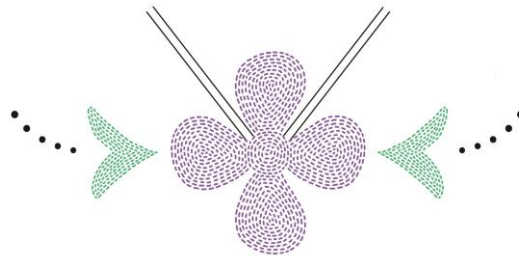


National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls



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: Truth-Gathering Sessions
Maison de la famille
Maliotenam/Uashat mak Mani-Utenam, Quebec**



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Marie-Jeanne André

Heard by Sheila Mazhari

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Heard by:
Sheila Mazhari

List of exhibits: none

1 Upon commencing on Friday, December 1, 2017, at 1:24
2 p.m.

3

4 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** OK?

5 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** It's uh... You're
6 not doing the...

7 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Yes, I'm going to...

8 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** Yes, I'm ready.

9 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Yes, OK.

10 OK. Hello, my name is Sheila Mazhari and I
11 work for the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered
12 Indigenous Women and Girls. It's December 1, 2017, and
13 we're in Maliotenam, Quebec. I'm speaking to André and...

14 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** Marie-Jeanne.

15 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** ... Marie-Jeanne from
16 Maliotenam and the other person with us is Jean-Guy Pinette. And
17 your testimony will be audio and video recorded. Do you consent
18 to this?

19 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** Yes.

20 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** OK.

21 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** When you're ready, you
22 can introduce yourself.

23 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** Uh-huh. I asked
24 Jean-Guy to come support me because we've known each other for a
25 long time. I was there for him when he needed me, and today I

1 need him, and he's good at supporting me. He's a pipe holder and
2 sun dancer for the Kutikuniu Centre too. I have a healing centre
3 that I... I went through a lot before opening it; a journey to
4 heal from sexual abuse... wow! It's hard! (Sobs) I didn't think
5 that by leaving like that I would... (Sighs) See, no matter how
6 much time has passed, how long you've been trying to... Those
7 things come back... It's not pleasant, feeling this way.

8 When I was young, I was abused by the priest in
9 Maliotenam. His name is [Priest]. He's still alive, and he's
10 old. I was 9 when it happened. He brought me to his office. He
11 had an office here, at the presbytery, and uh... and the two
12 other girls were cleaning upstairs and I had to clean his
13 office. He always had handicrafts in his office and he said,
14 "Choose a necklace, choose something, it'll be your reward and
15 after you can wipe off the desk." I didn't understand much
16 French back then, but I understood what he said so I bent over
17 to look at the necklaces, which had Indigenous designs. That's
18 when he grabbed me from behind and it's like I can't remember
19 what he did, but I... (Sobs) It's like I built up a wall inside
20 me. And I can feel his breath, everything he did, but I can't
21 feel what he was doing to me... I blocked it. It's like I could
22 have protected myself, but I was powerless, frozen, paralyzed.
23 After he was done... We wore little cotton skirts from the
24 residential school, and... I ran. There was fresh sperm... I
25 didn't know what it was at the time.

1 But I ran to my grandmother's, and when I got there I
2 wanted to say something, but I couldn't. In the end I just said,
3 "The priest." And I showed her my skirt. She knew what it was.
4 Then she got up and she was angry. She left. She took her apron
5 off and she left, walking fast. I had left my sandals behind at
6 the presbytery, and I was following my grandmother and... we
7 went in and I grabbed my sandals and my grandmother started
8 yelling at him. She said, "(Speaking in an Indigenous
9 language)." That's what I heard her saying. Then I ran back to
10 her place, because I used to spend all my weekends at my
11 grandparents' place, but I was there during the week. That's
12 where he would come get us... To go do his cleaning. But at
13 first, I could feel it too, I hadn't realized at the time, but
14 looking back... At first, when he came to the residential
15 school, he would always say, "Hello my darling." You
16 understand? I would say, "He's nuts, you know, he's crazy!"
17 So after that happened, whenever he'd go there, I'd always hide
18 and I would stay hidden until he had gone, until he was done
19 talking to the nuns and girls. I would hide. It happened one
20 time and uh... I didn't want to...

21 I didn't know about those things... What those things
22 were. Until I talked to a girl in my group of friends, at the
23 residential school, and she said that a priest was abusing her
24 at night. She said, "Come sleep with me." And, "I'm scared at
25 night." So we were scared, but we wanted to help her. There were

1 four of us girls. That's when I heard the word *abuse* for the
2 first time. So that's it, the years went by... I kept that to
3 myself, and pretended to be OK, but I still thought about it all
4 the time. I couldn't sleep well, and I was always scared that he
5 would come in the night with the... Whenever I heard the nun
6 walking around the dorms at night, I always felt unsafe.

