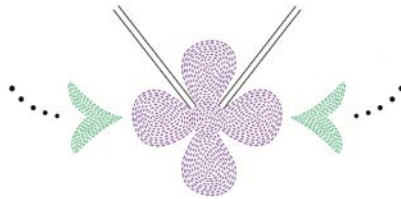


National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls



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

**National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls
Truth-Gathering Process
Part I Statement Gathering
Hotel Bonaventure
Montreal, Quebec**



PUBLIC

March 13, 2018

Public Volume 285:

**Marie-Louise Niquay, Thérèse Niquay,
Pierre-Paul Niquay & Herman Niquay,
In relation to babies Joseph Jean Antonio & Joseph Paul Emile**

Heard by Daria Boyarchuck

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Heard by: Daria Boyarchuck

List of exhibits: none.

Montreal, Quebec

1
2 --- Upon commencing on Tuesday, March 13, 2018, at 12 p.m.

3 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** I, Daria Boyarchuck, am
4 honoured to hear these private testimonies and to be here
5 with you, Marie-Louise Niquay, and your family. We begin
6 hearing your story at noon to give you the chance to share
7 your story with all the commissaries and the other members
8 of your family. Can you please introduce yourselves one at a
9 time, with your name and how you're related to Marie-Louise?
10 Thank you.

11 **MS. ISABELLE DUBÉ:** Hello, my name is Isabelle
12 Dubé, I am a counselor and I'm here to assist Marie-Louise
13 and her family.

14 **MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY:** Marie-Louise Niquay

15 **MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY:** I'm Marie-Louise's sister.

16 **MS. NANCY OTTAWA:** My name is Nancy Ottawa, and I'm
17 Marie-Louise's niece.

18 **MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** I am with Marie-Louise.

19 **MS. LISETTE NIQUAY:** I'm Marie-Louise's younger
20 sister.

21 **MS. ROSA NIQUAY:** Marie-Louise is my big sister.

22 **MS. MARIE-CLAIRE:** I'm the thirteenth child of a
23 family of 19 children. Marie-Louise is my sister.

24 **M. MR. HERMAN NIQUAY:** I'm Marie-Louise's younger
25 brother.

1 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Thank you very much. Thank
2 you everyone for introducing yourselves. Now, Marie-Louise,
3 it's your turn to speak. This is your testimony, you can
4 decide where to start.

5 **MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY:** I'll tell you about what
6 I remember, because we just talked about something, earlier
7 that rattled me, that rattled my memories, and my memories
8 go back... I'm 68, and I was 7 when this happened. At 7, I
9 had to go to residential school. We were in the bush, where
10 we always lived; a hunting territory. On the morning of
11 September 2, my brother [Brother 1] and I washed and were
12 going to take the train to go to the Saint-Marc-de-Figuery
13 residential school, in Abitibi.

14 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** What was the name of the
15 residential school?

16 **MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY:** The Saint-Marc-de-Figuery
17 residential school. They called it the Amos Indian
18 residential school at Saint-Marc-de-Figuery. We washed
19 ourselves in the morning, then put on clothes that our
20 parents had bought for us to travel in. It was a bit chilly
21 in the morning. We had two little brothers who had to be
22 looked after. We lived in tents. We were 2-3000 sons of
23 parents. We were in tents. My mother had prepared food and
24 drink for the babies. We gave them their food and drink. We

1 brought them to my uncle Mavit's (phon.) and my aunt
2 Marianne's tent. My mother had brought Antonio, the biggest,
3 in a blanket, and I brought the smallest one, Paul-Émile. We
4 brought them down blankets that my mother used to make, and
5 we covered them up because it was morning and it was chilly.
6 They seemed to be doing fine. They were sitting up. We made
7 sure they were comfortable. After that, we got ready, had
8 something to eat and packed our bags (I didn't have much to
9 pack). After that, I went back to see the babies. I kissed
10 them. I hugged them and kissed them. I said goodbye. I
11 wanted my aunt to take care of them while we went to take
12 the train, because they were up and the others were still
13 sleeping, and I was sad about leaving them there, because at
14 7 I had already taken care of them a lot. From a young age,
15 all the girls would look after children and babies, from the
16 moment we were able to do so. In truth, I remember when they
17 were in the hammock, in the tent, and my mother would put
18 them next to me and say, "Keep the flies off them, make sure
19 the hammock doesn't flip over and sing to them." I wasn't
20 supposed to (inaudible). And my mother would listen from
21 outside, while she was washing herself: "Don't stop singing,
22 keep going!" We dealt with the flies. [Brother 1] looked
23 after them, too. One time, I was playing with friends and he
24 was looking after them. One of his friends, his cousin,

