ROAD TO HEALING

TRIBAL CONSULTATION

Verbatim Record of Proceedings

April 23, 2023

7512 Totem Beach Road
Tulalip, Washington 98271

REPORTED BY: Rachel M. Helm, RSR, RPR, CCR No. 20120397

A P P E A R A N C E S

TERI GOBIN, Tulalip Tribal Chairwoman

DEBRA HAALAND, U.S. Secretary of the Interior

BRYAN NEWLAND, Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs

NATASHA GOBIN

GLEN GOBIN

DAVID BEAN

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BE IT REMEMBERED that on Sunday, April 23, 2023, at 7512 Totem Beach Road, Tulalip, Washington 98271, at 10:19 a.m., the following meeting was had, to wit:

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(Welcome Song, 10:19 a.m.)

(Meeting commences, 10:27 a.m.)

CHAIRWOMAN TERI GOBIN: Thank you.

So if the drummers and singers could stay up here. Anybody who would like to join the color guard, please go to the entrance so you can come in with them.

At this time, I'd like to start some introductions before we have the prayer. (Indigenous speech.)

Shu-hay-la-lose (phonetic) is my Indian name. I am Teri Gobin, the tribal chairwoman. (Indigenous speech.)

My parents are JoAnn and Stan Jones. My father passed away three years ago, but my mother, Ha-ha-leet-sa (phonetic) JoAnn Jones, is right up here in front.

Wave, Mother. Thank you.

So my husband is also here, Squal-see-wish (phonetic), and my daughter.

But all of these -- this is our Salmon Ceremony

group, our Coastal Jam group, and all of the Tulalip drummers and singers. I want to thank them for what they've done so far.

But I want to start out with -- the Tulalip tribes is the descendants of the successors in interests of the Snohomish, Snoqualmie, Skykomish, and other allied bands signatory to the 1855 Point Elliot Treaty. And I would like to welcome you all to our ancestral lands and our beautiful gathering hall.

This building was built in 2020, and it's an amazing building. We watched this as it went up. The second pole as you come in on the right -- that pole is 99 years old. And the third pole on the left as you come in is 195 years old. So, like these timbers, our roots are deep, and we are all related.

So, next, I would like to have Natasha Gobin --

where is she? -- come up and say the prayer. And then, directly after, we will start with color guard. Natasha is one of our language warriors.

NATASHA GOBIN: (Indigenous speech.) Let us pray.

(Indigenous speech.) Creator, we give thanks for this day. We thank you for the safe arrival for everyone who's with us today, and we ask you to watch over those who will be joining us. We also ask you to watch over

those who wish that they could be here with us today.

Today, as we gather, we ask that each one of us can give strength to one another as we lay down our hearts, as we share our stories. We ask for strength in each and every one of us as we move, throughout the day, through this work together.

We ask for special blessings over our elders, over our children, and those who are in need. Please lift up those with heavy hearts.

And we ask that, as we finish our day, that you watch over each and every person as they make their way home. Amen.

CHAIRWOMAN TERI GOBIN: Okay. Next, we will have the color guard.

Can we please give our color guard and the veterans a hand for all they have sacrificed for us.

(Applause.)

CHAIRWOMAN TERI GOBIN: I would also like to thank all the drummers and singers that showed up today to help celebrate this event. Thank you.

Can we give them a hand?

(Applause.)

CHAIRWOMAN TERI GOBIN: Next, I would like to introduce the Tulalip Board of Directors that are here today.

We have Marlin Fryberg.

Mel Sheldon.

And Debbie Posey.

And we have three board members who aren't here today that had other commitments, flying to NAFOA and out of town. So I just want to thank you for being here today.

And could all of the elected leaders please stand? Can we give them all a hand?

(Applause.)

CHAIRWOMAN TERI GOBIN: Rick, are you an elected leader? Yeah. There we go.

Thank you.

Right now, I would like to introduce Tee-chuck (phonetic) Glen Gobin to give us a brief description on the two songs and the land that we are on today.

GLEN GOBIN: First off, I'd like to say welcome Secretary Haaland, Bryan Newland. Welcome to our homeland.

And the songs that you heard, the prayer that was said was about our way of life. Everything that the boarding school was intended to wipe out is still alive today because of our ancestors and elders that continue to bring these traditions forward. Some of them had to hide it for many years. But they kept up with it, and they

kept sharing with the younger ones.

That first song we sang was called the (inaudible) Welcome Song. It belonged to a lady named Hiahl-tsa, Hariette Shelton Dover. She was a very respected leader, elder in our tribe for many years and went around sharing our culture and keeping it alive.

And her father did the same thing, Chief William Shelton, preserving many of the things that we have, even including -- and people don't believe it -- a gill net made of nettles that looked very familiar, like

monofilament.

And these are things that our people had, always had. And the boarding school era tried to take many, if not all of that, away if they could.

Hariette would always say that we'd lost many things, but we kept what we could. We did the best we can. And we did the best we can. And when we carry on in that way, the best way we can, then our elders on the other side will accept that, knowing what's transpired.

That Welcome Song is about coming in and blessing the four corners of the building. And you saw the young women with their hands raised. They're blessing the people at the same time, welcoming and blessing the people, and stopping in each corner, blessing the building that we're in.

And that was Harriet's personal song. As much of our teachings were done in an oral manner, an oral tradition, this was her song, and we would not have permission to use it had she not given it to us. So she was the organizer of the first a Salmon Ceremony, revival of the first Salmon Ceremony. And as such, she gave the Tribe permission to use this song. If she had not, our teachings would say it would go to the other side, and we

wouldn't hear the song again because it belonged to her.

The next song we sang was a song that belonged to -- her given name was Bev Tom, but her Indian name was to Tuh-woh-wo-lope (phonetic). And that song came to her down below the longhouse over there. And it was about -- she was sitting here, and she was hearing the voices and remembering her ancestors. And this song came to her.

And so she taught it to us. Ultimately, she gifted the song to my father, Bernie Kai-Kai Gobin. And Stan Jones Scho-hallem gifted it to him. And it's their song now.

But we always remember through an oral teaching where the song comes from and who belonged to it. And so the history goes along with it because these things, even today, are not written down. You only hear them at times like this when we're at an event. And we always try to remember where the different songs come from and the

history behind it.

And so the song is a blessing song, but it's also about remembering your ancestors and remembering where you come from -- something that was strong, strong within our people that they kept it alive through the boarding school. It's ironic that we're sitting, today, on part of

the grounds of what was the boarding school. And there were, like, three phases of the boarding school when Father Chirouse came. Shortly after treaty signing, he set up a school up at the mouth of the Quil Ceda Village, our Quil Ceda.

And that's where he started. Then he moved it down towards Priest Point, and he actually built a school. This wasn't part of the government program yet, although it was required in the treaty that education would be part of it.

And he set up a school at Priest Point, and that's why that's called Priest Point -- because he was the priest. And it started there. But as our children passed away, started a cemetery there also. So the oldest cemetery on the reservation is the one at Priest Point.

And, ironically, I was doing a little research the other day, and I saw that my grandma's sister, age six, is one of those that died at that time and is buried at that cemetery.

And I didn't know that. But I learned it. And so when you see things that relate to you, they start to have even more meaning because it's where you come from. It's who you come from.

And so that school was there. And then I believe it was about in the late 1860s the Sisters of Providence petitioned the government to start a school. And so the government contracted with them. Only it wasn't truly a government school. They contracted with the Sisters of Providence.

And that school was over there across the bay where Mission Cemetery is today. And that's where it started. And that's why, again, the cemetery started over there -- because as the children passed away, they were buried in and around the school grounds there. And that was the start of that cemetery until it burnt down.

It burnt down in the late 1800s, and then the government took the program back and said, "We're going to run this ourselves now." And so I think it was about the early 1900s these grounds were developed.

And what we know as our generations, now, the boarding school was the one over here that was more run like a military camp -- as we heard many of our elders talk through the years, what either they knew or witnessed or what their grandparents or their parents told them

about -- the constant marching and the constant inability to speak their language, the constant inability to see

their family when they wanted to because they were taken away and brought to these schools to civilize them.

And so this school, albeit a school, it was more of an industrial school. So they were going to make us farmers. Although we were fishermen, we were harvesters of the sea for thousands of years, they were going to turn us into farmers. And so they taught industrial farming and industrial aspects, a vocational-type school.

And so most of the documentation that we see today and we hear about today is what took place at that school. We don't see it as much as what happened under the Sisters of Providence because the Catholic church holds those records. We don't see what happened over there or we don't understand what took place in Father Chirouse's schools that he started because the documentation was not the same or the Catholic church also holds those records of what took place.

But, today, it is ironic that we sit here. I was born in 1956, and I grew up right over here below what is our health clinic today. There's an old cattle guard down there so the cows wouldn't get out. That was down there.

And we lived in a row of about eight houses there that were part of the government agency that was here at

Tulalip.

The dining hall was still there. The commissary building -- because they built a mill, also, at that time, just right over here. And they built a dam, a dam going across Tulalip Creek, right over here, where we raise salmon today. But it had a returning salmon run. And when they built that, they also built a fish ladder for the salmon to come up. And as a kid, we saw remnants of it. It was just an old -- looked like 1-by-6s framed this spillway that came off, off to the side. And it was no longer in operation.

But they built a dam that powered a generator, a powerhouse, which my great uncle -- he told me he worked in the powerhouse. And what was remnants of the old hospital was still there. But, yet, we still have people here today that were born in the old hospital after the government ceased to operate. In 1932, I believe it was, the school ceased to operate.

And there was even a jail down there. But the jail was in the most inhospitable conditions unless it was summer, because then you had waterfront view. It was literally on the tidelands. And in the wintertime, the tide would come up, and the waves would splash through. It'd be cold and damp. But that was where the school was.

And so it's ironic that we're here to talk about

the boarding school, that we sit here today as survivors but still moving forward because the elders before -- they took what was given to them, and they turned it into a positive. Most importantly, keeping our culture and our language alive and bringing that forward, and the value to make something better for the next generation.

And so I hope that we could hear some good testimony here today to talk about those things that happened and find ways to move forward in a positive way, not forgetting the past but taking what we can that gives us strength and move forward.

So I thank our federal representatives for being here. Secretary Haaland, I know your background, and I know you feel our pain as well. So bless you.

SECRETARY DEB HAALAND: Thank you.

(Indigenous speech.)

CHAIRWOMAN TERI GOBIN: So for some housekeeping, just to let you know, we have restrooms. They're down near the entrance on both sides of the entrance. Or there is other restrooms where you can go out this side door right there to the left.

And now I would like to give an introduction to our Good Relative Support Care Team, our staff members. If they could, stand up here.

Our ancestors knew that community connection,

prayer, ceremony, and meditation can help us to get and stay grounded, especially in times of crisis.

Oh, you're right there. I was looking for you back here. I'm sorry.

Support care will be offered to the participants who might need additional support during this time of sharing. You can choose from individual support, acudetox, somatic body care, and mindfulness space. We have a number of people who have volunteered their time to be good relatives to the people who are sharing their stories today, including staff from the Tulalip Behavioral Health, Indian Health Service, Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board, amongst others.

They are here to listen, to offer support, a shoulder to cry on, to help us stay grounded, or to simply hold space. The Good Relative Support Care staff are here for you if needed, and they will be located up front where they will assist you if you need.

So I want to thank you. They are here in case anybody needs some support care. Thank you.

Can we give them a hand?

(Applause.)

CHAIRWOMAN TERI GOBIN: Okay. So before

I get into the introductions, I'd like to talk a little bit about my father, Scho-hallem, Stan Jones. He was on

council for 44 years, 26 of those as chair. When he was young, many people in this area were exposed to TB, tuberculosis. At nine years old, a government agent took him, along with his two older brothers and one older sister, to Cushman Hospital.

Cushman Hospital used to be Cushman Boarding School, and that was from 1860 to 1920. So when it closed down, they made it into a hospital so they could still have Indian children there.

So my father told us of his memories of the Cushman Hospital. He said it was more like a boarding school than a hospital. There were four wards. Two were for the really sick kids, and two were for those that were not that sick.

He didn't get to see his sibling much during the time he was there. And he was there three years of his life. And he didn't get visitors from home because we were very poor at that time, and it was hard for people to make it down, even, to Tacoma. Back then, you know, having the relatives to come and see you -- it was really tough for them to not have that.

So he did remember when they washed out his mouth with lye soap where his tongue dried up so bad -- I'm actually taking the words out of his book. His tongue dried up so bad; it cracked and split open and bled.

He also was locked in a closet by a nurse because he didn't have his area clean. While he was in the closet, he overheard the two nurses talking that his older brother had died. Jack had passed away. Dad was in there crying, and when they asked him what he was crying about, he wouldn't tell them that that was his brother.

He believed that the hospital was doing experimental procedures and medicine on the children and were trying to fill quotas so they could get paid by the government. The hospital was another way to keep Native kids after the boarding school was closed.

Later on in life, my father traveled to D.C. often and vised the Smithsonian Institute and researched all the records on the local tribes here. One of the documents that he found and shared with me was a letter to the Secretary of the Interior from Father Chirouse in 1875.

Father Chirouse had sent back artifacts from our tribe to Washington, D.C. Two of the items were skulls.

One was of an adult male, and the other one was a small skull of a five- or six-year-old child. He stated in this letter that the parents were still alive and they would be very uneasy if they knew that this happened as it was a great insult to the dead to transport their bones to another place. These skulls were finally sent back to

Tulalip where they were laid at rest.

This is one of many similar stories that we have heard, and I want to thank you all for giving me this opportunity to share some of my dad's words with you.

Today we have the opportunity to share our stories, to have them heard. With that in mind, please be respectful of time so that all those who would like to testify have the opportunity to do so.

Now I would like to introduce both of our honorable guests.

Deb Haaland is an enrolled member of the Laguna Pueblo tribe. She made history when she became the first Native American serving the 54th United States Secretary of the Interior.

Well, give her an applause.

(Applause.)

CHAIRWOMAN TERI GOBIN: She's definitely

a mighty woman of many powers and very forceful, and we just are so glad that we have her there.

But after running for New Mexico lieutenant governor in 2014, Secretary Haaland became the first Native American woman to be elected to lead a state party.

She is one of the first Native American women to serve in Congress. In Congress, she focused on environmental justice, climate change, missing and

murdered Indigenous women and people, and family-friendly policies.

Throughout her career in public service, Secretary Haaland has broken barriers and opened the doors of opportunity for future generations. Debra is a visionary leader and a true mentor to all of us in Indian Country. It is a true honor and pleasure to welcome Secretary Debra Haaland.

(Applause.)

CHAIRWOMAN TERI GOBIN: Now I would like to introduce Assistant Secretary for the Indian Affairs, Bryan Newland. He is an enrolled member of the Bay Mills Indian Community, Ojibwe, where he recently served as the tribal president.

Prior to that, Bryan served as chief judge of Bay

Mills Tribal Court, and he served as a counselor and policy advisor to the Assistant Secretary of the Interior of Indian Affairs.

Bryan has worked on behalf of Indigenous people in Indian Country for decades. His priorities are to ensure the respect of tribal sovereignty and self-governance; fulfill federal trust in treaty responsibilities to tribal nations; and make regular and meaningful robust consultation for tribes.

Let's give him a hand.

(Applause.)

CHAIRWOMAN TERI GOBIN: And I also heard that Bryan would like to challenge any tribe to a basketball game. That was from dinner last night.