7 So at one point... I stayed at the residential school for
8 a long time; I started at 9 and left there at 15. When I left,
9 the younger children were still there. So that caused me to keep
10 to myself when I was a teenager, to be quiet, to run off
11 whenever someone talked about kissing, fondling, boys... It
12 scared me so much. So my grandfather, my father, he would often
13 send me back when... There was a conflict between me and my
14 mother, and my brothers, my sisters, and my father. During the
15 summer holidays I tried to reconnect with them, but it seemed
16 impossible. So I was unhappy when I was there. Then one of my
17 brothers also dared to... I woke up and he was masturbating in
18 front of me. So that's another thing that I absorbed. So it was
19 hard. I told my father and he hit my brother who had dared...
20 who had disrespected his sister, a girl. Because there were a
21 lot of boys in our family. After that my father said, "You're
22 going to your grandmother's. You're going to your grandmother's;
23 you'll be safer there." So I went back to residential school and
24 I spent my weekends at my grandmother's. It's always the same
25 thing. When I was old enough to get married, well, other things

1 happened. My husband was very violent and he beat me up all the
2 time. He was very jealous and uh... Even when I was pregnant, I
3 felt like it was dirty in the house, my children... I felt
4 terrible. All of that made me feel broken. It's like I felt
5 unworthy of being a mother. So that really broke my life. I
6 didn't know it would be terrible. So as I grew older, I got fed
7 up of living with violence, and I was fed up of not feeling
8 good. So I moved here. I went back to Schefferville and to my
9 parents' place. That's where I married a Greek guy. After
10 that... When I came back here in 1983, my friends greeted me at
11 the train station. It said, "Welcome Manishan." That made me
12 happy, because in Innu my name is Manishan. Even that, I would
13 always sign "Marie-Jeanne André," but they also changed my name,
14 I don't know when... Our last name used to be Kapeshe. Until
15 1942, my father's last name was Kapeshe. I don't know when it got
16 changed to André. That really bothers me too; everything that
17 the government did, imposed on us. It all impacts us; we haven't
18 been the same since. It's not just what's going on now; the
19 missing and murdered women. We're all missing and murdered
20 inside too, and we feel bad when we ask for something; we always
21 feel like we're begging the government. I have a healing centre
22 and it's thanks to that that I opened a healing centre. All my
23 pain, my journey, my healing process. It's all of that. I was
24 thinking of the others who were like me, because I think I'm one
25 of the first to speak out against the sexual abuse that happened

1 at the residential school. And it was with [D.L.], the
2 psychologist. He said, "You could help a lot of people." I said,
3 "No, not right now." When I finally felt ready, I went to see
4 him and said, "OK. I'm ready!" He came with me to the community
5 radio station, SOCAM. At the time, it hadn't been open for very
6 long (speaking an Indigenous language).

7 **MR. JEAN-GUY PINETTE:** Socam.

8 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** Socam is a radio
9 station that all the communities know about and listen to. That
10 was the first time I spoke out about it. I was scared, as if I
11 was the bad guy, as if I was the one who had abused a little
12 girl. I felt so terrible. I was scared, so scared. I was
13 sweating, and I said, "Oh my God! Doing this is making me feel
14 terrible." When I started talking about the priest who abused me
15 when I was 9 years old, I could see the radio host getting
16 really uncomfortable, like he didn't know how to sit anymore. I
17 started thinking, "Is he listening to me or is he
18 distracted?" But the truth is, it didn't matter whether he was
19 listening to me or not, the goal was to get the message out. And
20 I was scared of being heard, scared that my people would
21 criticize me, judge me, because... there's a lot of judgment
22 here, a lot of criticism, a lot of... of belittling, a lot of
23 disrespect. A lot of it. It's a plight in our community. That's
24 why we can't grow together. We're always bitching about one
25 another, and we get jealous of one another. So you can't go

1 forward; you have to step aside, keep your head down and keep
2 going. So when I got home, the phone started ringing and it was
3 the older women saying, "You crazy bitch! How dare you say that
4 about the priest who works for God, who blessed you, who
5 baptized you!" Ouch! I was scared, oh my God, I was so scared,
6 and I was panicking. I was alone at home. Some time after that,
7 I was driving someone to the airport, and an older woman said,
8 "You, ever since you've come back here..." Ouch! I was upset. It
9 was taboo... I knew that would happen, but I hadn't realized how
10 badly people would attack me. So I kept doing my own thing
11 without getting too... But there was something heavy inside me:
12 their judgment and... Because that was new, you know, we hardly
13 ever heard about stuff like that. At some point, a few months
14 later, or some time later, I don't know. Time, dates, all
15 that... I don't remember any of that. I was watching TV and I
16 saw the government saying that Chief Phil Fontaine was going to
17 make an extraordinary statement about what he experienced in
18 residential school. So I watched it and that's when he revealed
19 that he had been abused. I was so happy! Do you understand? I
20 wasn't happy because he was abused, but because an important
21 person talked about it like I did. I felt a sense of freedom,
22 and that's what allowed me. I said to myself, "Well, I'm going
23 to do things in my community!" I thought about how much my
24 father had given me, and how much my mother had given me. I
25 remember the first six years of my life very well. Both my