1 said, "[Brother 1], come play with us." [Brother 1] said
2 (inaudible), that means, instead of saying, "I can't, I'm
3 babysitting," he said, "I can't, I'm pregnant." There was a
4 lot of work to do when we were young, we did what we could,
5 and we took care of the children, under our parents'
6 supervision, of course. I was very sad about having to leave
7 and leaving the babies behind. We just left. In winter, my
8 cousin Marie told me my little brother had died. Just like
9 that, she said, "Marie-Lou, your little brother is dead." I
10 looked at her and said, "It's not true." I didn't believe
11 her. I didn't believe her, but I went and cried in a corner
12 by myself and afterwards told myself that it wasn't true.
13 But when I went back home on June 24, to the house in
14 Wemontaci (phon.), I asked my mother where the babies were.
15 My mother said, "Didn't you know? They died." I had been
16 told, but I hadn't believed it. I cried and my mother hugged
17 me tightly, and I asked, "We'll never see them again?" And
18 she said, "No, they're up in heaven." (Inaudible). That's
19 how I remember it. I don't know what happened in my
20 memories. Some things are probably mixed up, but anyway... I
21 was born in 1949, and when I was 7, I went to residential
22 school. That year, at 7, on [date of birth], I turned 7. On
23 September 2, 1949, I went to the residential school. And
24 that's the year the two babies died, as far as I can

1 remember. I saw the two little ones; I remember that little
2 Paul-Emile looked like one of the twins, he looked like
3 Herman, and the other, Antonio, I can't remember who he
4 looked like. He didn't look like anyone in the family. I
5 always wonder now about what they would have been like, how
6 old they would be, whether they would be married, have kids,
7 grandkids, what their lives would be like today. I don't
8 know. But what I remember from when they were babies,
9 children, is that I hugged them and that I loved them. For
10 the rest of the story, I think Pierre-Paul did some
11 research. My mother told me that one, or both of them, had
12 drunk and were in hospital. There was a bottle of milk in
13 their bed. It was stormy outside, with thunder and
14 lightning, and they drank the milk that was, if we can say,
15 contaminated by the storm. And they drank that milk and died
16 because of it. I told Pierre-Paul that I found that hard to
17 believe. That's what they told our parents. Pierre-Paul
18 looked into it; he's the one working on it, looking into it.

19 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Marie-Louise, can you tell
20 us the name of the hospital or the place where the two
21 little babies died? Which city? Which hospital? Do you know?

22 **MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY:** I guess they were sent
23 to La Tuque. We were from Wemotaci, and children were sent
24 to the hospital in La Tuque.

1 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Thank you.

2 **MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** The hospital was called
3 Saint-Joseph.

4 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Saint-Joseph Hospital?

5 **MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** Yes.

6 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Thank you. Did you speak to
7 a doctor? Do you know if someone explained what happened?

8 **MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY:** Excuse me?

9 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Did the doctors, or anyone
10 from the hospital, like the nurses, tell you what happened
11 to the little baby boys? Did anyone ever tell you anything?

12 **MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY:** After it happened, no
13 one ever mentioned it again until we were adults. Our
14 parents never talked to us about it afterwards. Because a
15 lot of things are taboo, and we don't talk about them. Once
16 we started asking questions, they gave us some answers. I
17 don't know who told them that that's how they died. That the
18 milk they drank had gone bad because of the storm, the
19 lightning and the thunder. And they drank it and died
20 because of that.

21 **MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** In short, the storm
22 altered the quality of the milk, which led to their death.
23 It doesn't make sense.

24 **MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY:** No.

1 **MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** Even for people of the
2 bush, it doesn't make sense.

3 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** You said you did some
4 research, or you found that in the newspapers?

