 How many governments are slaves to their own lies, I
23 wonder? But I'll leave it to you to answer that. Thank you.

24 **Ms. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Thank you.

25 **Mr. PIERRE PAUL NIQUAY:** First part.

1 there. That's what she did. When she got there, she was
2 with a government officer, and you can find that testimony.
3 She met with elders on our territory and she gave testimony
4 about that. And she said: When we got to the house, she
5 said there were these sickening odours, and there were
6 elders who came from another community, and there was an
7 elder who had died. The elder she was looking for, she said
8 she was in her... she was wet and she was in her own feces
9 and she cried. The government officer too. He was angry.
10 They cleaned her up, changed her, and they got her ready to
11 take the train. That's the part she told me. As for me, I
12 remember how my grandmother made us walk from one camp to
13 another in Sarmor (ph.). We were a bit scattered, inviting
14 the adults, the women to come and welcome the elder. It was
15 a foggy morning, and we could hear the train. I could
16 already kind of see the adults getting excited, they were
17 eager to see the elder. The train slowed down, it stopped,
18 and we saw my cousin waving to us and signalling. She came
19 to the door and she said: She's here, but we'll need a
20 blanket and four men to carry her. Four men got onto the
21 train and we could see them moving around, and at some
22 point the woman, it was Anne-Marie Awashish Laroche, my
23 cousin who had been given this assignment by my
24 grandmother, she said: She's here, she's here. And two men
25 came to the door and we saw this elder who was very thin.

1 There was just a little bit of meat on her, you could see
2 the... It's the kind of image you see in the Jewish
3 concentration camps. And there were women crying when they
4 saw this, and I thought to myself: Is that what it's like
5 to get old? Will I be like that someday? As a child, about
6 four years old. They brought her off the train and the
7 woman's voice was trembling. She said: Don't cry, I'm here.
8 We went with her. There was someone who had a truck and
9 they put her inside. It was like a procession, really. At
10 some point the truck sped up, to keep the elder from
11 getting cold. A few days later... We went to visit on the
12 same day, but she was sleeping, and the days and weeks went
13 by, and we saw that she had some good meat back on her
14 bones and her face was (inaudible). That stuck with me.
15 That was violence. That's extreme. And it's the government,
16 which like lots of people around is there to help, but what
17 have they done to our elders? Add one little thing in that
18 part with the other part I'm getting ready for, it's that
19 my little friend Jean-Marie, when we were little... O.K., a
20 white man killed ~~us~~ [them]. He got into an automobile and
21 he ~~knows~~ [went to] the river and my little friend was in
22 there and I realized that because I saw the body and I
23 remember that my grandmother told me: Your friend is
24 sleeping, [don't make any noise], don't touch him, don't
25 wake him up, and I... I saw the body (~~inaudible~~) [with some

1 sort of wax on his mouth]. And up until 45 years old, I
2 started thinking about that again. (cries) My friend wasn't
3 sleeping; my friend was dead. So, that part, I'm getting
4 ready for our next... It's been my whole life. I'm 58 years
5 old, and when am I going to be happy? When my family is
6 happy, that's when I'm going to be happy. I know that when
7 we pass over into the spirit world, I sense that those
8 spirits want us to stop suffering. I know that they're
9 suffering and crying too. I saw clouds the other day,
10 because I cried before I came here. I was thinking to
11 myself, what words will I choose so I don't cause pain...
12 what words? I said: Can you help me a little? I know you're
13 there. And then I saw clouds forming and they were women,
14 giants, and they were bending down. It was as though they
15 were about to welcome the children who had been lost. And
16 they were leading them there, and that image was comforting
17 for me. I said to myself: I'm living a life and I'm not
18 alone. There are other people around me, and we're
19 suffering greatly. Even though we're in our country. This
20 is a country where the government is [it claims] a champion
21 for rights, for the respect of human rights, champion for
22 rights and freedoms, but it's also a champion torturer, for
23 me, to a certain extent. I'd have to see the numbers on
24 that, but I think: no. Today, they talked a lot about
25 forgiveness. But how do we achieve that? Is the path still

1 there? Am I going to die with this? But despite everything,
2 I think I like what I do. I work in the field of health
3 care and community. Now I use the territory, and I think to
4 myself, the territory is big, it's rich. It's the territory
5 that's going to heal me. It's the water, it's the air. So
6 that's what I wanted to say in my language. (Inaudible).

7 **Ms. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Thank you very much.

8 **Mr. PIERRE PAUL NIQUAY:** Ha, O.K.

9 --- The hearing concluded at 5:09 p.m.
10

11 CERTIFICATION OF TRANSCRIPTION*

12
13 I, Julie Lussier, certify that the present document is a
14 true and accurate transcription of the provided digital
15 recording of the present hearing.

16 

17
18 Julie Lussier, July 12, 2018

19

* This certificate refers to the original transcript in
French.