1 grandmothers, you know, I have a lot of tools. So after that, I
2 decided to get the tools. So I went to... I met a woman, Dr.
3 [L.M.] from Ontario. I went to her, and she treated me, she
4 healed me. She took care of me for six months, she made me feel
5 better. So I'd travel back and forth; she taught me things and
6 she gave me my cedar bath. She said, "I'll give you a cedar
7 bath, but at the same time, I'm teaching you so that you can
8 free your people in Quebec. And you'll be the only one in Quebec
9 who has learned this." The cedar bath freed me from the sexual
10 abuse and the violence; it released everything, all the memories
11 that had been stuck in my brain. It's like it came out, but I
12 didn't get rid of it, it's still there, and when I need it, like
13 right now, I can take it from inside me so that you can feel my
14 truth, my healing. After that, I went to get more medicine. She
15 gave me lots of medicines and said, "Now go adapt what you've
16 learned for the good of your people." She said, "You're not
17 (indiscernible), you're Innu." So now, all the stuff I
18 learned... I went back and forth for six years, and she died a
19 year ago. We went together, me and him, because they knew each
20 other. She said, "Now that you've been cared for, it's your turn
21 to... open your healing centre." And she said, "Don't let anyone
22 else get involved, because it's hard..." Like I said earlier,
23 everyone gets jealous, everyone wants to tear others down...
24 It's a sickness in our community that we have to heal. And we
25 can take care of that, we have tools for that, we have tools to

1 uh... heal the abusers, heal the abused. We provide all types of
2 care; we have a healing program. Our centre is called: Abri pour
3 la nuit, Kutikuniu. It's 6 km east of here, east from Pointe de
4 Moisie. It's a former community, where we used to live, where
5 our parents used to live, and they got chased out to Malio. I
6 bought some buildings there. But Indigenous Affairs, the
7 Canadian government, doesn't recognize it. They subsidize it,
8 but they say that they subsidize just because, I don't know
9 which column we belong in, there's never been a healing centre
10 like that before, it's the only one in Canada. There are no
11 others like it because I created it based on our needs, our
12 values, here, our traditions, all... everything. Even for the
13 treatments, it's difficult. We have to prepare people before
14 treating them; they really need to adapt, to assimilate. After,
15 we give treatments that we take. And sometimes the... That's
16 what I want to suggest to the government, to the Commission,
17 that they inject money, a lot of money, so that we can... When
18 we finish our program, we want to follow our traditions, we want
19 to go in the bush. But for me to go in the bush, I would need a
20 teacher to teach the people who come after they've been healed.
21 OK? Then, I have a linguist. The language is getting lost and
22 I'd like a teacher for that. Since I've opened my centre, I've
23 encountered a range of needs that haven't been met. But it would
24 be comprehensive, it would be like an Innu, an *Innuversity*,
25 that's how much we need the money. I can't afford to be afraid

1 to ask. I've begged the government so much; they never increased
2 the funds. Like this morning, we had a conference call with the
3 Indigenous Affairs minister, and once again they made me feel
4 insecure, saying, "We don't know if we're going to be able to
5 keep giving you funds much longer; you'll have to find other
6 people to help you." They're making me doubt myself. That's
7 economic violence! Do you understand? All their terms, they come
8 back to them, the violence we experience, all types of
9 violence... Well, the government is carrying out economic
10 violence, that's their language. So I have to... To grow, to
11 achieve reconciliation, which they keep talking about... I'll
12 never be able to reconcile as long as my people haven't finished
13 their healing process. Give me what I need for my centre: all my
14 teachers who... That's what we need! Give me what I need! And
15 then I'll thank you for helping me rebuild myself and rebuild my
16 world. Do you understand? We've created our own system, based on
17 how we understand things. We don't use papers there! Forget
18 paperwork! Forget anything that's not necessary: look at us with
19 our identity crisis, we're living it here, we're all missing,
20 we've all been killed by them. They have to do their part so
21 that we can reconcile with ourselves before shaking hands with
22 the one that betrayed me, that... I'm accusing the government of
23 lying to my parents, telling them you would take care of me and
24 then not taking care of me. They did all kinds of stuff to me
25 there. They changed me and killed everything I learned from my