5 **MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** No. Our parents told us
6 those two memories. So it was by oral transmission within
7 the family. They were brought to the hospitals because one
8 of them had a rash on his bottom (inaudible). My grandmother
9 tried traditional remedies. But the problem persisted. They
10 referred him to a healthcare provider from Pam (phon.). That
11 was a city, a town. And a nurse referred him to the Saint-
12 Joseph Hospital in La Tuque. For the other, it was an
13 earache. I can't remember if it was an ear infection. He was
14 also referred to the hospital in La Tuque. So in both cases-
15 a diaper rash and an earache. Unless the illness got
16 worse... I looked on Statistics Canada, Health Canada, and
17 those aren't causes of death. I asked for the documents in
18 December 2017. I called.

19 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Health Canada?

20 **MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** No. The hospital.

21 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** The hospital.

22 **MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** I asked them if I could
23 get a copy of their medical records. They said, "Sure, no
24 problem." My brother said, "Both my parents are dead." I'll

1 do it for my family. We want to know what happened. After I
2 called the hospital, Radio-Canada aired their investigative
3 report on "les enfants fantômes" (the ghost children). A
4 great show on babies who disappeared. I went to the hospital
5 and said I wanted my brothers' medical records. He told me
6 that no, it doesn't work like that. I told him that I had
7 called beforehand and that they had been willing to give
8 them to me. He said, "No, no, we don't know, we saw the show
9 and they think it's easy to just go find records, just like
10 that, but it doesn't work like that." He told me I had to go
11 through court. I didn't go any further, because I knew that
12 the Commission has lawyers that can work on this. On behalf
13 of my family, I demand that the lawyers use their power to
14 help us access the medical records. If they don't, we'll
15 have to pay for it. And we're not rich, we shouldn't have to
16 pay. So we're asking the Inquiry again, officially. We can
17 put it in writing, if you want. If the recordings aren't
18 enough. I request it on behalf of my family. I gave the
19 documents I had, the baptismal certificate, to one of my
20 sisters who couldn't be here today. Unfortunately, I think
21 it was due to a misunderstanding. The National Inquiry was
22 demanded by women, then by families. The government
23 committed itself. And the Band Council is part of the
24 government. They should have made sure my other sister could

1 be here, because she's the one I rely on, who's more
2 available. Marie-Louise is often available, but she also has
3 health-related commitments. She has to go to the hospital
4 regularly, so I don't want to bother her. At this age, you
5 don't make problems for people. You offer them solutions.
6 And my other sister, I didn't (inaudible). The others are
7 already very busy. In the health sector, and disappearances.
8 In cases of health care delivery services. So, I'll try to
9 spend some time on it. I'm in (inaudible) and territorial
10 health, (inaudible) and territorial representative, and I'll
11 dedicate some time to it. But I didn't prioritize my family;
12 I helped other families first. I've finally decided to take
13 care of my own family. It's been difficult, because there
14 were times when I felt truly alone. It's how I felt. I have
15 a large family. But when you're researching something, and
16 they won't give you the documents or you're having problems
17 getting the baptismal certificates, it's not that easy. But
18 I did it. I think that helps. That's where we are, today.
19 And it's a step, but we're waiting, as I mentioned in the
20 circle earlier, with other families and we're determined. We
21 won't give up. The Commission, its mandate, they say it will
22 end in 2018 or 2019, but even if it ends, there should be an
23 opening. You can't take away what possibilities families
24 have of finding missing babies. The possibilities should

1 stay open. And I think that if we really can't find them
2 those who disappeared, we should go to the police. Some
3 families have already gone to the police and made a
4 statement about missing or kidnapped people. It's in the
5 criminal code. My mind is made up; I have to talk to my
6 family. Other families have discussed it amongst each other
7 and decided to go to the police. And participating in the
8 Commission was the other option, and here we are. And
9 there's another option to consider: a class-action suit. And
10 another thing, they say that this has all the
11 characteristics of a crime against humanity. Let's bring
12 that to the attention of the international criminal court.
13 About that, I also had the idea to do that to share with
14 others, because the process can be long. So we thank the
15 Commission for welcoming us, despite what my brother went
16 through last week, and I would like him to speak now.

17 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** OK.

18 **MR. HERMAN NIQUAY:** I called a week ago, before
19 leaving home to come here, to the Commission. They told me
20 that men weren't allowed to come speak to the Commission. I
21 wondered if that was one of your conditions or if it was
22 Indigenous women who didn't want men to speak. Because they
23 say that men weren't affected, but really, the whole family
24 was affected when the two stepbrothers disappeared. It

1 wasn't just the girls in my family who were affected; I was
2 just as affected as the others. My father was just as
3 affected as my mother. Because I know my father suffered
4 because of it.