So at this time, I'll pass this off to our honorable Deb Haaland.

Let's give her a hand.

(Applause.)

SECRETARY DEB HAALAND: Thank you so much, Chairwoman. (Indigenous speech.)

My name is Deb Haaland. My Indian name is Crushed Turquoise.

And I just want to say that you all are very

lucky to have your language. It was something that my mother was afraid to teach me. And so the extent of my Keres fluency is not very much, but I know that the ancestors hear even if you try.

So I'm really happy to be here. Good morning, everyone. I want to acknowledge that we have Congressman Rick Larsen here with us today. Thank you very much for coming.

And my dear friend, Seattle City Counsel President Debora Juarez, is here. Thank you, President Juarez.

Thank you so much for everything -- for the

songs, the blessings, the story. I am honored to be here in this beautiful, beautiful building, such a reflection of the people here. And it just feels like home. So really happy to be here, and it's such an honor to join you on your ancestral homelands.

I want to speak very briefly because I'm here to listen to all of you. Your voices are important to me, and I thank you for your willingness to share your stories.

Federal Indian boarding school policies have touched every Indigenous person I know. Some are

survivors; some are descendants. But we all carry this painful legacy in our hearts.

Deeply ingrained in so many of us is the trauma that these policies and these places have inflicted. My ancestors and many of yours endured the horrors of Indian boarding school assimilation policies carried out by the same department that I now lead.

This is the first time in history that a United States cabinet secretary comes to the table with this shared trauma. That is not lost on me, and I'm determined to use my position for the good of the people.

I launched the Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative in 2021 to undertake a comprehensive effort to recognize the legacy of boarding school policies with the

goal of addressing their intergenerational impacts and to shed light on the traumas of the past.

In Washington state alone, there were 15 boarding schools, leaving intergenerational impacts that persist in the communities represented here today. It is my department's duty to address this shared trauma that so many of us carry.

To do that, we need to tell our stories. Today is part of that journey. Through the Road to Healing, our

goal is to create opportunities for people to share their stories but also to help connect communities with trauma-informed support and to facilitate the collection of a permanent oral history.

Washington is the sixth stop on the Road to Healing, which is a yearlong tour across the country to provide Indigenous survivors of the federal boarding school system and their descendants an opportunity to make known their experiences.

I want you all to know that I'm with you on this journey, and I will listen. I will grieve with you. I will weep. And I will feel your pain.

As we mourn what we have lost, please know that we still have so much to gain. The healing that can help our communities will not be done overnight, but I believe very strongly that it will be done. This is one step

among many that we'll take together to strengthen and rebuild the bonds within Native communities that federal Indian boarding school policies set out to break.

Those steps have the potential to alter the course of our future. I'm grateful to each one of you for stepping up, for stepping forward to share your stories. I know it's not easy.

Now I'll turn the floor over the Assistant Secretary Newland, my dear friend and colleague and somebody I'm very honored and proud to serve alongside. He'll outline today's agenda, and we'll begin our session.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY BRYAN NEWLAND: Thank you, Madam Secretary. (Indigenous speech.)

My name is Bryan Newland, also known as Walks Many Paths back home.

I come from the Place of the Pike, which is the Bay Mills Indian Community, which looks a lot like the beautiful bay behind us, and it feels very much like home to be here with all of you today. And I want to thank Chair Gobin and the board members and the tribes here in the community for welcoming us here; being so generous with your time and your spirit and your space; and sharing your homelands with us today.

Yesterday, I had the opportunity to visit with Chair Gobin and the Tribe's leadership here. And we also

visited the Mission Cemetery and the Tulalip Indian School grounds where thousands of Indian kids entered the doors to perform agricultural and other labor and engage in marching. You know, it was explained to us that it was just endless marching over and over again at these

boarding schools.

We know that this is a part of an era when the federal government funded these boarding schools to forcibly assimilate these kids and tried to change them and change us away from being who we were and who we are.

As of now, the Department has determined that 15 of those federal Indian boarding schools were located here in the state of Washington, including the Tulalip Indian School right here.

And as we continue investigating the federal Indian boarding school system, learning about your experiences at these schools in the overall system, it paints a history that our federal records alone can't tell the whole story. We need more. And so we need to hear from you to help tell that entire story.

We're going to continue our research as well. Our next steps include identifying marked and unmarked burial sites across the Indian boarding school system and trying to determine a total amount of federal funding and support for these boarding schools.

We also encourage people across Indian Country to raise other considerations that you think we need to be aware of and paying attention to.

So getting into the housekeeping for today, I want to make sure I acknowledge our colleagues and partners from the Department of Health and Human Services. We have IHS Director Roselyn Tso here.

We have a number of folks here as well from the Indian Health Service here to support. We have representatives of the Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board who are here today.

We have the director of the Bureau of Indian Education, Tony Dearman. Tony and his team in the BIE have been instrumental in this work.

And, of course, we have the leadership of the Tulalip Tribes.

Chair Gobin, it's just been so wonderful to spend this weekend with you and your team. I'm so impressed by your team's leadership not only on behalf of your community, your tribes, but Indian Country as well.

Want to make sure I also thank the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition or NABS -- I know I saw Deb Parker here -- for the work that they're doing.

And, of course, we appreciate Tribal leaders who

took the time to travel here from other tribes and join us

for this important conversation.

And, most importantly, I want to thank those of you who attended these boarding schools and took your time to be here to share your time and your stories with us today.

I want to make sure I emphasize that today's session is an opportunity for boarding school survivors and their family members to share their stories about their experiences.

And so we know at these events and a lot of other occasions where we have the opportunity to visit Indian Country, there are a lot of issues and a lot of needs that people want to bring up with us as part of our work. We have a number of representatives from the Department of the Interior, to include the Indian Affairs, who are here today. And during breaks, if there are other issues that you wish to raise, you know, we're happy to listen.

But we want to make sure that we keep the focus today on boarding school survivors and their families and that they have the space to tell their stories. We appreciate, of course, again, the time that our survivors have taken to join us today.

So for that, we want to make sure that we invite our boarding school survivors -- if you wish to speak and

share your stories, just simply raise your hand. We have mic runners at different places here in the room who will help come to you.

I want to make sure that I also note that we have a number of folks from different media outlets who are joining us today. I want to thank you for coming and covering these important events in telling this story.

And for those of you who are here to share your stories, I want to make sure that you understand they're here for the first hour of today's conversation to help tell the American people about this story. So if you wish to share your story but don't want to be recorded on the news, there will be opportunity for you to do that after the first hour. We'll respectfully ask our friends from the press to excuse themselves, we'll take a break, and then we'll continue on with the conversation.

Also want to note that we have a court reporter here who he is transcribing all of the comments. This is part of our ongoing boarding school initiative, and your comments will inform the work that we do. And so, in that spirit, I ask that you identify yourself when you speak by name as well as your tribal affiliation and the boarding school you wish to speak about.

Our plan is to stay with you for most of the day into the late afternoon and to hear from as many people as

we can. We're not going to put a time limit on people who wish to speak. We know that it's often difficult to share these stories.

I will ask, respectfully, that if you do wish to speak that you do your best to keep your comments concise and on the topic of your experience or your family's experience with the boarding school system and era.

And we want to make sure we have an opportunity to hear from as many people as possible. And, if necessary, I'll do my best to interject and try to make sure we keep the conversation moving forward. But just ask that you be mindful of others who wish to speak.

Lastly, I want to note that we understand that these conversations are painful and, for many of you, may be triggering. We have, as Chair Gobin indicated, a number of people here to support you if you need to speak with somebody through a number of different modalities that work for you.

And, also, those of you for whom this is just difficult and painful, we want to make sure that you are taking care of yourselves, taking the space you need. And we'll do our best to connect you with follow-up care if necessary.

So, with that, I want to again thank you for

joining us today. I know it's a weekend. This is your

time, and we're mindful of that. So what we're going to do is we're going to sit down and listen. And we'll open up the floor.

Again, after one hour, I'll interject, and I'll excuse the press. We'll take a break. We'll make sure we make time for photographs during that break. And then we will come back. We'll take breaks throughout the day as necessary.

So if you wish to speak now as a boarding school survivor, we want to make sure we prioritize you first. So you can raise your hand.

RICHARD JAMES MUIR JR.: This is going to be tough. My name's Richard James Muir Jr. My tribal name is Sah-lee-skuh-bye (phonetic), which translates to The Two Dogs. I was sent down to Oklahoma to Chilocco, '67, '68.

Get down there, and none of the kids down there got to speak their language. You know, that was forbidden. Didn't have long hair, nothing. And they had very few staff there to watch things.

We had a priest out of Blackwell, Oklahoma, and

he was a molester who tried to get the boys. And it wasn't very nice down there.

I was always getting in trouble with the staff in

the school because they'd give you demerits. But if you cut all of your hair off, they took all of your demerits away. Well, I never had any hair down there.

And that's just -- (Technical interruption.)

Hello?

But I found the different lot was -- at 14 years old, I could go to the canteen and buy a carton of cigarettes. So they sold cigarettes to us kids down there in boarding schools.

And then we heard from some of the older kids if you want to get drunk, drink aftershave. Mennen Skin Bracer was the best. Or Listerine -- that way, they didn't know what you were doing. But that's how we got drunk. The girls would drink perfume.

There was always fights going on down there. You always had to watch your back. It just wasn't nice. And I'm going to keep this real brief.

Second year, I went down there in '68. Some of the older boys in what they call the new dorm down there started molesting the younger boys. And I wasn't going to

have none of that; so I purposely got in trouble to get sent home. Asked my girlfriend if I could sit next to her in the dorm have the door open. When they did the bed check, there I was sitting. So I got kicked out, and that was okay with me.

I don't know what anybody else went through down there, but that's just some of the stuff they did. And you had to survive. Do I remember? Oh, hell yeah.

Anyway, that's my experience down there. Just kept it real short and brief. But there was a lot of -- a lot of bad stuff happened there with the priest and the school and et cetera, et cetera. And it wasn't a very good experience for me.

So, anyway, I came back home, and that was it. And I'm done.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I'd like to stand here and honor my mother. Lottie Sampson Picard was from Swinomish. I'm Tulalip. And I remember going up and listening to my mom at nighttime tell stories of the boarding school. And I didn't have no recollection of what was going on until later on in my life when I realized that this is what happened to my mom and her

siblings.

And I just want to recognize that Auntie Ida, Auntie Annie, Uncle Gene, and Aunt Marge were all in the Tulalip Boarding School.

And I'm 80 now, and I don't have that much memory. But I wanted to tell the story; so I've asked my sister to tell. She has more memory. So this is my

sister, Virginia Bill.

VIRGINIA BILL: Hello. As she mentioned, I am the daughter of Lottie Sampson. She was a member of the Swinomish Upper Skagit Tribe. Her and all of her siblings were removed from Bow Hill, Washington, and taken to boarding schools. The youngest was 5 years old, and the oldest was 15.

The youngest spent her whole educational life at the boarding school at St. George in Puyallup and Puyallup Cushman. The other sisters were put in different schools, never together. The only two sisters here at Tulalip were forbidden to talk to each other. They weren't allowed to have time together.

As you can tell, the family bond was broken when you're sent to all different areas of the region, you

know, and you're not allowed to come home. My Aunt Annie wasn't allowed to come home till she was a senior in high school -- did she get to come back to La Conner, Washington. So family breakdown.

They weren't allowed to practice their religion. At that time, in the 1920s, they were the keepers, and they held the Shaker church altar in their home. People used to gather at Bow Hill in the nighttime so that they could pray, because you know our religion was outlawed.

But people would come at night and gather to pray. Yet they weren't allowed, once they got here, to do any of that.

The breakdown of their family structure. Then they moved our grandmother down to La Conner, and so the girls -- my mom, being one of the oldest, was the only one to return back to Bow Hill to maintain the family allotment that they continued to hold all of her life.

When she got here to Tulalip, she did talk of having to be marched everywhere. She talked about that bell that would ring. And I think it was in the 1980s we were brought here to a ceremony to commemorate this bell. I found Mom sitting alone by herself, and I asked her what was she thinking.

She said, "Thank God it's silenced. No more will that bell ever tell me where to go, where to be." She talked of being marched all the time and marching the little children.

Today I brought with me a 100-year-old photograph of them. We know our Aunt Marge is the flag bearer in the picture. The picture is standing on an easel outside in the front. As you can tell, the children are all lined up like little soldiers sitting there with their hands folded. How do you keep that many children still for that long?

She told stories about the lack of food. There was no easy going and having a joyful dinner. You had to eat what was given, and if you didn't -- and sometimes it was questionable. Remember, these were the days when they said -- I read some of the documents, and they said they were going to make Tulalip the Carlisle of the Northwest. They were going to make it an industrial school as we had never seen and, as the gentleman mentioned earlier, you know, industrialize us Natives.

I read some official papers that talked about, you know, as they mentioned, the former priest that was here and as he referred to our families as savages. You

know, when you read those articles, it breaks your heart because there are no commemorative plaques. There's no ribbons. There's no stories telling us of the success of our mothers and fathers. And, even, there is no "Congratulations, you made it."

My mother was a person who had affirmations. And in her affirmations, she talked about who she was. She would tell you at the drop of a hat: "I'm a Sampson, and I'm from Bow Hill."

She'd say, "I'm doo-wa-ha (phonetic)." And if you know anything about that, about the strength of the people, she'd tell you, "Always remember who you are and where you come from. Never forget your people."

And she would do that to her children. She'd do it to her grandchildren -- her grandchildren are sitting here in the audience -- her great-grandchildren if she was alive. She would always repeat that, always making sure that you know who you are.

The strength of which she survived is what I celebrate today. We celebrate, say her name. And in that, we continue.

My own personal story is that my father also was a boarding school survivor. He was Colville-enrolled

Indian and was at St. George Mission and at Chemawa.

He was one of the runaway people. He learned to jump the freight trains and had to endure severe punishment. Severe punishment where he hid in the hills for years in order to survive. He'd rather do that than go back to Chemawa -- yet goes on in his career to be a decorated war hero.

These are just some of the stories. It's time for us to get our elders, our ancestors recognized so that we too must heal. On that note, when I say "family," we mean children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, not yesterday but today, sitting in this room.

We thank you, Madam Secretary, for coming and being the ears to hear the stories. It's time for all of us to heal together and make a better tomorrow.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY BRYAN NEWLAND: Thank you so much for sharing your story.

JEWELL JAMES: Yeah. My name is Jewell James. I'm the head carver for the House of Tears Carvers, Lummi Nation. I'm a boarding school survivor. I would like to talk to three points.

One is my great-grandfather had to go in the

woods and hunt down two little boys that were left to die because their white stepfather didn't want to raise them. So they ended up at Tulalip Boarding School.

And old Joe, right to his dying day, he had a couple grievances. He talked about how they would burn his tongue and torture him and stick his tongue on frozen pipes outside during the winter every time he used Lummi language.

And he talked about how BIA took all of his land and sold it off and kept all the money. And he never got to live long enough for the Cobell settlement back in 2012. But it was a real traumatic experience that he would share constantly, and I'm glad he did.

But I also want to mention that my mother, when she was three, ended up in Cushman. And it was back during the Depression, and there was no jobs or income or food on the Reservation; so it was either Cushman or

starve.