1 father. I'm accusing you of all of it: of putting me in that
2 situation. Oh my God! What it did behind our backs is
3 unforgivable. Killing the ambitious people we would have become,
4 the visionaries we would be today, instead of losers living in
5 our communities, doing drugs, drinking, doing nothing, playing
6 bingo, (indiscernible), playing slot machines for days and days
7 and ignoring our responsibilities. I wouldn't have turned out
8 this way if you hadn't lied to my parents. The priests and... Oh
9 my God! The priests and the nuns never had children, how can you
10 expect them to raise children from... Oh! God! It's hard. I
11 still feel bad for my parents. They're still using. Everything
12 is painful... Seeing people belittle each other. Those who go to
13 school come here with their bachelor's degree in... and they
14 look down on us and act like they know everything. I went to
15 university too; I got diplomas to prove that I was someone, that
16 I had potential. This man beside me has made progress as well;
17 he's been following me since he was young. Today, he's doing
18 fine [Ten words redacted - personal information], he does
19 everything... Everyone who comes to see him goes back to school.
20 In the ten years of negotiation with the government, it took ten
21 years for me to get somewhere in the... in their mould to obtain
22 \$250,000 per year. What do you want me to do with that? Eh? With
23 all the people who want to do something after, to pay the
24 teachers, I can't do any of that. It would be full, it would be
25 a nice *Innuversity*, it would bring those people back to the bush

1 or give their children a chance to experience it. You can't do
2 that today. At least, At least, look, him there... At least go
3 in the bush with his children, his grandchildren, his children.
4 He can't do that, but his children will grow up without being
5 able to do any of that. I see the other mothers in my community,
6 we're very poor, culturally, we just have the surface,
7 appearances at a certain time. The will is there, but we can't
8 because we still need a lot of resources. There are a lot of
9 resources from the government, social services, resources... but
10 all already... their budget is already all planned out by the
11 government. Do you understand? But over there, we do things the
12 way we want. That's what the government doesn't like. It can't
13 justify that in its paperwork and its... What is it called? In
14 its accounting, accounting for what we're doing. Go get rocks,
15 you write "rocks": expenses for rocks, geez! You write: expenses
16 for branches, expenses for gathering in... for all the medicines
17 we want to make, we can't. It's quite the story. We can't freeze
18 caribou, fish, game meat. They'll look in the freezer and ask
19 what the expiration date is. Where did it get killed? Where did
20 it get butchered? Oh! God! The system is complicated! Its system
21 doesn't even work for them. How can it be expected to work for
22 us? It makes us sick, it makes its workers sick. The government
23 is just paperwork, paperwork, paperwork. It spends money on
24 paperwork instead of on its people. It works for its society. It
25 should do the bare minimum at least: be receptive to society, to

1 social concerns. There should be that. So with all those things,
2 of course, the Commission, yes, it feels good to get it all out,
3 thank you. You're very patient.

4 But the last time I went through something like this, a
5 hearing about the residential schools, the judge who heard us
6 died. He died from a heart attack. It must have been hard to
7 hear all those things over the years. One of my friends used to
8 do that; she listened to testimonies, helped, like he's doing.
9 And she was exhausted. Sometimes she would get sick and not tell
10 anyone. Do you understand?

11 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Uh-huh.

12 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** It was sad. Oh! God!
13 All that to say that I need help. I need the Commission to come
14 see me in... over there. Come see the people who are there,
15 visit us and ask questions to all the people there. They should
16 come and see what the Kutikuniu Centre's logo is, it's all in
17 there. And here in the Commission's room, I see a lot of people
18 from my centre, and I think that's what made it possible for
19 them to talk, be open, and everything. Do you understand? And
20 what else did I forget? I also wanted to meet someone and...

21 My brother died in a...

22 **MR. JEAN-GUY PINETTE:** (Speaking an
23 Indigenous language.)

24 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** Uh-huh.

25 **MR. JEAN-GUY PINETTE:** (Speaking an

1 Indigenous language) In a detention centre.

2 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** Yes, at the
3 detention centre in Schefferville and I never understood... I'd
4 like that case to be re-examined to figure out what happened,
5 because the last time we went to court, the police called us,
6 from our community, and said, "You should do something. What
7 happened there wasn't normal."

8 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Uh-huh.

9 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** So I said, "OK." We
10 tried to do something through the court and the judge asked,
11 "How did this man die? His hands were tied behind his back; he
12 couldn't have started the fire. How? It's a mystery. That's all
13 I have to say," he said at the time.

14 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Uh-huh.

15 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** So not long after,
16 he sent money to my brother's ex-wife, and then it was over. I'd
17 like to know what happened. Did the police hate him? My brother
18 often told us... That's why I want the case to be reviewed, but
19 I don't know how to do that. My brother used to say, "Oh,
20 Manishan, I'm scared, the police are always after me. They keep
21 saying that they'll get me one day! They'll find a way to get
22 me." And he would always hide when he saw a police car go by.
23 Well, he would run. He would say, "Yes, he's the one working
24 tonight." And, "Sometimes he tries to... I don't know how he
25 does it, but it's like he's trying to get me to go... to the

1 post office to pick up a package. And I know the package
2 contains money... uh, drugs, and if I pick it up, they'll get
3 me. Sometimes they're parked outside when I go check the mail."
4 It's bad, eh? And he said, "To make me look like a drug dealer."
5 And at one point, they got him and he got sent to prison. He
6 beat his girlfriend and she reported him. And that's the night
7 he burned. He died.