5 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** So, from what I understand,
6 you contacted somebody from the Commission just last week?

7 **MR. HERMAN NIQUAY:** Yes.

8 **MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY:** I'd also like to add that, of
9 course, after all these years of questioning things, what
10 happened (inaudible), that I'm happy my older sister talked
11 about this. That she shared her memories (inaudible). I
12 think it's time to start really asking the proper questions
13 about what happened to our family. I have a cousin who
14 worked at the hospital in La Tuque, in those years, I think.
15 I'm not sure either.

16 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Was it the same hospital?

17 **MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY:** Yes, the same hospital. She
18 was a helper. In those years, there were a few Atikamekw who
19 worked in those hospitals (inaudible). I was very close to
20 that cousin. She was the same age as my mother. They died
21 the same year. She told me about what she witnessed at the
22 hospital, what it was like for children. People don't know.
23 Parents weren't contacted. I had some questions. I didn't
24 really dare ask my mother questions, because it made her

1 suffer, caused her pain. But I wondered: How could she bear
2 it? How could she bear living all those years without really
3 knowing what happened? And how were the children wrapped?
4 Like they were being put in little graves... But once at the
5 cemetery (inaudible). That's what my cousin told me. We went
6 to the cemetery a few times (inaudible); she had told me
7 that the place was empty (inaudible). We entered the
8 cemetery from the far left side, and it was flat, and she
9 said, "That's where they bury Indigenous children and
10 people-even my grandfather-all in the same corner of the
11 graveyard." So I lived with that. I kept it to myself,
12 without necessarily sharing it with my sisters, but I
13 thought about my mother often. I tried to imagine the moment
14 he left, that maybe he was the first to die. And the second;
15 it's like we all carry his pain. My sister was even closer-I
16 don't remember my younger brother, but...

17 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** How old were they?

18 **MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY:** I was born in 1956 and the
19 others were born in 1956 and 1958. They told me a few months
20 later, when one died, that the other was one year old. I
21 don't really know.

22 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Do you know if anyone knows
23 how old the boys were when they died? Marie-Louise, do you
24 know how old they were?

1 **MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY:** I can't say how old
2 exactly. I know they were little, but they could move
3 around, they could sit up. One was bigger, but I can't
4 say...

5 **MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY:** One was more than 10 months;
6 we found his...

7 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** And that was Joseph Jean-
8 Antonio?

9 **MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY:** Paul-Émile.

10 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** OK, Paul-Émile.

11 **MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY:** There's no date of birth. It
12 says he was baptized on August 13, 1958, and buried on June
13 12, 1959, at 10 months.

14 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** 10 months.

15 **MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY:** And the other, Joseph Jean-
16 Antonio, born August 29, 1957, baptized August 30, 1957. But
17 there's no date of birth. There's just the godfather's name,
18 Henri Liguin (phon.) and the godmother's name, Rowes
19 (phon.). So we brought that because our mother was never
20 present. Of course, we know everything that she had to say
21 about this. We're still suffering the consequences of the
22 trauma she endured: never knowing where her children were
23 buried. Or the other, where's the other? But I don't have
24 any answers. (Inaudible)

1 The only memories I have... I never knew my brothers. The
2 only memory I have was when I heard my mother talking about
3 them to other women. I knew what she went through. I
4 remember once I left the room because I had just heard about
5 it and it was the first time it really touched me, because I
6 started asking myself about it and wishing I had known them.
7 I remember that I heard several times about the little boys
8 she had lost. Now I can understand how incredibly sad she
9 was. The thing that really affects me is that I've been
10 thinking about my mother a lot lately, and how she lived
11 with that, without really knowing what happened. She never
12 got the chance to bury them or pray on their graves, and
13 that touches me, because I have a son who disappeared. Do
14 you know where to find him? But I have a nice memory: my
15 mother had gone to the hospital to give birth. One day, my
16 father was looking after me and he gathered us around. He
17 said he had something to tell us and started by saying, "Two
18 little boys were taken away from me; I lost two little boys.
19 Today, I'm getting two little boys. You're getting two
20 little brothers; your mother will be with you." Then he died
21 in 1978.