And she always talked. And she'd cry about how, at the age of three, they'd put you in a basement with the rats and block off fall the light. So she said -- she would always talk about how she would have to hide in a corner and hope the rats wouldn't get her. You know, this

is at the age of three, this kind of lack of love and care that our children had at places like Cushman.

Myself, I ended up in an Oklahoma boarding school, Fort Sill. And that was during the era of -- still part of the termination era. So we didn't get into Chemawa back in the '60s. We'd go to Oklahoma like it was mentioned earlier. Some of our people ended up at Chilocco, and I ended up at Fort Sill outside of Lawton, Oklahoma.

And even though there was a lot of violence, that was okay because it was, like, intertribal youth fighting each other. You know? And that's pretty much normal there.

But at the time, we were informed that -- it was '69 -- that the boarding school system was being highly scrutinized, and so they couldn't just go in and apply the type of corporal punishment that was associated with the experience in prior generations.

But, myself, my own problem was that I got

extremely sick, and I had a severe infection. And they just locked me up in quarantine. And it was so bad; I would have to shove the medicine -- I did get some medicine finally, some pills. And I would have to shove

it through my throat with pencils because I was totally closed off.

And I happened to be adopted by a full-blood Cherokee, and he came down to the school and threatened to -- excuse my English -- kick the shit out of everybody if they didn't open up the quarantine so he could find out what was going on.

And because of his intervention, I was able to get to the hospital and get it taken care of. But then they send you home, you know, after they can't take care of your medical needs. That was a common practice of the boarding schools too. And so I'm lucky that I was able to get through that.

But I also have to say that I did enjoy meeting a lot of the other Natives as well from all across the country, and so it wasn't completely bad because a lot of times -- by that time, a lot of the damages that were known from prior generations was being stopped. They were actually starting to intervene because we're moving to a new era.

But thank you for your work. You know, I'm proud

of Henry Cagey. I know he went to an ATNI and helped support the resolution. But, more importantly, I'm proud

of the women that are Native national leaders that formed the coalition and have been addressing this matter. Like mothers and grandmothers, they've taken to their heart and have led the battle.

And for all of us that are boarding school survivors, I just want the say thank you, Native Boarding School Coalition, for getting it to your office, the Secretary of the Interior and Assistant Secretary. Thank you for holding these hearings.

ED CARRIERE: Well, I'm Ed Carriere from the Suquamish Nation, Suquamish tribal elder. And I just wanted to mention about my life on the Reservation down in Suquamish.

My great uncle and my great-grandma -- my great-uncle Lawrence Webster and my great-grandma Julia Jacobs -- they both went to boarding school.

And one story that my great-uncle, Lawrence Webster, told me -- they were requiring him to learn another language. And if he didn't learn this language, he was going to be punished. Well, he told them, "Well, I already know another language. I know my Lushootseed Indian language." So he said they didn't

punish him after that.

So I wanted to learn my Lushootseed Indian language, and Grandma Julia, my kay-ya (phonetic) -- no, that was forbidden. She wouldn't try to teach me.

Because when you're little, that's when you can learn. That's when you can pick up a language or learn it. So I lost out on that particular part of our Native way, our Native culture.

So I just wanted to bring those points up. Thank you.

MATTHEW WAR BONNET: My name is Matthew War Bonnet. I'm a Sicangu Lakota people. I was located at the Rosebud Agency in South Dakota state, which is located within the boundaries of the 1868 treaty.

Before I begin, I'd like to do a little -- I like this term because I just learned it -- a little housekeeping. And I do have some things that I'd like to pass on to Secretary Newland.

I have a medallion in the image of you and your husband, which was hand-beaded by Mel Sheldon -- (inaudible) Sheldon who asked me to pass this on to you if you would have it.

Also I have some document information of the 1950 class of St. Francis Indian Mission of which grades 1

through 12, first boys and girls, by class. My sisters are in this 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade. So if that's possible, I'd like to pass this on to Mr. Sheldon. And that would be nice.

But, as I said, first of all, I would like to pass a big wop-yu-la (phonetic), a thank-you to Secretary and Mr. Newland for being here and to the Tribe for presenting this.

Like I said before, my name is Matthew War Bonnet. I am 77 years old. And in 1952, I attended the St. Francis Indian Mission School located on the Rosebud Reservation -- at the time, I was six years old -- ten months out of the year for the first eight years of my education.

I would like to kind of, I guess, tell a little bit about my family. My dad's name is Matthew. My mother's name is Julia Swalley. My grandfather's name is Joseph War Bonnet. His wife was Jenny Yellowhair. We are Sicangu people, and our tiospaye is called the Badnation People located on Rosebud.

My dad and my mother both attended these various religious schools. My dad, when he was in the second grade, I believe, in wintertime, ran away from one of the schools. And the result of that was he froze his toes off. And in the end of his life, that's what ended it.

My mother attended the St. Francis Indian Mission School. Ten of us children from my mother and my father attended that school, St. Francis Indian Mission. My older brothers and sisters started before I did, which was in 1952. Like I said, 24/7, we were there for ten months out of the year and went home in the summertime for the two months.

My mother and my father and my uncles, my aunts, my grandparents were all Lakota speakers. I'm assuming I also was a Lakota speaker before I went to school. When I was in the school, I learned a lot of Latin, a lot of English, a lot of Spanish. Not a word of Lakota. So I'm a little weak in that. So I want to kind of acknowledge that by saying (Indigenous speech).

I come here today with a good heart to try to tell the story the best way I know how.

In the school, we would get up 5:30 in the morning every morning, seven days a week. We would go down to the playroom and line up. The 1st to the 12th grades, we'd line up. And we'd march off to church, Catholic church, every morning.

Sundays was high mass, and that was a little longer than the regular. Then we'd go off and have

breakfast from the church and march back in the boys' room.

First class in the morning was catechism. Second class was Latin. Third class was, I think, American geography or government; English; math.

In my heart's memory, I think of the kids I went to school with. And what I'm going to say now, I say with a lot of respect to their memories and their children's and their grandchildren. But I know what they went through.

At nighttime, my first time with experience with this in the dormitories -- of course, the kids would be crying because they're lonesome for their parents. Sometimes a priest who shared a little room off the side there would get disturbed about that. He would come out with his belt, pick up a kid off the bed, and whack him for crying.

Of course, when you're six years old and you see that, you get scared. You start holding things in. And you watch yourself through the daytime like walking on eggshells. Anything can get you into some kind of trouble.

The priest also had what us kids referred to as a

Jesus rope, which was a rope with several strands hanging off it. This is a light rope, one I fashioned myself in remembrance of how it was made. But they used to use this on us as well. I had a taste of that as well.

This one was my friend. A razor strap. Three -- or third grade, maybe. This strap taught me not to feel. Taught many of my friends the same.

They also had a willow stick. My friend that I served on the tribal council with at Rosebud -- telling me a story one time about how they had given him a choice what to use, what to hit him with. And he had his experience with all of this except the willow stick.

And he told me -- he says, "That didn't look too bad; so I chose that." He said, "When they hit me with that," he said, "I saw stars."

But, still, they hit him ten times. A lot of times, myself included, we'd end up in the infirmary.

I gave testimony to Congress over a year ago. I mentioned my brother Joe who he was thrown down a flight of stairs and broke his arm. I said in the testimony that I think they were also abusing him in other ways.

I think about all the kids that I went to school with in my heart's memory.

The school was operated by the Jesuits. I want people to understand this: This has never been about religion. It's been about people abusing children; men abusing children physically, emotionally, mentally.

Many of the kids I went to school with grew up to be abusers of themselves, abusers of their families,

abusers of their communities until they just quit. I know this because what was in them is in me.

When I got out of there at the eighth grade, I was working with my dad. He had this tripod picked up behind his house, pulling motors from cars. I put a rope around there and went to hang myself. It's the first time I saw my dad cry. I don't want my kids to feel that way.

My dad never told me about his toes until I got to be a sophomore in high school, about how he froze them off when he ran way from the school. That's how I feel when I talk this way. I don't want to hurt my kids. My parents didn't want to hurt us.

I remember words in the church. (Latin speech.) Latin terminology.

Never heard a word. (Indigenous speech) -- never heard that.

Some eight, nine years ago, I contacted the

Milwaukee Archdiocese which controls all the Catholic schools in the Dakotas. And they sent somebody from that school -- or from that Archdiocese down to talk. I met him at the Sacred Heart over in Everett.

He came in, and I looked at him. And I said, "I know you. You're Father Murse (phonetic). You were at that school."

"Yeah, I'm glad you remember me," he said.

"Yeah," I said. "I remember you. You were fist-fighting Thomas White Hat who was a high school boy. And you were fist-fighting him out in front of the boys' room."

He said to me, "No, that wasn't me. You're wrong."

That told me that that discussion with them wasn't going to go anywhere. But in short of it, he asked me what I wanted. I said it ten years ago and nine years ago, and I'll say it again, and I've been saying it all along:

I want the church to take responsibility for what it did, not only to me but to our communities. I want them to go to our children and our grandchildren and to tell them about the innocent children that came to their

school and what they did to them -- so our children today and our grandchildren can begin to understand that their parents or their grandparents weren't really mean people but they were lovely people; and what happened to them put this thing in them.

And I want you to start working with them to help them to make them heal to be -- some program to help them. If you do that, I'll come back and work for you.

Have not heard from them yet.

There are many schools like that in South Dakota

Stephan Holy Mission, St. Joseph, Holy Rosary Mission, which now is Red Cloud.

St. Francis Mission continued to operate as a religious school until, I believe, mid-'60s where they began to get a school board from the local people to sit on the board.

My friend Mike Boats (phonetic) provided me with the information that I gave to you in that packet. In that packet, also, is a CD where I talk about my family and what's happened to us.

I bless the Creator for giving me the parents that he gave me. They were strong parents, a strong man and a strong woman, that provided us good direction.

There are many parents that did that for their children.

And I want to thank you, wop-yu-la, for doing this. I've been around enough to know that, a lot of times, you'll get criticism for your work you're doing. And I want you to know that on my behalf and my family's behalf, you'll never hear a criticism from us.

(Indigenous speech.)

RUTH JIM: (Indigenous speech.) Good day, my friends and relatives. My name is Ruth Jim, and I'm a Yakama Tribal Council person.

I graduated from Fort Sill Indian School in 1966.

I still have two close friends that I keep in touch with almost on a weekly basis. One comes from Cherokee, North Carolina, and the other comes from Pawnee, Oklahoma.

But today I am here to express that the Yakama Indian Reservation had a boarding school located at Fort Simcoe, which is now a state park. Our people -- some families, all of their children were taken to Fort Simcoe. And in my family, my aunt was taken to Fort Simcoe, and my mother was taken to Warm Springs Boarding School in Oregon.

And when they took her there, she wasn't allowed

to come home for the summer. She stayed there year-round. Finally, one day -- I don't know. She didn't tell me who or how, but she caught a ride home.

And we were fortunate enough, our family, that they still spoke Ichishkin, our Indian language. But my aunt, in her home, none of her children are fluent or even speak Indian. On our reservation, I believe we have very few fluent speaking people.

And I believe it's because most of our people were sent to boarding school. But we're fortunate enough to have our Indian language classes. And, hopefully, we'll be able to retain our language. That's our biggest prayer.

I thank all the leaders from the different

organizations that are here to listen. And it's good to see the former leader -- or the leaders in this room that I've been able to work with at AT&I and CAI. And I thank you for this opportunity to speak. (Indigenous speech.)

ERNESTINE LANE: Good afternoon, everybody. My name is Cho-hat-cha (phonetic). In English, Ernestine Lane, Lummi.

I didn't know what I was getting myself into. I

didn't know that I was -- I thought I might have been the only survivor of a boarding school. But it's so good to hear and know that we're all the same.

We all think different. We all are silent. We keep ourself to ourself. We don't tell all because we can't tell all because we might get a spanking. We didn't know that. My mom was very strict. My grandmother was very strict.

My sister -- here's my youngest sister sitting next to me. And she never went to a boarding school, but she went to public school. And I went to Chemawa Indian School. And I graduated from Oregon; Salem, Oregon.

So there was a lot of things I seen, lot of things I learned, lot of things I don't want to remember. But we keep our secrets, and that's one of the things that we do. We keep our secrets all the time. We don't talk

about it. We should talk about it.

But it's okay to heal. We're not healed yet. It's going to take -- I'm 99 years old, and I'm still healing yet. And it's hard. It's very hard.

It's hard because I'm learning from you. You're my teachers here. You're the ones that are teaching me today.

And so any time you talk to someone that's more educated -- I think they are more educated than I am. But I'm educated. I went to Chemawa, BIA.

And it was fun. We had a bed to sleep in. We had food to eat. Like I heard the -- I can hear the bell that would ring everyday.

Bell: Get up. Bell: Come back to room. Bell: Line up for lunch. A bell to go back to school. A bell to come back from school. A bell to go to school. A bell to go to evening classes. A bell to go to a dance. A bell to go to a football game.

So it was really, really -- that's the way it was. That's the system of it. That's how we heard. That's how we -- I guess they thought we couldn't hear. They didn't want to talk to us.

But we did have a Catholic schooling. And it was strict. It was strict, harsh, hard learning. Harsh. Hard learning. I call it hard learning.

My mom was a hard teacher. My little sister -- I used to have to babysit for my sister right here. She didn't go to a public school. She went to Lummi Day School.

So I was raised on the Island at Lummi. I rode a

boat across every day to go to school to catch the bus. It was hard, but it was fun. Everything was fun to me, but it was hard, hard, hard living.

I can remember my shoes had holes where the rocks would come in. I can remember all those kind of things. You know, my socks would be full of rocks when I reach the school. We all went through that. We all went through that because we didn't have good shoes.

So I go to the government, U.S. Navy. We had a U.S. Navy up there. The U.S. Navy used to give us gigantic Navy shoes. So there were shoes that were really big. And we had Army blankets, which was good. We had everything that was government, which was okay.

Otherwise, I'm okay today. I am 93 years old, going on 94. So thank you for everything.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY BRYAN NEWLAND: Thank you for sharing. We're going to do one more speaker right now, and then we will go into a break and excuse our friends from the different outlets. And after our break,

then we'll return and continue these sessions.

DONALD HATCH JR.: First, I want to

introduce myself. Donald Hatch Jr. (Indigenous speech) is my Indian name.

First of all, Madam Secretary, I welcome you here. You know, if I had my way, we'll adopt you to our tribe so we can keep you here.

And Rick Larsen -- good friend of mine. I knew his mom and dad, worked with his dad.

But one thing -- before I start talking about what my mom, anything. The government -- Rick and, you know, Madam Secretary -- we, as Indian people, never been apologized yet. We, as Indian people, have never been apologized yet. The Blacks have been. The Japanese have been.

And, though, when that shooting happened down there at Las Vegas, that was the biggest massacre in U.S. history. You know, I thought, "What happened to our history, our people?" I got massacred.

You know, we look at history, and we talk about it and how we're going to get back to this and how our children, our ancestors think about that; how our children now think about that. You know, that's some of the things -- you know, the apology. I want to carry it on.

You know, I'm 83 years old, and I've been in

politics for 29 and a half years on the tribal council and 16 years on the school board in the Marysville School District. 11,000 students in the school district in Marysville.

Believe it or not, you think we were fighting the government schools then? We're fighting it a little bit now as well. I stayed on for 16 years on account of things like this too, as well. We got to work together and make sure this happens.

My mom was honoring her brothers and sisters just right down the road a ways where the school was at and where they ate all the time. As the crow flies, probably about 15 blocks from there was their home. They could see where their mom and dad were, but they couldn't go home.