8 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** What year was this?

9 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** I don't even know
10 what year that happened. That's why I... When the lawyer told
11 us... I don't even know what the lawyer's name was, can you
12 believe it! I was going through so much back then. Uh... he told
13 us, "Oh my God! We have to do something." But he said, "Look,
14 when you sue the police, the justice system..." He said, "You'll
15 never win. You'll get exhausted, you'll be broken, you'll all
16 get sick. You're better off accepting what they're offering." I
17 said, "They're not offering us anything." He said, "Yes, your
18 sister-in-law got a cheque." But I said, "What do you mean, she
19 got a cheque? She wasn't living with him anymore. That should go
20 to my mother." Because my brother was living with my mother.

21 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Uh-huh.

22 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** But he gave [Five
23 words redacted - personal information] for the coffin and all
24 that. I paid for the coffin and everything. So I would like his
25 case reopened to know if it's possible to get it reviewed.

1 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** He was at the
2 Schefferville detention centre?

3 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** Yes.

4 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** And his name?

5 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** His name? [Brother]

6 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** And I have no idea
7 of the year. '90, '93, I don't know.

8 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Uh-huh.

9 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** We'd have to go see
10 to make sure. And I don't know how to get help for that. Because
11 we experienced traumatic events during the... The body was
12 transferred and we always had to... He was burned to a crisp.
13 And he screamed and... That's why I'd like to see the guard who
14 was on duty that night. He said... When the judge said... When
15 the person who analyzes the materials, I can't remember the
16 name...

17 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** The coroner.

18 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** Yes. About the
19 material in the padded room my brother was in, he said, "That
20 burns in three seconds." Really, that's the worst. When the two
21 police officers put my brother in there, they said one of them
22 went down with a cigarette. I don't know if he threw it in.
23 That's what he told me. But he died too. Yes?

24 **MR. JEAN-GUY PINETTE:** Uh-huh.

25 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** He died too, he got

1 sick.

2 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Did he go to residential
3 school too?

4 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** My brother?

5 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Yes.

6 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** No, he didn't go to
7 residential school. He was too young. My God! There were eight
8 boys in my family, and the three oldest and I went. And the two
9 youngest after me.

10 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** And do you remember what
11 year it was when you were nine and at the residential school? It
12 was in 19...

13 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** Around '59.

14 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** '59...

15 **MR. JEAN-GUY PINETTE:** (Speaking an
16 Indigenous language.)

17 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** (Speaking an
18 Indigenous language) 59-60 (speaking an Indigenous language).
19 Finally...

20 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** You were born in 1950?

21 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** Yes. Yes.

22 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** OK. And...

23 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** I was there for six
24 years.

25 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Uh-huh.

1 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** I went in when I was
2 six and left when I was around 15.

3 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Uh-huh.

4 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** 6-7-8-9-10-11-12-13-
5 14-15, that's it, 9 years.

6 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** And the priest
7 [Priest]...

8 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** Yes.

9 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Is he still alive?

10 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** Yes.

11 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Where does he live? Does
12 he live here?

13 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** He lives in
14 (speaking an Indigenous language).

15 **MR. JEAN-GUY PINETTE:** (Speaking an
16 Indigenous language.)

17 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** He lives in Quebec
18 City.

19 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Uh-huh. What community?

20 **MR. JEAN-GUY PINETTE:** It was the white men,
21 the Whites.

22 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** The residential school
23 was...

24 **MR. JEAN-GUY PINETTE:** Well, he isn't a
25 priest anymore. He left that.

1 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Uh-huh. And the name of
2 the residential school?

3 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** The Maliotenam
4 residential school.

5 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** And no one ever filed a
6 complaint against [Priest]?

7 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** No, but there have
8 been a lot of complaints in the residential school hearings.

9 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** But never...

10 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** We were compensated
11 for that... but that's not what's going to heal us.

12 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** But never with the RCMP
13 or...?

14 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** No.

15 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** No?

16 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** No.

17 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** So he's free now?

18 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** Yes, he's free, and
19 he had many, many victims. The judge told me, "Him again!" And
20 he said, "Do you know you're the 56th one?" Yikes! "Oh my God," I
21 said! You see, I thought I was... I knew there was someone else;
22 we had talked about it and I knew she... that there were two of
23 us, but I had no idea there were so many.

24 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Uh-huh.

25 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** And if all those

1 people could talk freely without being afraid or being judged...
2 That's the barrier for people here, all the judgment. Because
3 they cover up for the abusers here. A lot of people will stand
4 by him and support him. (Speaking an Indigenous language.)

5 **MR. JEAN-GUY PINETTE:** (Speaking an
6 Indigenous language.)