22 (Inaudible)

23 **MS. NANCY OTTAWA:** Regarding what was said
24 earlier, about men who aren't allowed to testify, I want to

1 know as well, because it's the same for my mother. She lost
2 a son, but because he's a man, she wasn't allowed to
3 testify.

4 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** To begin with, I'd like to
5 thank you, because as you said earlier, that it was probably
6 the Indigenous women who preferred not having men here, now
7 it's Indigenous women who would prefer it if my colleagues
8 from the Commission and I welcomed both men and women here
9 in this room. That's why I thank you for coming here even
10 after your phone call. And for that, a big thank you,
11 because you overcame a big obstacle. You came anyway, to
12 support them and testify. And if the two of you want to
13 testify separately, you're welcome to do so, and I'll talk
14 to the people in charge of registrations. You can still do
15 it.

16 **MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY:** I'm frustrated; I don't
17 know. Anyway, I don't like the way my brother was treated.
18 It seems like what's being done in the current organization
19 that's working here, is that they're rejecting centres.
20 That's not how it works in our society. Men and women are
21 together; they work together.

22 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Exactly...

23 **MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY:** Otherwise, there's no
24 connection if they don't go together, if they don't work

1 together. There's never one that's rejected, then the other
2 is rejected. It doesn't work like that. Life can't keep
3 going on that way.

4 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** I agree with you.

5 **MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY:** I'd like for it to come
6 out, to be discussed, and for an apology to be made.

7 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** I also encourage you to do
8 so. After this testimony, I'll help you with your testimony
9 if you want to do that with me, and we can do it until
10 Friday, as the Inquiry, the Commission, is here until
11 Friday. If you want to do that, you're welcome to meet us in
12 private or in public. Yes, do you have a question?

13 **MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY:** I hope that the little
14 bit of memory I shared helps, that something happens. I hope
15 that it helps with something, that it will lead to something
16 positive, and that it will help us rebuild something for the
17 family, anyway, I wish a lot of good for my family.

18 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Thank you. Do you have
19 anything to add? I've heard many of your memories, and also
20 several demands you would like to make. I know that we've
21 already talked about including men. But is there anything
22 else you can think of that would help us better include all
23 the other members of society?

1 **MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY:** There a little thing:
2 there should be more people here who speak French.

3 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Just francophones you said?

4 **MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY:** More people who speak
5 French, because there aren't many people, and it's hard to
6 reach someone who speaks French.

7 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** OK.

8 **MS. ISABELLE DUBÉ:** When they try to reach
9 someone, to talk to someone, they usually end up with
10 someone who speaks English. And that makes it difficult for
11 them.

12 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** OK.

13 **MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY:** I don't mind if they
14 answer in English, but "I just want to speak with you [in]
15 French."

16 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Would you also like to say
17 something?

18 **MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** Yes. I also came here to
19 talk about my mother-our mother. Her name was Emma Dubé.
20 Daughter of Marguerite Florin. She was married to St-Raymond
21 Dubé (phon.). My mother, her brother and her other sisters
22 lost their mother when they were very young. They had no
23 mother. They lost their maternal support. They told us about
24 how they were placed in other families. And even though she

1 suffered, she was a very good mother. It's true that she had
2 suffered, and we could tell by her sometimes very aggressive
3 comments. But it shaped us into who we are today, and we're
4 good people, according to the data and the information.
5 That's the gift: we don't just have her blood, we don't just
6 have her flesh. She managed to teach me -- And I think she
7 still does. She's an amazing woman. She had 19 children.
8 During one of her deliveries, in winter, on the reserve, we
9 were chopping wood for the fire, and she said to my
10 grandmother that it was time (inaudible). Our grandmother
11 told us to stay in the tent and she went to my mother. Not
12 long after, we heard a baby cry. We had a new family member.

13 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Brother or sister?