When they walked to church -- they walked to church, and their mom and dad -- this Catholic church right up on the hill here -- and their mom and dad, my grandmother and grandfather, was behind all my aunts and uncles. And they couldn't turn around. If they turned around, looked at their mom and dad, they got whopped on the hand at the Catholic church.

You know, a lot of things -- I'm a strong Catholic, but only strong -- you know, it's things that happened in life.

And I told my priest -- you know, I says, "This happened." Right now, he's -- he had a prayer last night that everything goes well here today. You know, the thoughts are up there to be able to change, you know, and to make things happen, positive, for our Indian people.

We need, Madam Secretary, some changes. I don't know what the changes are, Rick. And I don't know what the changes are, but we got to do some changes.

We got to do some changes for our people that are passed on, the ones that are still here. The elder that last spoke here, 93 years old -- she's got children's children's children. We need to take care of them.

All the ones that have that, all the history that's out there -- we need to help. We're saying, "Help, help, help. Help us."

I pray every morning and every night at my altar that we're going to get help. I prayed for this meeting this morning when I got up this morning at my altar and last night before I went to bed. Hopefully it'll be positive here when we have this meeting and everything goes well.

But, Madam Secretary and Congressman Larsen, I want to make sure the message gets back there and we do some things. I don't want this meeting just to happen and pretty soon we're done and we're going to go to another

meeting.

You know, I don't want this. Seen this before. Done this before. Okay. Let's move on now. I don't want these things to happen like that.

I heard my nephew, Dick Muir over there talking about where he went -- to Chilocco -- and the things happened. All my relatives that spoke and all the ones that are behind me that maybe are not going to be able to speak or don't want to speak -- we have to think about them.

Because everybody in here is hurting. Everybody that's in this room is hurting.

I want to thank the tribal council for having this -- making this happen. You know, Chairman Gobin and the ones that are here -- Mel, Marlin, Debby -- I want to thank you for being here and being part of this. I wish all the council was here because this is very, very, very important.

A lot of people are hurting on our reservations, not just this reservation but our relatives on other reservations. So make sure, when we do this, we have everybody here, because this is one of the things we always should be carrying on -- the love we have for everybody. And that's why we're all here -- because we

25 love everybody.

1 I want to make sure that when we carry on with
2 everything after this is over, we can say, yes, it's
3 working. It's working.
4 But I want to thank all my relatives behind me
5 and the ones in front of me and left and right side of me
6 for being here and sharing the love you have for each one
7 of us, each one in here, because I love you just as much
8 and much more because I prayed hard this morning.
9 Thank you, thank you, thank you.
10
11 ASSISTANT SECRETARY BRYAN NEWLAND: So
12 what we're going to do right now -- we're going to go into
13 our first break. I know the tribes have agreed to provide
14 lunch for attendees right out here -- Madam Chair;
15 right? -- if you're facing us, on the left side, outside.
16 We'll take a break, and after you've had a chance
17 to eat, we'll come back in and do some photos. And then
18 we will continue to hear from folks. Thank you.
19 (Break, 12:03 to 1:26 p.m.)
20
21 ASSISTANT SECRETARY BRYAN NEWLAND: All
22 right. Thank you, everybody, for bearing with us. I want

to thank you, Madam Chair and board members and everyone who helped provide that lunch. I know how much work goes into harvesting and cooking and serving and preparing; so

let's please give a round of applause to the team that prepared that.

So we're going to continue with our listening session. I see our mic runners here. You guys are doing an awesome job of helping us get to folks who want to speak.

So we're going to go for another hour, 90 minutes, and then maybe take a short restroom break and then see where we're at. We're going to try to stay as long as we can this afternoon to hear from as many people as we can.

So we'll go to our first speaker.

WAH-LAY-SUH: First of all, my name is Wah-lay-suh (phonetic) from Swinomish. I just want to thank all the ones that spoke earlier. You know, we hear testimony, and we get touched by some of the words that we hear.

Just want to thank the board for allowing this to take place today. I commend you on the work that's

happening.

I want to talk about Ah-so-neet-sa (phonetic), Grandma, kay-ya. She was part of the boarding school here in Tulalip. And many of the stories that she talked about, what she want through -- you know, hearing that,

that goes through our families. We deal with trauma in our families. How we work through that, it's a lifetime healing.

One of the stories I'd like to share with you is part of that trauma. You know, when you're being raised and you work in the white man world and they tell you you can't do this or that, you have to follow their law -- that's hard. Hard to do on an Native person.

This all connects. We're all connected through this boarding school, one by the other, whether it be the hurt, whether it be the language.

How many of you know about the Biden administration, their ten-year? How many of you know about that -- what they want to do with our language?

I look around. How many fluent speakers do we have in this room? You know, that's the connection, the connection I want to make today, that language. How many of you know a few words of your language?

That's where we're at today.

That's when I learned -- what I learned from my people -- (Indigenous speech.) You know, I said that so easy. And I learned that language. The people that traveled here today to be with you, you know, I challenge to make that a lifelong work.

You know, the government, what they did to

grandmas and grandpas -- take away the song, take away the dance, take away the language.

How many of your tribal members, tribal leaders in your own village have to pay for that language out of your own back pocket? How many of you have to do that? Do you have to go for a grant? Do you have to apply for a grant? Do you have to challenge others to do that language, to have that?

You know, as I look around, I see all of you. You know, I'm hurt about the language. I wish they would take it back to D.C., make it into law that the government fully pay every tribe for what has happened to our ancestors, not just ten years through the Biden administration. Should be a lifelong payment, knowing that they take Grandma or Grandpa in the backyard, take away their speaking. The ska-pahs, the kay-yas.

Those stories, my grandmother shared, Lizzie Scott Ah-so-neet-sa. So I just wanted to share a few words today. Thank you.

JOHN MCCOY: Good afternoon. I'm John McCoy. Next to me is my wife and my sister, Jeannie and Carolyn. And I'm a retired state senator here in the great state of Washington.

And listening to a lot of the things that some of

these individuals are asking for -- we've started them in the state of Washington, but tribes need to also step up. And maybe the feds give them money to beef up their culture departments. So that's where most of the languages are at.

In the state of Washington -- well, there's 500 dialects in the state of Washington of Lushootseed, and so not every -- not one size fits all. So I passed legislation that tribes certify language teachers and that they go into the local school districts and teach children how to speak the language.

Which leads me to -- when I was growing up, I would ask my father, who was a fluent speaker, if he would teach me how to speak. And his only response was, "They

beat it out of me. They beat it out of me." So he wouldn't pass it on.

So those are some of the traumatic events that prevent our language from growing -- is the memory of being beaten for teaching the language. So we have to work hard at that.

And I myself -- I was raised in San Diego. And I joined the Air Force. The Air Force taught me computer programming; so I had a good career in that job. But that's my contribution here.

Yes, the feds need to step up and help fund

language departments so that the tribes can bolster the languages and get people into the schools. There's a lot I could talk about in that regard, but I think I need to let others speak.

Oh, there was another incident in my dad's life. I was stationed at Tinker Air Force Base in Oklahoma City. And my parents were retired, and they were traveling around the country in an RV. And they stopped to see me at Tinker.

And so we were doing the touristy thing. And we went to the Cowboy Hall of Fame. And we were wandering around, looking at all those sculptures and paintings and

everything. We kind of got separated.

And my mom said, "It's time to go. Go find your dad."

So I was scattered to find my dad. And I went walking around this bank of paintings, and there he was, standing in front of this picture, crying. I'd never seen my dad cry before.

And I said, "What's wrong?"

And he said, "That was me at Chemawa."

It was a painting of a kid on horseback driving cattle in a driving snowstorm. That was his job -- herding cattle. Because at Chemawa at the time in the '30s, they were told if they didn't grow it, they didn't

eat. So they had to grow things to eat.

Thank you for listening.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Welcome. I'm really happy you're here today to listen to us that need help.

And, to me, we're so under the thumbs of the government. Everything we do, we have to go through the government. We're still like this. Deep down in our hearts, you can feel it. You can feel it in the bottom of

your stomach. And that's what we're passing along to our children if you know. If you don't know it, it's there. The kids can feel it. The kids can feel our pain. We're still under the thumb of the government. We have to ask permission.

I went to Lummi Day School, and it was a good school. We had a maypole. We had a basketball team. We had baseball. We had cheerleaders. We had plays. We had people that could sing and play instruments.

And then one day while I was in sixth grade, they closed the school down and moved us to a public school. Well, I think, because Ferndale wanted our money, they wanted what we had. And they took it. And they took the kids with us.

When we got to Ferndale, we weren't really

discriminated at. People looked at us like we were different, you know? Like we were different. But we were good.

We were put in the back of the room, back of the buses. They wouldn't let us sit in the front -- the bus drivers.

But where we came from in Lummi, we had Indian bus drivers. We had two buses. And they were both our

janitors, our gardeners at Lummi. The wives were the cooks. We all had home cooking. It was really great.

There were some teachers that were kind of off the handle. There were two of them. We had science teachers. We had all kinds of different teachers -- music teachers, English teachers.

But, you know, we lost all that. I really think today we still could have an Indian -- could have had our Lummi Day School yet. But that was all taken away because of the funding of the public schools.

Another thing -- my mother, our mother, went to St. George's School that we talked about. One lady talked about St. George's. And she talked about how they did different things, how they learned how to do different things.

But one day they asked her -- when people came from California and asked if they could buy her, she was

13 years old. They wanted to buy her and take her away. And she said no. She refused. She absolutely -- so things like that happened.

Like people said, we don't talk about it. You don't talk about these things.

People are good. Henry had a friend whose name

was -- well, he's from back East -- and he told me that he came to my house, and he told me he was in a boarding school from the age of three. Think about your little grandchildren that are three years old. They put him in a boarding school, and he was there until he graduated with Henry. That's how sad it is.

My husband and I went down to Chemawa and dedicated all the graves that were there, the homeless people, the graves that they didn't know who to send these people, these children home to. We went down and (inaudible).

So I don't know have much more to say. But (Indigenous speech). Love you. Thank you for being here. Thank you.

CAROLINE O'NEILL: Hi. My name is Caroline O'Neill. My father was Chester Robert Ashman. We're Tulalip.

My dad was born in 1927. He was a month old when

his father had passed away. His mother was Helen Young, and she lived until he was six or eight -- I'm not sure which.

But he had to go. He went to the boarding

school. He went to Chemawa. He was also in Cushman. They told him that he had tuberculosis.

And a couple years later -- I'm not quite sure when he was at Cushman, but I did find it in the annuals at the Marysville High School library that he was at Marysville High School in '47, which would have been -- he would have been 19 or 20 at that point. So there was two years when he was at Cushman. I'm not sure if that's before he came back to Marysville.

But during the time he was at Chemawa, he wrote several letters to my uncle Hal asking to come home. And he wouldn't let him come home. And so, finally, when he did come home, I believe he was at school for a year and a half here or a year here at Marysville. And then I believe he went to play baseball. Played in the minor leagues. I think he got drafted about that time.

And then when he was -- I think when he was 22, he went into the service, and they said that he never had tuberculosis. But he was at the hospital for tuberculosis.

And I just see that these kids that were, you

know, in the boarding schools weren't treated with a lot of love. We didn't have a lot of that when I was growing

up.

My dad was a good man -- worked hard and provided for his family. He took us -- they lived all over the place growing up. They lived in California, then they came back to the reservation.

My sister was born in California. By brother was born in Washington here. And then I have another brother that was born in Alaska. And then they came back here, and I was number four out of four.

And we actually lived next to the Gobins in the government homes. And then they took us to California when I was about three and a half. And so I grew up down there.

And growing up, he never really talked about the boarding school at all. It was, "I went to boarding school," and that was about it. He didn't mention anything about it. And probably about last year in October when they had the awareness -- it just breaks my heart that, you know these kids were taken away.

But I think he did a great job with what he had. He raised four children and -- along with my mom. But my hands go up to my dad, and I honor him today. Thank you.

PATRICIA WHITEFOOT: I have some photos that are going to be shared with you and also files. So my niece is going to bring them up. (Indigenous speech.)

Good afternoon, my people, my friends and relatives. I greet you with my indian name, Twal-put (phonetic), and my English name. I'm Patricia Whitefoot. I acknowledge the Tulalip tribes. Thank you for allowing us into your territory, the families and the ancestors of this sacred land.

I also share warm greeting with the U.S. Secretary of Interior, Deb Haaland, a good friend, a lovely woman. Please take care of yourself. And also the Assistant Secretary, Bryan Newland.

I just want to share a little bit about, you know, the history of the Native American Boarding School Coalition. And I'll do that also at the end.

To acknowledge the work of the Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition, I just want to say that it was a vision that many of us had years ago before it became the NABS. And it was through perseverance, particularly of women, as Jewell James said earlier, that got this going. And today, to be able to be here to witness it, and to be able to see our staff with NABS -- it makes my heart happy that we are all here at this point in time in the lives of our people.

I'm just going to share a little time line for myself personally. As a young child, my maternal grandparents Elias and Lillie Whitefoot raised several grandchildren in the community of Medicine Valley, which sits at the foothills of the Cascade Mountains on the Yakama Reservation. They descended from the Northwest Tribes of Yakama, the Tie-na-kum (phonetic), the Klickitat, (inaudible), Spokane. And my descendency also includes Diné with my sisters.

As a young child, my grandmother was sent to the Fork Simcoe Military School. At age five, I would end up at the Yakama Indian Mission. Both of these institutions are in White Swan on the Yakama Reservation, and they had a great impact on my life.

During our young childhood living on our ranch, our life followed the traditional practices of sustaining our livelihood -- including the livestock, animals, and crops -- as well as following our migratory ways of life in harvesting the salmon, the deer, the roots, and the berries throughout the Columbia River Basin and tributaries.

In sustaining our way of life early into the 1960s and '70s, the family would experience social, political, and intergenerational trauma that took its toll on our family. Our grandparents were aging. The menfolk

were fighting in World War II -- that was my uncles.

Alcohol impacted the community, and our fishing livelihood would be devastated with the inundation of the Celilo Falls in the Columbia River. And so by having this inundated, the falls came -- the Dalles Dam was established.

So some of the history of Fort Simcoe Boarding School is important to know. In 1852, St. Joseph Mission was established in Ahtanum, which was west of Yakima, with settlers moving in on tribal land which was later ceded under the Treaty of 1855.

In the Treaty of 1855 with not only the Yakama Nation but also other plateau tribes, the intent was to contain the Indians on the reservation, enforce the treaty, and to keep the white people off the lands; however, this failed when gold was discovered and white men would repeatedly encroach on our Yakama tribal lands.

And a short six months later, due to the settler encroachment on our lands, war broke out in the Seattle, Yakama, and Spokane territories. Governor Stevens's goal was to impose martial law and to exterminate the Indians with his army. In a four-year period, wars escalated, and tribes joined forces with the Nisqually, the Yakama, and

Klickitat; and further east, a few years later, were the Spokane, the Palouse, Yakama, and plateau tribes.

In the 1865s, Washington Territory's superintendent reports Indians needed to be civilized; and the children were the most salvageable by assimilating them with education and taking the wildness out of them by removing them from their families.