7 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** It's really hard to
8 work together. We have a program on how to heal from abuse as a
9 community, how the abuser can go on a healing journey to one day
10 be able to sit face to face with the person he injured. We have
11 a program for that, but it isn't being used. Here, it's the
12 social services that... It's powerful, it's... all about the
13 money. And we can't do that, we're trained for that, we support
14 each other for that, but we can't. We can't because... We would
15 become too big if we... It's like the world is scared of us
16 becoming visible. It's like the government is afraid that we'll
17 become visible, because often it says, "Listen, that's not
18 useful anymore, you have everything you need. We have all this
19 for free. You're just complicating things now, Marie-Jeanne." It
20 says, "You're making things complicated!" It's not complicated.
21 I want to give my people their culture and identity back. I want
22 to give back what I received when I was young. Do you
23 understand? What I still use to this day. Do you understand?
24 Being Innu, not half, but to think... My children are Métis. OK?
25 They're full; they feel fully Innu and they feel fully Greek.

1 And after that, they connect their children in the
2 multicultural. You understand? That's quite a journey too.

3 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Do your children speak
4 Innu?

5 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** No, that's the
6 thing. Do you see? That's why I need language teachers, because
7 I can't teach it to our children again. Yesterday this guy told
8 me, "Geez, Manishan! You use our ancestors' words a lot." Eh?

9 **MR. JEAN-GUY PINETTE:** Uh-huh.

10 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** I said, "Of course,
11 you never forget that." So, you see, it's all that stuff. I'm a
12 woman who teaches healing. And there are many people that I
13 would like to... There are frauds that try to do what I do, and
14 they find followers. That's what's dangerous; they haven't
15 followed that. I took a class; I learned from a well-known
16 elder. She taught in universities and talked about culture.
17 Nowadays, I often get asked to give talks at universities and
18 conferences. You understand? And I really emphasize that this
19 teaching needs to be recognized. You understand?

20 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Uh-huh.

21 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** The reconciliation,
22 I'm going back to that, if I sow small seeds like that in
23 universities, the students will understand, they'll understand
24 us and our communities. And they say, "Oh my God! We did that to
25 you?" You know. "Still today!" That's the history, Canada's

1 history. That's it. Go over the whole history, everything that
2 happened here, the five days you were there. Show it and teach
3 it in the schools. I'm asking for that, a recommendation: that
4 it be taught so that when children say, "Hey, when the
5 Commission came, they talked about it. Look!" You understand?
6 All the research... They have to say, "Oh! Look at what Manishan
7 has done for the community!" I want everyone to know our
8 history. I worked hard here, in my community. You understand? I
9 got through it... I was disruptive at first, but a teacher told
10 me, "It's good to be disruptive! That's how things change." So
11 he helped me keep going. You understand? So that's it. And there
12 was a lot of appropriation of our values. You understand? You
13 teach white people something and they'll use it to get their
14 lives back; there's a lot, a lot of that. We've been broken by
15 that too. You understand? And I fight for that too. I can't be
16 afraid of being shy, of speaking of it openly; it's reality,
17 it's everyone's reality. So I hope that those who listened to me
18 and my message take it: crucial. It's very important, it's for
19 our survival: help us rebuild, then you won't have a reason to
20 come back. If we rebuild ourselves and understand our history,
21 if we can claim it, if we are able to state our needs, if we can
22 say, "My people are sick. Will you give me this tool? I need
23 it." That's how people who do healing circles envision it. We
24 must heal together, not individually. It takes too long
25 individually. When I'm there, it's every month, from the 1st to

1 the 14th... I didn't book any groups this month because my
2 daughter gave birth and I wanted to be there, and I wanted to
3 come here. For once, I can be with people who are doing
4 something. I never made it before because I had groups. I do it
5 year round, what they're trying to do. I'm not sure if you
6 understand.

7 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Uh-huh.

8 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** What they do here,
9 in the community, once in a while, I do it year round over
10 there. So that's my contribution to society. And it felt good to
11 cry; I hadn't cried in a long time. That morning, I was sitting
12 by myself at the centre, I live there, and I was looking at the
13 river and praying and I thought, "God, give me the words, I
14 don't know what I'm going to say. It's like I've run out of
15 stories, like they've all been extinguished." And then I cried
16 on my own, and I was thinking about him and how he had to
17 support me. You understand? Because he's the only loyal one who
18 comes to help the... Because people know he's a pipe holder, so
19 he comes over and helps my people out. People come for two
20 weeks; they sleep and eat there, and I bought the buildings in
21 2002. And I've existed since then, and it's not Health Canada
22 that's going to announce that I exist. Nor the ministers;
23 they're so scared that people will go there. You understand?
24 It's like an obstacle. Like today, at the meeting I mentioned:
25 "Well, you're off the reserve!" Yikes! It hurts to hear that.