14 **MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** And our grandmother came
15 and told us to go see the newborn. Our mother kept telling
16 us not to touch him because we played with a lot of things,
17 and to stay at home, stay in the tent. And she went back
18 outside to chop wood. It's around that time that we were
19 never cold. I don't remember ever being hungry. We didn't
20 know where the food came from, but it was very good. We made
21 blankets with what we had. There was no Wal-Mart or
22 anything. We had mattresses made with boiled moose fur
23 (inaudible). For us, that was luxury. We were happy. Today,
24 we have houses where you just turn on the lights, the hot

1 water, etc. And we're unhappy in them. We were happier
2 living on our land, and that's where our relationship with
3 land comes from. We're one of the last Chicawatawa (phon.)
4 families to have lived year-round on the territories. For
5 that, I thank my mother for telling me about the time my
6 father came to the Manawan village and my mother was told
7 she had to go to the church. She knew that whenever a girl
8 was told to go there, she came out married to someone she
9 didn't know. My father went there. He had come from
10 (inaudible). They got married. Her godfather, Sergio
11 Filament (phon.), her grandmother's brother, was happy to be
12 there. He was her uncle. He witnessed the wedding the same
13 day (inaudible). When he left Manawan for the territory of
14 Tenand de Granier de Groelon (phon.). They had a nice
15 territory, many women, many children—they would have 19
16 children... Then he boarded the Manawan ship. The Manawan's
17 captain was Duc Lamant (phon.), his witness was (inaudible).
18 Then she said that she would cry because she was losing the
19 Manawan because they were separated for a year. My
20 grandfather has to be careful. A nice story. My grandfather
21 (inaudible) made sure to do it, because my mother used to
22 say she didn't even know how to cook an egg. For her first
23 teepee, he bought her a wood chip stove.

1 **MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY:** My grandfather gave her
2 \$100 and said, "Go buy what you need." And my mother came
3 back with half a chocolate and candy.

4 **MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** She thought he would live
5 with that. She wasn't taught how to buy, since he learned he
6 did it for the next 30-40 years. My mother's spiritual name
7 was (inaudible). We held a rekdance(phon.) ceremony, the
8 Thirst Dance at Wakanaw (phon.) in 2004-2005 (inaudible), I
9 can't remember, in 2004. She asked for her spiritual name
10 and it was the Thirst Dance woman. Chiniwan (phon.) was her
11 name. We still have the lodge that many people want to
12 visit, and we hold 5 of these ceremonies. That's where that
13 comes from, from my mother. It started very small, but it's
14 getting (inaudible). She and her family have the right to
15 know what happened. And I think it's the government's duty
16 to help us search for the truth. If it did, we would know
17 what to do, we would take care of it. It would help us live
18 better too. It would also help us with our reorganization
19 activities. It's that we have to rely (inaudible) on the
20 reconciliation we desire so strongly for ourselves, our
21 children and their children.

22 **MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY:** There have been inquiry
23 commissions in the past, and many people participated,

1 including myself, but then we never heard anything more
2 about it.

3 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Yes...

4 **MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY:** And also to be able to
5 develop, to continue, to help families discover the truth.
6 Continue to help families in their process to uncover the
7 truth and in their grieving process as well.

8 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Grieving.

9 **MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY:** Speaking of my mother, we
10 talk about non-isolated grief, with everything she lived
11 through. Because we were 19 children, and most of us went to
12 residential school. When I think about everything my mother
13 went through, what she suffered, why leave her children and
14 grandchildren and never see them again? But to see these
15 other children leave every year for over a decade, because I
16 went to residential school, there may be (inaudible). There
17 is mourning. There is always mourning. And even if we come
18 back, we're not the same anymore. The mistakes of this
19 generation: the incomprehension of seeing our parents
20 transform, change and to see them with their issues and
21 addictions. We were strongly affected, including our
22 brothers, by our parents, every time we went through that.

23 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Thank you. Are you the only
24 ones of all the pasallan (phon.) survivors?

1 **MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY:** Yes.

2 (Inaudible)

3 **MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY:** In fact, what she just meant
4 is that my younger brothers were brought to the hospital.
5 For something that wasn't serious at all. It was really easy
6 back then to send children to the hospital for the smallest
7 thing. Whereas today, children can be extremely sick and not
8 be able to get the care they need where they are.

9 **MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** There are doubts that
10 make you suffer, as there was a rumour that Indigenous
11 children were being used to experiment on. There is evidence
12 of that. For us (inaudible) it will be very hard. Other
13 families have already experienced it. It's like they
14 purposely buried them in communal graves. How can you find
15 your brother's bones in there? Other families and other
16 nations are almost certain that experiments were carried
17 out. I often think that I'd rather they be dead than find
18 someone who's been severely handicapped by experiments. It
19 would hurt so much. And if that's what it turns out to be,
20 we will be appalled. Who would have authorized such
21 experiments?