So during the 1860s, the Indian Service turns over Fort Simcoe and makes it a military boarding school, which was originally established to contain the Indians on the reservation. And a story I share with you -- I'll share this photo with you later -- I have a quote from a good colleague, Dr. Denise Lajimodiere, who shares from a young girl, a Yakama girl. She says:

"I was four years old when stolen and taken to Chemawa, Oregon. The matron grabbed me and my sister. She stripped off our clothes, laid us in a trough, and scrubbed our genitals with lye soap, yelling at us that we were filthy savages, dirty. I had to walk on my tiptoes screaming in pain."

This was by a Yakama girl who was very young while at the Chemawa Indian Boarding School.

Similarly, at Fort Simcoe Military School, the

Methodist church was put in charge of the boarding school where these churches were provided federal funds to assimilate Native children. The children's long hair was cut. Their Indian names were discarded. Christian names

were given to them. And they were baptized so they would have proper Christian names.

Children were to attend school regularly. Children followed a military regimented life of gardening, sowing, studies, and mealtime throughout their waking day, just as you heard earlier with the bell. Every time you were to make some kind of change in your life, it would be by the bell. If children spoke their language or used cultural attire, it was destroyed. Children were whipped and their mouth washed with lye soap.

These are stories my grandmother didn't tell me of what she experienced. But through research, I began to learn more about that experience that she had. My experience wouldn't be as severe, but I know the pain of being separated from family.

During this time, the settlers also introduced diseases that impacted the lives of our children with measles and whooping cough, and the disease spread among our region's tribes. The Commission on Indian Affairs

cites boarding school beds are to replace pine wood beds and to address the health needs of our children.

In the late 1800s, our children would run away from school and, on return, would face harsh punishment with whippings and beatings, which resulted not only in bruises but also some of the children dying.

And so later in life -- again, this is to provide context. 1887, the Dawes Act was enacted so isolate Indians with the intent of creating Indians as farmers on the reservations. Each Indian was to provide a parcel of land which fractured the collective tribal land base. For land not claimed, the land was open to settlers.

In 1922, the Fort Simcoe Military School closed in White Swan, and the Yakama Indian Agency was located 30 miles east of Fort Simcoe in Toppenish. Children were then sent to other boarding schools such as Chemawa, Pasco Indian School, the Yakama Indian Mission in White Swan.

And, of course, we all know on June 2nd, in exchange for the right to tax Native people, the United States Government unilaterally extended U.S. citizenship to Native Americans by passing the Indian Citizen Act over the objection of some Native nations. As the citizens of their tribes in the United States, members of federally

recognized tribes should have been able to register and participate in both nontribal elections and their own tribal elections.

The Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 abolishes the 1887 Dawes Act allotment system, establishes tribal governments, and affirms the secretary's trust responsibilities to Indian tribes and Alaskan Natives.

And, Secretary Haaland, I know you have a huge

job, but I see us being here to support you and continue the work that needs to be addressed in addressing these atrocities toward our people.

More recently, I followed the work of Vineto Lloyd Jr. (Phonetic), and he states that knowledge and understanding ultimately should be the goal of understanding and wisdom.

The intersections that I talk about of our humanity is about taking action in reclaiming our truth, justice, and healing toward a collective vision of having safe and secure environments, stable communities, healthy lifestyles, thriving successful children.

So I just want to finish by sharing the journey of NABS. In 2011, a symposium was held with the United States and Canadian leaders to discuss the Canadian Truth

and Reconciliation Commission and the goal to advocate for a U.S. commission.

In June 2012, the collision was incorporated as 501(c)(3) nonprofit under the Navajo nation. We created a national strategy to increase public awareness and cultivate healing of the profound trauma experienced by individuals, families, and communities resulting from the U.S. boarding school policy of 1869.

NABS was fiscally sponsored by the Native American Rights Fund until it became financially

independent in 2015. And we have persevered in our advocacy with the bill to implement the Boarding School Healing and Reconciliation Commission, and we will continues to do so.

And I close with this final quote from the United Nations Declarations on the Rights of Indigenous People. In building Indian nations, I come here as an advocate and proponent about building our Indian nations. And the declaration states, "Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right, they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development."

Thank you.

SECRETARY DEB HAALAND: Patsy, if that's in writing and you would like to, we would love to have a copy of that if you would like for us to have a copy.

NANCY SHIPPENTOWER: Good afternoon. Deb, thank you and Bryan for coming and listening to testimony.

And, Teri, thank you and your board for putting this historical event on because that's what it is. It's an historical event.

I was sitting here listening to the stories, and I was remembering the stories of my grandpa. My grandpa's

Willy Frank. Let me introduce myself.

My name is Nancy Shippentower. I'm from the Puyallup Tribe, but I'm also Tulalip. My mother is Janet McLeod, Yat-see-too (phonetic) from Tulalip Tribe. My father is Don McLeod from the Puyallup Tribe. But we grew up on Frank's Landing because my grandpa, Willy Frank Sr., and my grandma, Angeline, told me they raised their children on Frank's Landing.

So anyway my grand- -- I don't know -- he always looked old to me. And he always had his hand over his ears. But he told us about the boarding schools.

And he'd say, "Do you know why those nuns wore long, black dresses?"

And we'd sit there. We were just kids. And we'd say, "No."

And he goes, "Because they would rape the Indian boys and get pregnant."

Why they had orphanages was because their children -- they adopted their own children plus the Indian girls' children because they were raped by the priest.

So then I was sitting there thinking about my brother. This elder right here reminded me of my brother. We both went to a boarding school in Oklahoma. I went to an Anandarko Riverside. He went to Chilocco. And he was,

like, 12.

And my brother was on this road that he shouldn't have been on, and it wasn't my parents' choice that we went to boarding school. We chose to go. And then I have sisters and brothers who went to Chemawa.

But, anyway, I was sitting there, and I seen this guy walking down the sidewalk. And we're all looking because you had rules when you lived in these dorms. And nobody was supposed to be there. And I'm looking. Like,

who is that? He looks familiar.

It was my 12-year-old brother. He hitchhiked from Chilocco to Anandarko. It took him three days.

This one woman picked him up, and she goes, "Who lets a young man like you out roaming the streets like this?"

And he said, "I'm running away from a boarding school." And so she fed him and put him on a bus.

And the matrons and them come and say, "Oh, we gotta send him back. Send him back right now."

And I said, "You're not sending my brother anywhere."

And I called my mom, and my mom called Bill Rifenberg (phonetic) because he was the one that sent all the kids to the boarding schools.

And, anyway, the people at my school wanted to

send him back, and I wouldn't let them. In fact, I took him to my room, which was illegal because he was a boy. But I wouldn't let them come in my room because I was protecting my brother. Because he was just crying, pitiful. He was crying.

And I just did everything I could to help him. And then my mom called, and they got him a ticket to come

home. But he wouldn't get on the bus with the matrons because he was afraid they were going to take him back to this horrible school.

He was telling me that -- guy was talking about how the older kids picked on the younger kids. That's what he went through, the older kids picking on the younger kids, raping them and abusing them and beating them. That's what they were taught at these boarding schools over there.

But, anyway, he got to come home. My brother was a hardcore alcoholic. Beautiful man. I miss him. He was very young when he died. But I think it's all the pain he went through.

So then my husband -- he was from Umatilla Cayuse. They had their own school, Catholic school. And he'd tell me these stories, and I'd say, "Yeah, right. I mean, who does that today?"

And then, finally, he said, "You need to listen

to these stories. They're true stories."

And he talked about the blue hands. How do your hands get blue?

He goes, "Because they beat your hands until they're black and blue."

And he said that he was an altar boy, and he was raped by the priests. He was sexually abused by the nuns. And his hands were beat black and blue.

And his dad -- his dad wasn't always around all the time. And his dad came home that time, and he goes, "Son, let me look at your hands."

And he put his hands -- (gesturing).

He said, "No, no. Let me look at your hands."

Finally, he grabbed his hands, and he seen what they looked like. And he put his kids in the car, and he went to that school. And he went looking for that man that beat his son like that.

He went looking for a priest, and they all hid from him. And then he said, "My kids are not coming back here."

And his mother said, "Oh, but it was all Edmond's fault. It wasn't the nuns' fault. It's Edmond's fault." See, that's how they whitewashed the parents -- you know, blame the child.

And so then -- I had to write notes. I've never

had to write notes before. But, you know, today's a really heavy-duty day. And you look at the pictures. And, in my mind, I have these beautiful, beautiful

great-granddaughters. You have to see them. Great-grandchildren. And I'm thinking that could have been them.

And I could not see my great-grandkids going through that. And I can imagine what the parents felt when they couldn't find their children; when they couldn't run after them and get them off those carts they hauled them off with; when they beat them.

You know, I was watching Canada, what they've done so far. Canada government gave their people -- the Indigenous people $541 million for all of Canada. And they said it's not going to help anything, but if we can help some, this will help.

And not only that, they apologized. They apologized to their people for the atrocities they caused to the children. Yet the United States has done nothing, nothing but take and take.

So we're talking about films. Dennis Banks did a film over 15 years ago on what he went through in boarding school in Ojibwe.

It took him a long time to forgive his mother because he thought his mother gave him away, just gave him

away. And he was in this school for years; so when he got

out, she tried to greet him. He wouldn't have nothing to do with her because this is what they do: "Oh, your mother didn't want you. We got to take you. And in the meantime, we're going to beat the hell out of you."

"Beat the Indian out of you" -- that's what they said. Beat the Indian out of you.

And the trauma affects all of us. My grandmother went to a boarding school. Her name was May McCoy. She's from here.

In her mind, she was telling me that she felt like they took them, put them on a train, took them to Alaska when it was wintertime and then took them to Arizona during the summertime.

And she goes, "And you never made friends with anybody." She was only five when she first went. She couldn't talk to her sisters or anybody. And she said that you can't make friends because they would die. And at night, you could hear the babies just crying and kids crying and crying. And if you wet the bed, they put you in the cold shower and put you outside if it was wintertime.

I remember my dad talking about him and his sister. They were in Chemawa. When he was in elementary school, his sister was just homesick, just homesick.

And he goes, "Well, come on, Sister. I'm going to take you home. We're going home."

And he said, "And we hitchhiked. And then we'd hide if we seen a weird car coming because we thought it was somebody looking for us."

And he goes, "When we get home -- we get home, and my sister's so happy, and I'm so happy. And my mom says, 'And what are you two doing here?'"

And they said, "Well, we didn't like the school. They were doing" --

"No, you're going back."

And that's kind of like -- I don't know what they told the parents. But, you know, my dad was really upset because him and his sister had to go back to Chemawa.

But, you know, our parents suffered. Our grandparents suffered. We still suffer today from that. "Generational trauma" they call it. You know, it's way back here what happened.

I was telling my sister my daughter's -- my daughter, Lu-wong (phonetic), where is she? She's here. She drives me all over.

But I tell her stories all the time. And I was saying, "I didn't remember this. I was too young to remember this. How do I remember this?"

She goes, "Because you love history, Mom." She

goes, "You can quote history. You can talk about history."

But I just think today's an historical event. I think it's good when tribal leaders come together and exchange ideas, exchange thoughts, exchange stories. They need to do it more often. They need to come together, all, all the tribes. Don't have to be nothing but just to come together.

Because, see, like the lady said over there, they still control us. And they do. You know, we have to ask permission. Even with our casinos, with our salmon, our everything -- we have to negotiate and ask permission.

I always tell them, you know, when I'm at these things, you know, "You guys took your 50 percent a long time ago." It's time for us to take it. It's time for us to take ours back, and that's what we need to do.

Thank you all for coming. Thank you. Thank you, Teri and the board, for what you've done today. It's very good to have you here. Thank you very much.

ELEANOR MILLER: I'm happy to be here with you. I'm happy to hear the stories. I'm one of those with stories.

My grandparents on both sides went to the schools

25 against their will. My father, Muscogee Creek Indian from

1 Oklahoma, removed on the Trail of Tears from the
2 Georgia-Alabama area.
3 He was 15 years old. His family hid him so they
4 could not take him away like they did his older brothers
5 and sisters. He was 15 years old, and he missed being
6 with the kids, the other Indian kids, and so he asked if
7 he could go to school. And he didn't know what the
8 schools were like, but he did go. He went to Haskell.
9 You know, we all know about that school.
10 And my mother was from here. And the first thing
11 she told me when I got ready to go to school is, "We're
12 not Tulalip; we're Snohomish." She said, "They think they
13 own us, but they don't know we own ourselves. We have our
14 own soul, our own heart."
15 I'm thankful for my grandmother, Sarah Sheldon.
16 She went to the first grade, and how she managed to stay
17 away from the school, I don't know. She spoke the
18 language. Her children were taught the language.
19 There's a really terrible story in our family.
20 My uncle, Martin Williams, was very, very sick. And those
21 of you who know about the Catholic church -- the boys and
22 girls stayed on one side, and the parents had to stay on

the other side of the church. They could not speak to each other, but they could look at each other. And looks can tell a lot. The children knew they were loved, but

the parents could not tell them.

So what happened with my uncle, who was very, very sick -- they did not tell anyone -- now this talking about right here -- did not tell the folks that he was sick. They sent him home, believing that he was dying. But he did not die.

And my grandfather, Robert Sheldon -- his great-grandfather, my grandfather -- said, "I'm never going to allow a child of mine to ever go to that school. I'm ready to fight."

So what they did with him is they put him in that cement-block jail that was discussed a little while ago. And every day, the superintendent came down and says, "Well, Bob, you ready to send your kids to school?"

He said, "No."

I don't know how he ate. I don't know if someone brought his food. But the only way he could look outside out onto the water was the bar. Otherwise, it was just cold cement. Small, tiny building.

So there was a white man who knew my grandfather.

And he's the one that gave the land for the red church.

And he told my grandfather, "I got a house in town, and you can buy it for $1 down and so much a month."

Well, that was all well and good, but they were the only family that lived on the reservation to go to the

Marysville School District. And they wanted to be with the Indian kids, even though it wasn't -- they knew what kind of a place it was.

My stepfather, Sam Alexander, told me how the kids would run away, and if they were caught, they would chain them to their bed with a ball and chain so they couldn't get out.

I interviewed several people about the school. One story was "I used to get money. But then my brothers and I had to sign papers, and we never saw money again. They would give us a little bit of money at the school, but no more." So much was taken.

Now, on my father's side, my name, Eleanor Miller, my maiden name -- but the name Miller's not an Indian name. Well, Opothleyahola, the chief of the Upper and Lower Creek Nation, before they were made to walk on that long trail that the Cherokees call the Trail of Tears -- they had to walk to Oklahoma from there.

And they were given names because they couldn't spell the Indian names. So the name Miller's what I had. But I've never been comfortable with it because my father told me that was not our name.

"Yahola" is a word kind of like king. But "opothle" -- "opothle" means fog, the fog. And that -- because they have to go through many areas of fog; so he

was given that new name.

Now, I went to Chemawa Indian School. I was six years old. The story of how we got there -- there was a big truck. Not a truck, you know, that most of us have if you're lucky to have a truck. A big truck.

And it had cedar boards on the side, and it had one chain across the back. And they started from Lummi and picked up kids in Swinomish. And then it finally got to Tulalip. And there were about eight of us kids, and we jumped up on there. And my mother gave us, my sister and I, two sacks worth of sandwich and apple inside. And then, finally, we took off.

You know, I thought it was a lot of fun. But if I was a mother watching my child jump up there on the back of that truck -- and none of the other kids had any food. And the speed limit was 35 miles an hour back then; so

they drove all the way, not once stopping to see if the children needed to go to the bathroom or the get anything to eat. And, finally, it was very dark when we got to Chemawa.