1 Off the reserve. Is it a crime to have a great healing centre?
2 The government tells me, "You're off the reserve; we can't give
3 you too much."

4 **MR. JEAN-GUY PINETTE:** (Indiscernible)

5 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** Yes, when I opened
6 the centre in 2002, I asked his uncle, Eudérick McKenzie, to
7 come for the opening. Michelle Audette was there too, she was
8 hosting, and Indigenous Affairs and Health Canada were there,
9 along with journalists and all the counselors. So I asked Mr.
10 McKenzie, "Would you do the opening ceremony with the drum?" And
11 he said, "Of course I'll do the opening ceremony and play the
12 drum here. This is where I used to run when I was young, in
13 1923, I would gather wood here." He said, "We used to live here;
14 my cousins and I grew up here." And he said, "Each fall, we
15 would take the same river and go into the bush for the year."
16 You understand? He used to live there. He lived here and felt
17 good here. So that's why, when I opened the centre, he said,
18 "Thank you! You're a strong woman! I'll come applaud you! Of
19 course I'll come!" And he also left us a drum. So it's everyone,
20 the elders that come to visit get nostalgic. They say, "Look
21 over there." They remember things. You understand? That's
22 history too. It's a richness that we want to keep for our youth,
23 an inheritance.

24 **MR. JEAN-GUY PINETTE:** Uh-huh.

25 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** Our ancestors used

1 to live there. We went back there to purify ourselves from the
2 inside, mentally and physically. And now we serve the whole
3 province of Quebec. It's a good program. It's for everyone, the
4 four colours: the Yellows, the Asians, the uh... Us, the
5 Indigenous people, the Whites, the Blacks, the Whites. It's
6 quite a program, it's rich. And now we've mastered our program
7 and it's like we're doing our PhD. People heal there, and it's
8 really special. And we take before and after pictures, and even
9 faces are transformed. I know we're all the same; when people
10 arrive there, I welcome them and they feel at home right away.
11 They don't see me as the manager, the owner. No, they'll never
12 get that feeling from me. They'll always... I tell them about my
13 woes too, my suffering, my substance abuse, my... What got me
14 through it when I quit using, well, it was our actions, our... I
15 am what I am today thanks to [L.M.].

16 **MR. JEAN-GUY PINETTE:** (Speaking an
17 Indigenous language.)

18 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** Uh-huh.

19 **MR. JEAN-GUY PINETTE:** (Speaking an
20 Indigenous language.)

21 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** Uh-huh.

22 **MR. JEAN-GUY PINETTE:** (Speaking an
23 Indigenous language.)

24 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** Yes, [L.M.] died
25 last year, her name was [L.M.]. Before she died, she asked that

1 we continue to laugh, dance, cry, be happy. Because at some
2 point in your healing journey, you stop crying! For a long time,
3 you don't cry. And to keep drumming. Because when she died, they
4 put all her sacred items in a community centre. (Speaking an
5 Indigenous language.)

6 **MR. JEAN-GUY PINETTE:** Uh-huh.

7 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** And they removed all
8 the pictures that were there too. That field too; we should go
9 back. There's a lot of work to do on what we were taught; when
10 someone dies, you don't bring them to... In church, you bring
11 them to a place where everyone will feel comfortable. You
12 understand? Not everyone is Catholic, not everyone, you know.
13 Everyone went back... Since she did cedar baths, her coffin was
14 made of natural cedar, and it also had a cedar crown. And all
15 the trees all around were cedars, and there was nothing on the
16 walls, all her items. There were two baskets on her coffin: a
17 basket to take the tobacco and make an offering, your prayers
18 and your worries. When you were done, you put it in the other
19 basket. And they buried the tobacco with her. It's the first
20 thing that they... instead of sand... that goes in first. We
21 watched the whole thing. So those are all things that were...
22 Even about 20 years ago, she said, "The first thing that humans
23 want to heal, when they come to me, is the abuse." And she said,
24 "Abuse is an energy." And, "It's certain that with time, it will
25 come around, like a snowball, and everyone will work on the

1 abuse." And you see, today, throughout the world, abuse is
2 coming out, and here it's coming out too. You understand? Well,
3 that's what she explained. She said that the energy gets
4 stronger when you work together. That's what I said to a girl
5 yesterday, "She said that more than 20 years ago. And now you're
6 talking about it! That's a snowball!" You understand? It started
7 at home, the Innu weren't afraid anymore after the acceptance
8 of... That word, it was taboo before we opened up. They used to
9 say, "Oh, those guys and their abuse. Indians are always talking
10 about abuse..." and all that. You know, residential schools...
11 After that, it's like it became, everywhere in the world now.
12 Everyone's working on abuse because if we spend our time putting
13 them in jail, they'll be the same when they get out of jail. But
14 if they come to our place and let us work with them, they can
15 change, transform and heal that habit. You understand? And the
16 abused, we can also work on... support them in their healing and
17 help them let go of the hate in... Of course what they did was
18 painful, it's like they tarnished us and... The dirt, you had to
19 cry it out with tears to release it, to cleanse it. Tears are
20 like bleach. And I'm glad they're using... Look, it started
21 there, at the centre.