22 **MR. HERMAN NIQUAY:** Who has the power to authorize
23 that?

24 **MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** Never, never...

1 **MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY:** Who would dare!

2 **MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** I would never sign a
3 paper saying we'll give you this amount for all these
4 stories, but you can't sue us. They're doing that for the
5 residential school stories. But for my brothers' stories,
6 no, the government had better not ask. It would be an insult
7 to our intelligence. We better never get any offers. We want
8 the truth. And there are other families, too. We are united,
9 we are committed. They'd better not try to destroy this
10 dignity that we're trying to create for all the families.
11 Because that's what's going to strengthen our nations' unity
12 and the unity of all Indigenous nations. That's why the
13 government is afraid, because that's what it's been trying
14 to do, to make us disappear, since 1870 and the Indian Act
15 and Indian Lands Act. It thought the job would be done
16 within 100 years. No, we're still here. We're here to stay.
17 There are legal battles, political battles, economic battles
18 and what I would call more clinical battles, but politicians
19 should do their jobs, too. We demanded a national
20 declaration regarding kidnapped children, and we still
21 haven't had one. We're in the middle of a commission and we
22 wanted to be heard. I don't blame anyone, territorial
23 negotiations are well and good, but the people who lived on
24 those lands, the children who were supposed to live there,

1 didn't survive. So sometimes that's quite challenging to our
2 (inaudible). It's easy to be outraged, to lose your head,
3 but no, we want to keep our cool. But we know that it
4 strengthens our determination. And, up to a certain point,
5 everything we went through made us a family. Of course, when
6 we fought, it was because the brothers and sisters weren't
7 getting along. But we are connected by blood, by the
8 territory, by the past. We're doing it now. We're in the
9 midst of a reconciliation. But we get heated sometimes,
10 because sometimes they say it was involuntary. Rejection,
11 hurtful comments, they come from somewhere. They come from
12 somewhere.

13 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Yes...

14 **MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** And that's just one
15 effect, but we need to find the cause. If you find the
16 cause, I'll no longer have to go through this type of...
17 That's why our mother wanted a united family. She never
18 imagined giving birth to someone who would be against the
19 others. And everything was on my shoulders.

20 (Laughs)

21 **MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** On all our shoulders. We
22 have work to do. We're going to do the work. But we're
23 asking that the Commission do its work.

1 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** I have a question for our
2 youngest member: how do you think this testimony can help
3 future generations? Or how do you and the others think that
4 the stories we share here today in this room, in public and
5 private agencies, how can they help?

6 **MS. NANCY OTTAWA:** It helps us understand our
7 family's injuries: knowing the history, knowing the stories
8 allows us to heal because we don't want them to affect us
9 and the future generations, as well.

10 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Yes. Thank you.

11 **MS. NANCY OTTAWA:** That's just what these stories
12 are, a healing process. To be pushed, in part, to forgive
13 our parents if they went through difficult situations.
14 (Inaudible)

15 **MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** Really, these are
16 consequences (inaudible).

17 **MR. HERMAN NIQUAY:** To be everything that that
18 triggered, the stories that you heard triggered a lot of
19 problems in my family, because my parents (inaudible) a lot.
20 Today, I've become a man. And I know that my parents
21 suffered. I was angry at my parents for a long time, because
22 I lost a twin during a night of drunkenness—a tragedy
23 happened in the house we lived in. I was at my step-
24 sister's, and I lost my twin and little sister in that

1 tragedy. Those are all things that were triggered by all the
2 stories my sister shared, the residential school story, and
3 my two brothers that were lost and we never got any real
4 answers.

5 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Yes.

6 **MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY:** Such accidents in a family,
7 jealousy, it's very hard. I think we lost, in total, a dozen
8 people due to fires... I don't know... A dozen? Anyway, in a
9 pretty short period, that's a lot of people.

10 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Would you like to add
11 anything else?

12 **MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** I already suggested that
13 there be a national day for the children and babies who
14 disappeared. And that it be decreed an official day, because
15 non-Indigenous people don't know anything about these
16 things, the history...

17 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Yes.