And we didn't know what to expect. My sister and I were the youngest there. So we were put in a building called Winowa Hall. Those of you who may know about Winowa Hall, that's for the older kids. Then there's McBride Hall. McBride, of course, for the younger kids.

Now, this was just before the war, World War II, and that building had been empty. So all of us kids, we were given a bucket, given something to wash, and it was our job -- now, I'm six years old, almost seven -- and just us kids, no adult supervision. We were to wash the ceilings and all the walls and the floors.

My sister was just young enough to where she only had to work half a day. The rest of us worked all day. And then when McBride Hall was all clean and everything, and dry, then they brought in a single bed for each one of us, two to a room.

And those of you who have been in McBride Hall, when you remember then, when you go up the staircase, it goes this way and this way. And if any one person did

something wrong, everyone was to sit on each side there, and the matron would be in the middle and just give us some bad words.

And some of these kids couldn't even speak English yet. They were from different parts of the United States, Alaska. And they had a lot of crying going on. Lot of crying.

So one day, I said, "I'm not staying here."

I talked two girls into going with me, and I ran away. But I didn't really run. I walked. It was dark. And I waited. I watched to see how I could get out, and

they went with me. And we walked and walked and walked and walked.

Finally, we got really tired, and there was a cornfield. And a the corn was ripe; so you could see what time of year it was. So we stopped, and we ate some of that sweet corn. We were really hungry. But it was good. It was really good.

Now, that trip on that truck coming to Chemawa -- I thought it was fun. And the guys -- I mean, I didn't realize how dangerous it was because there's only that one wire across the back end. And the older boys -- you know, you go along, and there'd be some pretty girls walking

along, and they'd wave. And I actually thought it was fun.

But now imagine all of those kids, the little kids to the older kids, not stopping to go to the bathroom. And if it weren't for my mother thinking ahead, Florence and I wouldn't have had anything to eat either.

Anyway, so we were walking long, and I knew how to get home. I watched. I know. You know? I knew there's a highway. But, you know, now that I'm older, I think I talked two girls into going with me. I had no idea where they were from. Imagine.

But we were walking along side of the highway. And we got stopped, told "Get in the car," and were sent

back.

A lot of the kids could not speak English. You can imagine what it was like to go to school and different languages in there. But I had actually gone to the Marysville School District because of what had happened to my uncle. So I could read. I could read, actually, pretty well.

Well, this is just one. Each one here has many stories because it's not just one person. Many of us -- many of us, we hear. Even if we didn't go, we hear from

different ones about what the school was like and how it hurt to be away were your mom and your grandma.

And I had three little brothers that I didn't get to see for a long time. But somehow I was able -- I was allowed to go home.

And my mother said, "Well, did you like it?" She knew very well what it was like.

And I said, "No."

"Well, do you want to go back? Or do you want to stay home?"

I said, "I'm not going back to that place." I want to stay home here at Tulalip where I could walk a little ways and see my grandma, my aunties, and my uncles. I was glad to be home.

And it was a while later that I found out from my

father what happened to him. He was 15 years old and couldn't speak English yet, and then he was sent over to Haskell where he met my mother. My mother had gone to Chemawa and then went to Haskell. And she stayed at Haskell and went on to the University of Kansas and got her degree in business administration.

And listening to some of the stories here, I was thinking, you know, I don't remember ever getting a hug

from my mom. I don't remember, ever, my mother telling me she loved me. I remember getting whipped with a switch and finally being able to go live with my father because they didn't live together anymore. And that wasn't allowed. He never did anything like that.

He said, "That's because of the schools."

My children want me to write my life story, and I've been thinking for a few years. What should I write? I don't want to hurt my children's feelings for some of the things. You know, not too many women talk about the rapes. We hear about the beatings.

There's a lot that I think about. What should I write? What should I tell? What should I share?

I thank the people who organized this meeting for all of us. I talked with a few other people at the Muscogee Creek place and Indians from the different conferences that I've gone to. That's not something that

we've talked very much about -- Indian schools. And I'm glad that this is being started. I appreciate it, and I appreciate the people who came here to listen. And I suppose you're going to other places also.

Those of you who want to be interviewed, you know, I suggest if you feel like doing it, do it. This

story needs to be told. Maybe not to the non-Indian, but to each other, to know that we have survived. We're here. We have the Native heart and spirit.

And I thank you. Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Good afternoon. Bobby See-yous (phonetic) is my great-grandfather's name from Snoqualmie.

I started out with sitting way back here in the corner. Had my hand up all morning. I just told her as she was handing me the microphone, "Aw, shucks. I forgot what I was going to say."

Anyway, I got some teachings from some elders as I was growing up. Told me there's going to come a time when you're going to need to make notes to yourself. And I forgot the most important one. A man told me when you make those notes, you keep them with you. They're scattered back here in the tables somewhere.

But I stand because I heard the name earlier

Lottie Sampson. I stabbed for my grandmother Teresa. Her maiden name was McLeod, Sampson Willa (phonetic). She attended the old school over here. She talked about it some.

And my mother -- I'll share a little history about my mother with you. When I came home some 30 years ago, I got out of the police department over here. There was a man -- he passed away working for us, with us. He was a dispatcher. He happened to overhear me talking, and I mentioned the last name Sampson. He pulled me aside after.

He goes, "You mentioned the name Sampson."

And I say, "Yeah."

He started to telling me he and his younger brother went to Chemawa. He told me his mother, their mother hired this older girl to chaperon us. And I was listening to him, and his next words hit deep in my heart.

He said, "That girl, boy, she was strict. 'You boys behave now! You boys eat now! You boys pay attention now! You boys go to sleep now!'"

That girl was my mother. She attended Chemawa, Margaret Sampson James.

I saw two pictures as we're eating up here on the screen. Most of you around here will know what I'm saying: I did not know my dad had teeth. I saw his

picture up there. Big shot. I also saw the picture of my grandfather, Alfonso Sampson (phonetic).

I'm thankful for this day, and I don't want to take anything away from this in particular. But my assimilation started when I was about nine years old. The Mormons came into our lives. And they called -- do you realize they call us the lost tribe of Israel?

The only thing I learned from the Mormons was racism. Their comments, even to kids: "Ugh. How. Heathen Injun. Me the great white man here to teach you."

I went through junior high in those homes over in Idaho, started high school. But then I walked away, ran away. Took off, come back.

I wound up moving over to the Yakama Nation with the brother of our beloved elder here, Kenny Moses. I stayed with Ronald and Ted Moses. From there, I went into the Marine Corps.

And one day there in boot camp, I got into some serious trouble because I'd had enough. All the other recruits called me "Ugh. Ugh. Hey, Chief." And that was the only highest unofficial rank I earned. And there are many here that are veterans that earned that rank as well -- "Chief."

One day, the drill instructor's walking around through the ranks of the platoon, looking at them, asking,

"What are you here for?"

Oh, they're giving the official, you know, "I'm proud of my country. I love my country," and all of that.

He walked by me. He come back, and he had, you know, that sneer in his face. "What are you here for, you dumb F'ing Injun?"

I'd had enough. I snapped to. I was -- I was -- as directed, I snapped to. "Sir, this privateer, sir." My answer was, "My ancestors were here before the immigrants came."

Oh, I got in trouble. The drill instructors swarmed me, slapping at me, snarling at me, growling at me. And I don't know. I can't tell you how many pushups I did because they were pissed off.

That followed me throughout my tour in the Marine Corps. "You're the official American?" Yep.

Then I really stepped on their toes because, you know, I hear some of you get up and say, "I am Irish-American. I'm proud Irish-American. I'm proud Italian-American."

Well, you hear me now: We can stand up and say, "We are American-American."

So I'm thankful, you know, to be here. The only reason that I walked in the door is because Matt War Bonnet -- we're discussing something. I got to

have an event up at my place. And he said, "Meet me at the gathering hall Sunday."

Well, I would have we been just outside here somewhere. But then he says -- you know, I talked to him and he said, oh, yeah.

He goes, "Oh, I'll be inside." And so -- okay. And I come in and say, "Whoa." So glad I grabbed one of those flyers back there.

But as I was saying, I was sitting way back in the corner with my hand up trying to -- moving up, moving up. And finally up here. And, oh, I see we're one step behind the elders' tables. Okay. We're getting there. But I'm just thankful to be here and hearing these words and see these pictures.

I want to share a little request from my sister. I was sitting back there with Hank Williams's daughter. We hope we can get copies of those.

You know, I used to listen to my grandmother sometimes when she'd open up. She'd talk about it. Even today, I wonder -- what was truly in her heart when we talk about Tulalip and then we're told that's God's country? What was truly in her heart when I hear about these boarding schools.

And I, you know, listen to my mother sometimes talking. And then, of course, I listen to their brother

whose mother hired that girl as a chaperone. That was Ron Tom. He attended Chemawa, he and brother.

And he was so surprised as I sat there listening to him telling me how she taught him just the way she raised us.

I had myself and two other brothers along with those other two -- you know, the sisters. The five of us, she raised us. It was always us boys -- "You must behave now!" You boys, you boys, you boys.

Well, what about them? They're angels.

And he was just -- he started braking up. And he was talking about a small world. You know, I mean, she wasn't nice to him. Yeah. That was my mother. She was the same way to us.

So I'm thankful, you know, that I just -- I think that someday, we could all look at one another as human beings and not the color of your skin.

I'm thankful for my platoon sergeant. And I'm thankful for a warrant officer. He was Korean. He didn't look at an Injun. He looked at a Marine my platoon sergeant didn't let those that hated the Injun pick on him, and I was thankful for that.

I'm thankful a that there are some in this world

that look at a human being.

HENRY CAGEY: My wife said I got to be short and sweet. So I want to introduce our chairman, first, Madam Secretary. He wants to say a few words. So -- Chairman Hillaire.

TONY HILLAIRE: (Indigenous speech.) Good day, my dear friends and relatives. My name is Tony Hillaire. My name is Sat-sun-tin (phonetic). I come from Lummi, and I'd like to thank you all for being here on this day. I don't know the Lummi language, but I am learning, and I am doing my best.

On behalf of the Lummi Nation, I just wanted to -- I had it on my heart just to say thank you to the Tulalip People, the Board of Directors. Thank you for inviting us into your home today and for creating this very safe place for us to have this honest discussion to open the hearts and the tears come with this. To be able to do it here in this beautiful place that you call home is just -- we're so full of gratitude.

And special acknowledgment to our federal agencies. Director Tso, Director Dearman, thank you for

joining us today as well to hear these words of our elders.

And thank you to Secretary Haaland and Assistant Secretary Newland for your ongoing leadership and ensuring

hope, you know, through all of this, our history that, you know, we're never going to stop talking about it. We're never going to stop being who we are in Indian Country. And we stand with you in that fight and in the effort.

And thank you to all of our elders that shared today, all the elders that are here. From the bottom of our hearts, we just want to tell you thank you for sharing your experience, for sharing the true history of this place that we all call home.

Yes, yes, this was genocide. Yes, this was the United States of America's version of the Holocaust. By federal policy, it was adopted to kill the Indian and save the man. And, yes, today we inherit the traumas that happened to us, the atrocities that happened to us.

But I want to assure our elders that are here today that are still here this afternoon that we also inherit your resilience. We also inherit the values and teachings and the love that you have for all of our people.

That's one thing that was mentioned -- that an apology is needed, and I definitely agree with that -- an apology from the federal government -- but also, to take it a step further, to understand and learn the true history of this lace that we call home; the bad things that have happened to us, but also to understand the light

that came from the people that had to face, you know, the fires of hatred and the burning of their skin because they're speaking their language, you know, that we still are here today.

And that's something that in my research and visiting with my elders -- the first thing that's said is that we're lucky that we're even here. And yet, we are still here. We still have our songs. We still have our dance. We still have our language.

And what we need from the federal government is the upholding of our treaty and trust responsibility that, you know, we did not go to war. We signed a treaty and secured our rights to education, healthcare, and our rights to our way of life -- our fish, our salmon, to hunt and fish in our usual custom area.

And so what we'll see is -- if we're given what we need as a tribe, we'll see more places like this. If

we are given what we need, we will see more of our songs. We will hear more of our language. If we are given what we need, we will have more of our salmon back, which is at the very center of our way of life.

And so it starts with this discussion. It starts with being honest with each other. And, yes, the discussions are very hard to have, but it is absolutely needed.

And given all that we've been through and how strong that we remain, you know, we're always going to be ready for what comes next.

So on behalf of the Lummi Nation, I thank you all. And I want to introduce our elder on council, Councilman Henry Cagey. He also wants to say a few words.

(Indigenous speech.)

HENRY CAGEY: Hello. Well, again,

(Indigenous speech.)

Henry Cagey. I've been on the council since 1989. And, you know, I've seen a lot here in my time just in the short time I've been here as a leader. It's just close to (inaudible).

You know, and what I've learned as a leader is

that we have a long way to go, Debra and Bryan. You know, we've come a long way, but we have a long way to go.

You know, this begins the process to heal. But I think this begins the process of the United States to correct it. And you need to correct it. We don't want an apology. You know, we want some action that's going to take us and give us back our sovereignty gives back acknowledgment of our treaty. You know, we want something that we're going to see. We want something that our children are going see.

This language is something that was taken. This language is something that you hear every one of us in this room felt the language was being taken away. My mother wouldn't talk about it. They wouldn't talk to her with that language.

And I asked her. I said, "Why won't you talk it?"

She said, "They wouldn't let me."

So, again, you know, this language has to be better than what we're doing. And it can't be a grant. Every tribe has a grant that we have to apply for, and it shouldn't work that way. We shouldn't be applying for a grant to bring back our language. And that's what's

happening.

We want something more than that. We want our education system to be redone. This education system is broken, and we want something done.

This boarding school was a failure. This boarding school did not work. And we're hearing it today. And it's still not working today.

So, again, Madam Secretary, I know this has been good for you. I read your report. I think the recommendations -- I think that report is a good report.

But I think it needs to go further. It needs to go further in what the United States needs to do -- not

this administration but the United States. It includes a court system. It includes administration. It includes Congress.

All these factors that are in the United States that have done a lot of wrong things to us. We are traumatized every day.

Trauma is -- it's a federal trauma. You've got state trauma, tribal trauma, family trauma, and individual trauma. We live with it every day. You know, we're always fighting with the feds. We're always fighting with the state, and we're always fighting the families. You

know, we don't know why.

And because there's these things that we don't know, no wonder we don't get along. You know? And that's a problem because it was beaten into some of them. It was taken from some of them. We don't understand why it's so hard for us to get along. It's because of the trauma.

So, again, it's something that we have to overcome and figure out ourselves. You don't have the answers. We do. But we want you to respect the solutions that we come to you and support them.

Each tribe has their own way to heal. Each individual has their own way to heal. You know, when we come to you, you know, we expect to have the things that are good for our people. We expect to see the things that

are going to happen to our children.

We can't be traumatized by these regulations and these statutes and these court cases that stop us for what needs to happen. Our sovereignty is affected every day out here. And you guys know that.

So, again, we want you to understand that we support you -- I support you -- and your report. And I expect to see a lot of good things from your report, Mr. Newland, and how you're going to do this. Because

it's not an easy job that you've taken on. I understand that.

And, again, I'm here to support you, and the leadership is here to support you. But we want to see some good things come out of this. So, again, on behalf of the Lummi Nation, thank you for being here.