22 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Uh-huh.

23 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** There, we would
24 never put our tears in the garbage.

25 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Uh-huh.

1 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** You know, someone
2 thought about that and... Yesterday, the candles... We do that
3 there too, you know? Someone did that, and lit all the candles.
4 I see people doing a lot of things. So that was my story. I hope
5 I didn't forget anything. If ever you need anything, you can
6 contact me and I can help you with your work too.

7 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Thank you very much. And
8 have you known any girls or women who have gone missing or were
9 murdered in your community or...?

10 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** That's... I don't
11 know. When I was young, I don't know, about 6 or 7... When I was
12 at my grandmother's I used to hear people talk about Anne-Marie
13 who disappeared. It must've been her, the woman who disappeared.
14 And in the summer too, when we were growing up, they would
15 always say, "Don't go down that road, the Whites will take
16 you!" You understand?

17 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Uh-huh.

18 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** That must've been
19 around the time when people went missing. That must be why they
20 would scare us, so that we didn't walk on that road. (Speaking
21 an Indigenous language).

22 **MR. JEAN-GUY PINETTE:** Uh-huh.

23 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** (Speaking an
24 Indigenous language).

25 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** What was the name of the

1 woman who went missing?

2 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** Anne-Marie

3 **MR. JEAN-GUY PINETTE:** Anne-Marie Jourdain

4 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Anne-Marie...

5 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** They talked about
6 her here. The Jourdain family was here.

7 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** It was almost... In what
8 year?

9 **MR. JEAN-GUY PINETTE:** In 1958, they said.

10 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** (Indiscernible) I
11 was around 6 (speaking an Indigenous language).

12 **MR. JEAN-GUY PINETTE:** (Indiscernible)

13 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** I was 7 when I used
14 to hear about her.

15 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** From Maliotenam?

16 **MR. JEAN-GUY PINETTE:** From Maliotenam.

17 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Uh-huh.

18 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** She said she got
19 lost in the forest in the evening, then she disappeared and they
20 never saw her again.

21 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Uh-huh.

22 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** So that was her.

23 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Uh-huh.

24 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** But I'm telling you
25 that we've all gone missing.

1 MS. SHEILA MAZHARI: Uh-huh.

2 MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ: We've all been taken
3 and killed inside.

4 MS. SHEILA MAZHARI: Uh-huh.

5 MS. SHEILA MAZHARI: Would you like to share
6 a message in Innu?

7 MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ: In Innu?

8 MS. SHEILA MAZHARI: Yes.

9 MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ: The commissioners...
10 OK.

11 MS. SHEILA MAZHARI: To the commissioners,
12 the people, today's youth...

13 MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ: OK. I would like
14 (speaking an Indigenous language) her name was Michelle when she
15 was young (speaking an Indigenous language). And to all the
16 people who are around you, who work for you, with you, the
17 commissioners, and in all the organizations, I know that it's a
18 very, very complicated task, everything is exhausting, but it's
19 so comforting for our community. To all those people: thank you
20 for understanding, thank you for giving us the time we needed,
21 for freeing us, healing us, crying with us. Thank you for being
22 patient with us and thank you for realizing what our common goal
23 is: getting out of there to become whole after the work is done.
24 I know this won't be the only time, there will be more times,
25 and more communities, and I know it's a journey. And I hope you

1 have protection around you so that you don't take in everything
2 people say and pretend you're holding a garbage can. You're
3 holding a garbage can between the people who are talking and
4 everything they say falls into the garbage, not on you,
5 otherwise you'll get sick, exhausted, burned out if you don't do
6 that. And always ask the Creator to protect you from all that.
7 And thank you very much, continue on your journey, safe travels,
8 and I hope your team remains close. Thank you.

9 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Thank you very much.

10 **MR. JEAN-GUY PINETTE:** Oh. Oh.

11 **MS. MARIE-JEANNE ANDRÉ:** Hey! Thank you,
12 Jean-Guy!

13 **MS. SHEILA MAZHARI:** Yes, that's true.

14

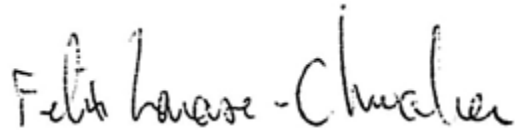
15

16 --- Upon adjourning at 2:25 p.m.

17

LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST'S CERTIFICATE*

I, Félix Larose-Chevalier, hereby certify that I have transcribed the foregoing and it is a true and accurate transcription of the digital audio provided in this matter.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Félix Larose-Chevalier". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial 'F'.

Félix Larose-Chevalier, August 19, 2018

* This certificate refers to the original transcript in French.