18 **MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** We could use that day to
19 raise awareness. It was the same for the residential school
20 stories. At any rate, I want to know how many children
21 disappeared throughout Canada. There was the Scoop in the
22 sixties... They didn't think there was a problem in Quebec,
23 and now we're learning that there is a problem there too. So
24 that's a suggestion, do you agree? A special day...

1 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** A day, yes...

2 **MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** It would be a day
3 dedicated to our little brothers and other children who
4 disappeared. We'll make it something special. We can go to
5 our land and choose a place, if I know that the wakanei
6 (phon.). I don't really know what part of the territory you
7 were camping in at the time. I'd like to know.

8 (Speaking in an Indigenous language)

9 **MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** A special day, and on
10 that day, we go back to the land...

11 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** A ceremony or something to
12 commemorate the children who disappeared...

13 **MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** Yes.

14 **MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY:** I would like to add
15 something...

16 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Yes, please do.

17 **MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY:** From a very young age, our
18 grandmother in particular awakened the power we had:
19 spirituality. She often asked us about our dreams because
20 dreams have a lot of meaning. And regarding this, a few
21 months ago, I dreamed about our father and he said, "I see a
22 woman (wife?) of your brother. Go get your brother." He was
23 telling us that he left us the means to do everything we
24 could to find our brother and what exactly happened with

1 that? We want to know. It's important. We have to do
2 everything we can, because in my dream, he said, "Find your
3 brother." (inaudible).

4 **MS. MARIE-LOUISE NIQUAY:** I think that what
5 Pierre-Paul said earlier is important: everyone has to work
6 together...

7 (Speaking in an Indigenous language)

8 **MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** One thing.

9 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Yes?

10 **MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** This recommendation was
11 already made at a summit, no, an Atikamekw forum on missing
12 children, on January 23-24, in Wemotaci. This is the year to
13 create a special unit on missing children. A special
14 investigative unit. So I would like to see the creation of
15 an investigative unit. Police officers should get together.
16 They do it for organized crime, the advisor told me. I don't
17 see why they wouldn't do it for the children. The families
18 are all available, obviously. We have obstacles, like how to
19 access information. So if the government doesn't step in,
20 we're the ones who will get stuck having to pay the
21 expensive fees. In that case, we suggest that the government
22 help the families get lawyers. There shouldn't be lawyers
23 just because there's an inquiry. After the inquiry, we would
24 like to have the help of lawyers-Indigenous lawyers if

1 possible—even if we choose counselors and train them to
2 create training groups. I can study law, I should be trained
3 as a lawyer and so should other stakeholders, other members
4 of this family. Give us this chance and we'll be able to
5 help more. We're looking for lawyers and it's \$25,000-
6 \$30,000. I'll do it for free afterwards.

7 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** So, you would like the
8 National Inquiry Commission's mandate to have a much broader
9 scope, so that when you leave this room, you want to have
10 not just resources, but also the means. For example, I'm a
11 lawyer, and I can contact each of you and try to figure out
12 how we can move forward in getting access to this power of
13 attorney? To access medical records, because sometimes, if I
14 understand correctly, you have the resources, but you don't
15 know how to move forward, what the next step is. Is that
16 right?

17 **MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** Yes, of course, but we're
18 well aware of the laws and the ones that are holding us
19 back, because hospitals hide behind those laws.

20 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** So you need a contact to...

21 **MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** We know how to find them,
22 but once we do, we need a lawyer, and we need money to
23 access the information. So I can't do it myself. I've
24 contacted lawyers and they want to charge me \$25,000 to

1 **MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** There's psychological
2 support, sure, but we also want to be part of the action, we
3 want to act, that's what we need.

4 **MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY:** Because we can give each
5 other psychological support.

6 **MR. PIERRE-PAUL NIQUAY:** Yes.

7 **MS. ISABELLE DUBÉ?:** I think they can contact you
8 for several reasons.

9 **MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY:** We need help in the process
10 of finding out the truth.

11 (Inaudible)

12 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** Shall we end the hearing
13 here, and after we can talk about...

14 **MS. THÉRÈSE NIQUAY:** Yes.

15 **MS. DARIA BOYARCHUCK:** So I'll just officially say
16 that we ended on March 13, at 1:16 p.m. Thank you.

17 (END OF RECORDING)

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19 --- Upon adjourning at 1:16 p.m.

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