I didn't talk about tribal schools, but I know my father went to a tribal school. My uncles went to boarding school, my grandmothers.

I went to a boarding school. You know, I left in the '70s, but, you know, it was not a good time. You know, the '70s were a bad period around this corner. You didn't want to be Indian up around here in the '70s.

So I went to the boarding school. I liked it there. I didn't have any problem with it. I really recommend to -- the boarding schools we have open today

need support. Those boarding schools need support. If you're going to continue opening them, support them, fund them. Don't let them beg.

Our kids deserve the best. If you're going to have a boarding school, well, make it the best. And don't bring in something that's just a band-aid, something where the school can operate. Our Indian kids deserve the best.

And that Chemawa school's still open. We should have the best for our children.

So, again, we want to -- again, thank you. Again, ish-ta (phonetic). Thank you.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY BRYAN NEWLAND: Okay. We'll hear from one more speaker and take a short snack break -- I think there are snacks set up here -- and a restroom break. And then we'll come back and hear from a few more.

ALISON BALL: (Indigenous speech.) My name is Alison Ball. I'm a Colville tribal member from the eastern part of Washington state.

In my community, we have a lot of alcoholism. We have a lot of drug adduction. We have a lot of violence. We have domestic abuse, sexual abuse, suicide, children being removed from the homes, chronic conditions, chronic

illnesses. We have high rates of diabetes.

And we think about all the conditions -- the poverty rates, high poverty rates. And we think about, you know, why this? You know? And what I keep thinking about is where did this come from?

Well, in the heart of our reservation, we have a mission boarding school that was built there in the 1800s. And it was run by the Catholic priests and nuns. I myself had attended in the late '60s; my colleague here and my friend in the early '70s. And my friend Lynette would leave a little bit and get some fresh air -- was in the '80s.

And during this time, I have 12 -- my family is I have 12 brothers and sisters. And each and every one of us attended that mission boarding school from second grade to eighth grade.

At that school, I witnessed a lot of physical abuse, a lot of emotional abuse, a lot of mental abuse, and a lot of neglect. And I knew about the sexual abuse that was happening. I didn't know it, but I did know it -- if that makes sense -- because we didn't have any words for it.

I just had a lot of fear about the sexual abuse, knowing that something wasn't right. You know, when the priest would come into the dorms while you were sick, I

know that he would come in; and that just wasn't right; and that he'd spend too long, too much time in one room with one of the sick girls.

You would know that when you went to the restroom during school that he'd go down to the girls' playroom. You know that wasn't right. You would know that when a prefect was missing and had to be someplace else and they would put one of us in charge that the priest would show up.

And you know about this. We knew about this. We knew to be afraid.

We knew about this brother who was studying to be a brother -- that he had candy. And it kind of got to some of the girls.

And so, one time, I thought, well, I want some candy too. So I went to where he had kind of a little side apartment. And when I went in there, I thought, this is creepy, and I didn't see any candy. I was smart enough to leave, but some of those girls stayed.

There was a lot of suspicion about sexual abuse. Later on, we found out that they did have individuals taking case against the Catholic church. I had two of my family members that actually filed suit. And they did get paid. Money didn't work because they still have their issues that they're still dealing with as adults, as

grandparents.

I had an older sister that told this story to me kind of over and over again. She talked about her and her friend getting their head knocked against the wall. And then when the priest walked in and he realized what was happening, he went to one of the girls -- because that was his favorite -- and he wrapped his arm around her. And he said, "Oh, my poor baby," and lifted her up and carried her off.

My sister remembers standing there alone and saying, "Well, who's going to come and hug me? Who's going to come and rescue me?"

My sister had a lot of blackouts about that time; so she doesn't know, but she also suspects that she had been sexually abused. My sister talked about being put in the closet with the mops and the brooms.

And, to this day, she can't sleep without a light on. She could be deep in her sleep, and as soon as somebody turns off the bathroom light, she walks up screaming. And she's a grandmother today. She doesn't know where this comes from.

A lot of my brothers and sisters have dealt with alcoholism. They've dealt with drug abuse. They've dealt with almost losing their children. They've dealt with -- like this gentleman back here talked about -- being real

mean parents.

Because, reality, when you go to a boarding school -- because my mother went to a boarding school; my grandmother went to a boarding school -- you don't learn any life skills. They don't teach you the things that you really need to be able to have a successful life. They don't teach you how to cook. They didn't teach you how to budget. They didn't teach you those necessary skills.

But they taught you discipline. So that's what you did with your children was discipline them. You know? And that's just what you did.

What I started having my own children, I knew that I didn't want to be that way. I didn't want to be that harsh disciplinarian. But I didn't know any other way. So I tried. I tried my best.

And so what I did, though, what I was smart enough -- when each of my kids turned 18, I sat down with them, and I told them I did the best I could do. I told them my life story. I told them my husband's life story. And I told them, "But you can make it better because it's going to take another generation or two to be able to fix it."

There's a lot of shame and a lot of guilt that comes from what was done to us, and it's so hard to address it because we've had, already, too much shame put

on us. We've already got too much guilt put on us. You know, it's just too much.

And it's embarrassment, the embarrassment of what was done to you without your consent. Embarrassment, you know, about how you are as an adult today.

I was one of the lucky ones to be able to go away to school and be able to learn new things when I was in high school, and then in college. I returned to the reservation about 10 years, 12 years ago. And the first week, I looked around, and I interacted with people I knew.

This is with intergenerational trauma looks like in my community. This is what it looks like today. And yet it still hasn't been fixed. It's going to take some real planning to do intergenerational work to fix this, what's happened. It took decades to get here, and it's going to take decades to turn around and get out.

When you think about, you know, the boarding school -- and, right now, we have a lot of deaths in our communities. We have a lot of suicides. I look to see my fellow classmates; my sister here, her fellow classmates; my brother other there, his classmates -- most of them have passed away. And you look around at all these empty chairs. They're here, but you just don't see them.

25 You know, what was done to us was spiritual, and

1 what it's going to take to get us out of it is a spiritual
2 cleansing. You know, it's something that nobody's going
3 to be able to fix it but ourselves.
4 Eduardo Duran had written quite a few books and
5 one of the teaching that he says -- that the oppressor
6 can't free us. We have to free ourselves from this. You
7 know, how do we do that?
8 The late Gary Joseph wrote a book. I can't
9 remember what it's called. But in there, he had a dream.
10 He had a dream that there was a whole village, and they
11 knew that a book was coming. And through that book, they
12 knew that it was going to be devastating for the
13 community. So half the people left, and half the people
14 stayed. And when that book came, sure enough, it
15 devastated the community.
16 The community after that -- and they believed
17 that it was the Bible -- was that book that came and
18 separated us from our religion, from our language, from
19 what we knew day-to-day, our wisdom.
20 After that devastation, they said that, well, we
21 need to rebuild our community. And they knew that the
22 people that had left needs to come back. And the people

there knew the community had to come back. But the problem is they don't know how to bring them back.

When I heard that story, what I understood was

half the community that left was the community spirit. Our community spirit left, and we don't know how to get it back. And we have to think about that, you know, in all of our Indian communities. Because I know that this high alcoholism, drug addiction, sexual abuse, physical abuse isn't just in our community. It's something that we don't talk about readily.

But here, the three of us that traveled over here this morning are prepared to talk about it, to say that it's something that continues to kind of -- it's underground in our communities because -- you know what? -- they're our brothers, our sisters, our uncles, our aunts -- you know, they're our relatives.

So what we have to do is think about something that Eduardo Duran was thinking about -- how do you address this vampire spirit that only comes out at night that preys on innocent people? All of the vampire movies that I've seen, if you can go and kill that first vampire, it helps with the healing.

Who was the first vampire that preyed in our

communities? You know, it may have been the Catholic church. It may be the government. I don't know. But that's the question that we have to ask.

Did any of us escape this? We didn't. You know, we've all been affected to varying degrees.

I remember the physical abuse. We had two priests at St. Mary's Mission on our reservation. One was a disciplinarian of the boys. And how he disciplined us with a "black mike" -- had a name for it. It was a hose with wires inside it. The other priest disciplined the girls, and he had a bat that was just carved flat.

That was our discipline. And you know what we got disciplined for? Maybe we got three points because our bed wasn't as straight as it's supposed to be. Maybe we were just a little bit late. We got points for just the ridiculous stuff. Now that I look back, I don't understand that. But we got disciplined for that.

So we think about why we're so harsh in our communities. That was taught to us. That was gifted us if you think about it. So how do we un-gift this thing that kind of plagues our communities?

Today I'm a survivor, but I thrive. I've learned to be able to deal with some of this -- not 100 percent.

But I see people in our community that aren't surviving, and they're not thriving. They're suffering from alcoholism. They're suffering from drug addiction. They're suffering from violence. They themselves suffer (inaudible) and don't know what to do about it.

And we think -- what is it that we really need? We do need that intergenerational healing because we need

programs that understand this. We need a spiritual cleansing.

You know, we think about the ceremony. You know, this was always a first time our ceremony was introduced into our community for something. We have to think about what kind of ceremony we need for what's plaguing our community. Because, like I say, at Colville, we're having more deaths than we are having enrollments, and our numbers are declining rapidly.

So I'm going to turn this over to my sister here because we come from the same school, and she has a story of the next generation, the next day.

KAREN CONDON: And I'll try not to take too much time because I know that we want to go on a break.

(Indigenous speech.) My name is Karen Condon. Dr. Alison Ball, Dustin Best, and myself -- we serve on the Colville Tribal Business Council.

And we drove over this morning thinking that we might or might say anything because this is really hard. But I'm trying not to cry because I don't -- this isn't about that, even though it is.

I want to share that my grandfather attended Carlisle Indian School. He died before I had the chance

to ask him what his experiences were like. But the one legacy that he left is that he played football with Jim Thorpe. And so he's got this legacy of sports.

He did work for the BIA for a number of years where he met my grandmother, Louise Goings, Oglala Lakota. And so we've got some of that family connection. And I'm going to leave it there.

But my father and his 12 siblings were all sent to St. Mary's Mission, the school that Alison talked about. They all ran away. Some of them passed when they ran away, but they did. And they hated the school.

And then I and my siblings were sent to the same school where we were also abused in all the ways that Alison already stated.

And it's hard being a tribal leader knowing that you've got this trauma and knowing that you're working and you're responsible for helping other people that have the intergeneration, historical trauma. But we do the best that we can knowing that, while we're going through this, we're also healing. And we hope to pass that healing on to others.

And so rather than go into the terrible experiences that I went through, I wanted to just share that -- you know, thank you Teri. I've known Teri for a long time through TERO. And so, you know, we've been

friends for a long time. I know John McCoy, Senator McCoy for a long time.

When the tribes of Washington state formed a grassroots organization called First Peoples Language Culture Community and we worked on maintaining and revitalizing our languages in the state, we worked with John on the bill that was passed, the WAC that was passed by OSPI to revitalize our languages to train and certify our own language cultural teachers. We've done a lot. Kevin Paul was involved with that, as was so many people here in Washington state.

We knew that if we could at least work on

revitalizing our languages and cultures that we would be able to provide a way of healing for our communities to overcome a lot of the trauma.

And so I want to thank Tulalip for this opportunity. This has been a long time coming, and we look forward to working with you on some more ways of healing our communities. I could go into a lot of political stuff, but that's not why we're here. So I wanted to just share those few words.

And Dustin left because it's too much for him. His mother went to the same boarding school that I went to, and so he knows of the trauma that she suffered. And she -- it was bad. She got it worse than, probably, us.

I don't know. I'm not even going to do that.

But thank you. And that's it. Thank you.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY BRYAN NEWLAND: Thank you for that. We will take a short break.

Before we do that, I neglected to acknowledge somebody here with us who's also very important to this work, the chair of the National Endowment for the Humanities, Shelly Lowe, is over here. NEH has been an important partner and participant in this boarding school

initiative as well. And I want to thank you, Chair Lowe, for joining us. Chair Lowe is also with the Navajo Nation.

So we'll take just a five-minute break. We'll be back up here, maybe hear from a few more folks, and then turn it back over to Chair Gobin.

(Break taken, 3:12 to 3:30 p.m.)

ASSISTANT SECRETARY BRYAN NEWLAND: Thank you very much, everybody. We're reaching the end of our program here.

So what we're going to do is maybe hear from one or two more folks who want to share about theirs or their family members' experience at boarding schools. And then we'll turn it back over to Chair Gobin and the Secretary for some closing remarks. And then we'll have a closing

prayer and songs.

I know a lot of folks have been waiting to speak today. I appreciate your patience with us. And so I think we can do -- depending on how long people go, we can do two more, and then we'll wrap it up.

So look to our mic runners. I think there's a gentleman over here who wants to speak. Okay.

KOOS-MAT: (Indigenous speech.)

Greetings, friends and relatives. My name is Koos-mat (phonetic). I carry the name from my grandmother.

And I have to start out with thank you to the two Debs. And when I -- I talked to Deb last night on the phone, and it just reminded me of the Glorias -- Gloria Steinem and her activism.

But I just wanted to speak on -- and I think we all are products of boarding schools if we were not in the boarding school, or we were employees of a boarding school.

But come from, today, five generations of boarding schools in my family. And I see the differences in every single generation. And I have to apologize to my mom way back there who made her little spiel earlier in the conversation that my grandmother kind of took me in, part time, and it was sort of traditional that you bring

up somebody else for a while and teach them your ways. And the other was because it was a hardship of, maybe, family abuse.

So I was taken in by my grandmother, and she told me a lot of the history and the stories in the boarding schools. And she didn't call them boarding schools. She

called them military school where she had to get up and march every single day. And as soon as she finished marching, she had to go to work.

And I said, "What did you do?"

She said, "Well, we worked in the farm, in farmyards, the animals, the cows, the chickens. We plucked the chickens. We fed them. And we took care of the goats the cow. Cooked the bread, worked in the kitchen, cleaned the halls, did all the work. And the boys did blacksmith and other things like that."

And I said, "So did you have time to go to school?"

And she said, "We weren't very much into school." She said, "We're kind of dumb."

I said, "What do you mean by that?"

She goes, "I can't hardly read. I can't hardly write. But they did teach me how to work hard." She said that's the one thing that the boarding school had done for her is that it taught them work ethics.

And even though she wasn't eating the beef and the chicken and the homemade bread and things like that -- it was all going to staff; it wasn't going to the students.

And they cut all of their hair into these little Dutch boy haircuts, and I had to go -- growing up in my family home, that's the way we had to get our haircuts because that's what happened to my mom and my grandmothers -- they'd had to get these Dutch boy-looking haircuts, which I hated.

And then I see my grandmothers came home, still, with culture. They still knew their songs. They still knew their dances. They still knew the language.

And the government seen that; so they hammered down on the next generations, which was my mom. They pretty much stripped them of everything.

My mom knows no language. She knows no songs. She doesn't make (Indigenous speech). She doesn't do anything that's pretty much what my grandmother did.

So that was hard to see because then we grew up with no language in our home or no song or no dance. And our religion was the Catholic church. So a lot of it was stripped.

And then my siblings went to a boarding school, and it was pretty much a boarding school for homes for

kids who were left without parents because of drugs or getting into accidents and dying. So they had no parents.

And so they had to go to boarding school or foster care.

And I worked in the boarding school with these kids, and it was hard to see because, you know, their lives were kind of turned upside-down, and they had no family.

And then my nieces and nephews are in boarding school today. And, like Henry Cagey said, support these boarding schools today because now my niece went to the boarding school, and when when she got straight As, she got an incentive. She got to get to do something good with her life because she did get straight As. She didn't get in trouble. She had a clean room.

So it was -- I told a lot of stories that were -- and I don't think I'll repeat a lot of them because it's really hard. But, like this lady said, it was trauma. How do we fix trauma?

And then after talking to my mom and my grandmothers -- is it Stockholm syndrome? You know, and how do you fix Stockholm syndrome? And how many generations is it going to take for our people to be well from the federal government's choices of kill the Indian, save the man, take the savage out of the Indian? You know, we were -- and all that comes back to mind when I

think of Pratt, you know, when he said that about the Indians.

And it's still happening today. It's not gone. It's still here. But with my mom -- and I'm sorry, Mom; I have to say it -- you know, she was a parent, and she was there, but she was absent.

So she was raised by the federal government. Her parenting skills came from the federal government. So the government kind of let them fend on their own; so when she raised her kids, that's the way we were raised. We had parents, but they weren't there.

So how does the government fix that? Is it fixable? And how many generations is it going to take to fix this? Are we all going to be dead and gone?

And so with all this, I became an activist for fairness and justice for our people. And I traveled -- and it's brought me around the world. And it's pretty fascinating, and it's interesting. And I was there during the Fishing War with Judge Boldt and the fish-ins. And I pulled canoe traditionally right out here in this water with the Tulalip Tribe when they were trying to bring the canoes back to the Salish Sea.

And those are steps of what we can bring back. But how do we bring back everything? How do you give back the land? How do you give us back our songs, our dances,

our culture, our tradition? How can we harvest food when we're regulated?

And the parks -- that we can't go there specific hours and days. We can't go fishing every single day of the week because we're regulated and limited. But in the days way back, we knew what our limit was, and we stopped fishing when we had enough.

So many things that have changed for us, and everything is related. Everything is told that we have to do this.

And I was told by my mama I was going to end up in jail because I was outspoken. I fought for justice. I fought for treaty rights, women's rights, Native American rights, fishing rights, everything. She told me I had to stop. Because that's the federal government talking: Don't talk. Don't tell.

And that's the way it was. She didn't want to tell nothing. And she won't tell nothing. And she won't talk about it. She talks about the good stuff. Yeah, she was a cheerleader at school. But she doesn't talk about everything else that happened in the school system.

I mean, my grandmother caught the boat from Lummi and got off right out here to walk up to the Tulalip Boarding School -- was one of the schools she went to. She went to Chemawa and Cushman and Tulalip and

Sticknicky (phonetic). And that's one that's not on the Washington tribe list -- Sticknicky.

But there's so much to say and so much to do. And I'm happy that it's gone this far, that people are starting to recognize it. But, you know, this is our land. This is where we came from. Still, we have no say. We're still not being able to be who we are unless we ask. Why is that?

Why are we allowing the federal government to control us, control who we are, control how we sing, control when we fish, control when we harvest, control how to raise children or whatever?

And all of the treaties were pretty much broken except for the fishing treaty which we fought so hard for. And I was 16 and 17 years old when I was out here with the fisherman and fighting for our rights.

And my mom swore to God I was going to end up in jail, but I didn't. And I wasn't afraid to go to jail. And I'm still not afraid to go to jail for speaking up and doing things that should be for the people, for our people, for what rights that we have.

So there's a lot of things that I could say. But it gets a little bit emotional because it concerns almost

everybody I know and what's going to happen to them. Because just like this lady said, today we have trauma; so

we have alcoholism. We have drugs. We have absent parents.

Where does that bring us? What happens to those? We have the services, but what does the service do for us? And how do we bring that pride back to the people and allow us to know that this is our land? How did we allow all these explorers -- or whoever you want to call them, white people -- come in and regulate us and tell us who we are and create law and say that you can live there?

You can't talk. You can't speak. You can't run. You can't do anything unless the federal government tells you.

So in all my activism, I was interviewed a lot of different times in my life. And this one young boy walked up to me, and he said, "Who do you like the least in the world."

And I said, "Besides the federal government?"

He said, "Okay. That's enough."

So I think I want to stop. I just want to thank all you guys for, at least, making this step to see. And I'm curious on how it's going to come out.

And I know I pray for Debra. I told Debra I was going to pray for her because this is a big challenge and a lot of work. And it's going to take everybody -- all of these survivors, all of their testimonies, all of their

interviews, all of their stories. And sometimes they're not going to tell the whole truth because that's what they're taught -- not to talk, not to tell.

But with a lot of them, I think you can get something out of them. So thank you.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY BRYAN NEWLAND: Thank you. We'll hear from one more person or --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Hey. I'm waiting here.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY BRYAN NEWLAND: And we'll hear from this gentleman last. Okay?

SE-AM-MO-WAY: (Indigenous speech.) My name Se-am-mo-way (phonetic), and I am enrolled with the Lummi Nation, Number 1984. I am the proud daughter of Dolores Solomon Leach (phonetic) of the Lummi Tribe, and proud granddaughter of Philomena Henry Solomon (phonetic) of the Nooksack Tribe. My great-grandmother Lucy Harry

was of the Matsqui First Nations People in Canada.

I am from a matriarchal society. I am 60 years old. I have no biological children but several adopted and stepchildren, grandchildren, and nieces and nephews.

My culture is thriving as a Clackamas woman, survivor of the great flood, survivor of smallpox,

tuberculosis, and survival of the boarding school experiences.

Have the residential boarding schools affected me? Yes. Did I ever attend boarding school? No. Let me explain.

My grandmother, Philomena Harry Solomon was a member of the Nooksack Tribe, born in 1998 [sic] and attended the Tulalip Boarding School here. She was a fluent Halkomelem speaker and taught her grandson, my older brother, her native language. All other children, for reasons only she knew at that time, did not learn her sacred language. Grandma also knitted Cowichan sweaters and grew raspberries and, in many ways, lived off the land in her culture.

For my time with her, she was very connected to her Indigenous lifestyles and language. She was an honored elder of the Nooksack Tribe and passed away in

1977.

Her daughter Dolores, born in 1928, attended Chemawa in Oregon. This is my mother who had nine children in all. And I lived with her on the Lummi Reservation. She worked at the tribal office on treaty protection rights and community services. I am proud that she was an honorable woman who gave to her community. She passed way at the age of 37 from a tragic car accident.

As the second-youngest child, I was five years old. I had very few conversations about my mother because it is difficult to get elders to speak about the deceased except in saying she was a beautiful and kind person.

When I asked my auntie, my mom's sister, about boarding schools, all she had to contribute was if someone was to get in trouble in my grandma's class, every student would got their knuckles hit with a ruler while all their hands are high above their heads. My grandma made sure she was always well-behaved to avoid any punishment.

Was there other forms of abuse? Undoubtedly. But our family would never know. My grandma did not speak freely of her school experiences. It was something they just could not speak of and to move on from.

The only thing I been told of my mother is she

ran away from Chemawa then hitchhiked 300 miles on the back of the pickup truck to come home. She became a teen mother and struggled with alcoholism and abuse in the home by my father, her second husband.

After her death, instead of staying with Native relatives in Washington state, five of the nine of her children were sent to Missouri to live with non-Native grandparents. After mom's death, it was decided that five of her younger children will go to Missouri, and the four children who were teens would stay in Lummi with their

father.

So I was one of them who went to Missouri. It was there I learned firsthand racism and sexual abuse. I was called by many people, including family members, derogatory names such as savage, half-breed, white Indian, Injun, squaw, dummy Lummi, you name it.

Even though I was not in a residential school, I might as well have been. I was living with physical and sexual abuse initiated by many abusers, young and old, allowed for only because of my mixed ethnicity.

After my grandparents became elderly, my sister and I moved to Oakland, California, where we learned new styles of racially and sexually motivated assault by my

white father.

I believe that the fact that my mother lived in a boarding school taught her to be a victim to white dominance. She was not able to protect herself; so she was repeatedly abused by her non-Native militant husband. I believe she endured this abuse because she learned how to be submissive first from her school experiences.

I've heard rumors of being forced to march for her husband. Her husband, her abuser, later became my abuser. I learned also how to salute my father. I learned to be submissive to his demands in order to stay alive. I can only imagine the torture my mother

experienced after I had the experience of living with my father.

He definitely was his parents' son, and he definitely felt entitled to dishonor Native woman. Having Native women in his life entitled him to practice the controls he felt was needed to assimilate them, to fit his expectations and desires. He must have very much appreciated how Chemawa prepared for him his bride.

The other thing I think has happened to me is unspeakable, just prior to moving to California. I was told, as a young person, do not get pregnant, which can be

very confusing if you happen to be a young victim of child sex abuse. And was told if I did, I would have a half-breed monkey baby.

So, one time, after complaining of an abscessed tooth, my grandparents drove me to Leavenworth, Kansas, to the military hospital and commissary. As a Navy family, we usually went to the commissary a couple times a year to buy food in large quantity.

But, anyway, after my dental appointment, the first one in my life, I was brought to a different room. And there was some type of procedure done on my private parts that involved blood and shame. I was told by my white grandmother to not talk about this thing that happened to me. I rode home that afternoon from

Leavenworth, Kansas, to St. Joseph, Missouri, in complete silence and burning tears, wondering what could they do to me. But I knew inside it was because I was a half-breed and so I would never have half-breed monkey babies.

Even as an adult, married with partners, et cetera, I have never become pregnant. I believe at the age of 11, 12, or 13 I was sterilized by my white grandparents and United States government because I was an Indian and they wanted me whitewashed.

I later found out the United States unleashed a campaign on Indigenous, Hispanic, and Black women in the 1970s by administering involuntary sterilization procedures. I believe I was one of their guinea pigs.

The same kind of hate lashed out on my mother and grandmother was also done to me, but the methods of delivery may have been different. I was hated for being an Indian woman. I never attended the boarding schools, but my spirit knows what it would feel like to be one, a child living with shame.

At the age of 18, I returned to the home of my Lummi and Nooksack people. It was not easy with me learning how to survive with homelessness, alcoholism, and continued cycles of abuse from my partners. But I was home, and I could heal with my Native people.

I also came to learn about the boarding school

experiences from others in my community speaking about Indian history, but nothing substantial from my own family. There's a lot of pain my grandma and mom must have experienced, but the stories were never shared for me to hear directly. The shame must have been too much to express.

I'm honored when elders tell me their stories of

survival. All I know is ruler whacks for Grandma and a picked-up ride for Mom -- is all that can be spoken of for my family. The silent family separation, loss of language; culture, and home; alcoholism; depression; suicide attempts; and all the other scars of colonialism are all that I live with, are learned to not live with.

And this is all because my mother and grandmother did not have any choice in how they were raised or educated. They were in boarding schools, and because they were there, I unknowingly was born into shame, survival, and then, later in life, pride.

The way I live now without shame is to honor my grandmother and mother and insist the children who lived at those godforsaken residential schools did exist; their lives matter; their children's lives matter. If the United States Government cannot say that, then we the Indigenous survivors must say that. Every child matters.

(Indigenous speech.)

ASSISTANT SECRETARY BRYAN NEWLAND: We'll hear from our last speaker today and then turn it back over to Teri Gobin and the Secretary to begin to close us out.

ROBERT CLEVELAND: My heart goes out to you, what you've experienced. My name is Robert Suh-rint (phonetic), and my family went to the mission. They had to draw a name out of the hat because the Father didn't understand there was a Chelan Bob, Coltish (phonetic) Bob, different ones, Chiliwist Bob. And he thought they were all brothers. So he said, "You guys got to get a white name." So now my name is Robert Cleveland.

But I'm here to talk about the terrible things that our people have heard and had to live with. People that are here, I know, touched my heart, and I feel like crying. Tears come to -- my heart is break for us.

I know the people up there are going to try to work on changing things and making things a little bit better. But I'm realistic, and I know we can only do so much because of those soo-yap-pees (phonetic) that run the government.

But I wanted to tart out by a couple little things. I remember getting whipped in school when I started because they told me about Columbus, and I told

them how he didn't discover me.

And then another thing I wanted to share is if you were brought up like I was in the school, the history

told you that Columbus was looking for India and called us Indians. Did you know that there was no country called India when he landed here? The closest I could look at and find was there's a different word, and it means "children of God." All of our people are children of God to me, the Creator.

My folks finally had to leave and go to the reservations in 1899, when they got there. They suffered a lot of things while they were there. The youngest one was my auntie.

She told me how she still believed in the Catholic church, and I couldn't understand. Because she shared how they took those brushes that you scrub the floors with, and they tried to get the dirt off of her for hours. Oh, she screamed and cried. How they thought they'd accomplished it because her whole body was red and bleeding. I remember these things.

I feel bad, and I want to apologize. I've forgotten my language. I'm just a poor Native Indian. We grew up in a -- I remember my grandfather was born in 1868. He was a big man, six-two, and everybody was gone when I was about five or six. And a Black girl came to

the house.

And my grandpa, he asked, "What do you want?"

And they said, "We're talking Bobby to the mission."

And he looked at that priest, and he said, "Get the hell out of here. You ain't taking him anywhere." And I was clinging to him like a baby.

But I had to go in. And there was only a few of us, because at the little school we went to, there was only two of us that were Native there. And when I bring up things -- or someone was talking in the back where we were sitting, us being the only two Natives in that class, we would get sent to the principal and beaten with those big old damn paddles.

I love my auntie. And I love her. She always made me laugh. She says that, over there, we call those European people soo-yap-pees. She said when they got here, we didn't have a word for them. But when they took their hat off, they were bald up here. And so she said that word actually meant upside-down face because instead of hair up here, it was on their chin down here.

But then she laughed, and she told me, "But you know the other meaning? Horse's ass."

That's the one I like to use when I see my friend, and I say, "You're a soo-yap-pee."

This is a terrible thing that happened to our people, the abuse. I was lucky. The people I grew up would cover their windows, and they never stopped doing the traditions, the different things, our winter dances, our language.

But not being around it -- I been on this side instead of over on Eastern Washington for 46 years. But I know the struggles and seen them for so many people. How can we heal the hurt and the suffering of our poor people?

And I even remember some of the soo-yap-pees telling me in school, in college, how respectful a lot of the Natives were because when you meet them they hold their head down.

And I spoke up and said, "That's because if they looked you in the eye, we'd get beaten and whipped for being -- thinking we're something special." But I always stood tall and looked them in the eyes and suffered a lot of abuse, and I tried to pay back as much as I can. Because we had an issue to fight for, to survive. This is something that's going on here.

I was thinking when that lady from -- talking about the mission was speaking -- how one of my cousins younger than me went there, and how they finally given -- I think it was $10,000 for the sexual abuse he suffered, how the abuse that he carried around -- he wanted us to

believe he wasn't a wimp and a tough guy. He went and became a Marine.

He drank and drugged. He wouldn't share what the pain inside his heart was. And, finally, he drank himself to death.

My other cousin went through the same damn thing, and he hung himself because he couldn't let go and share that guilt and shame with anybody, nobody.

And now they taught us -- they taught all of our people, like the lady was saying here, they taught us power and control. They taught us that you had to make them do what was right, and that's where a lot of the people suffer from abuse in their own homes. Alcohol and drugs.

They say it's not the Indian way, but it kind of became that for so many because of what they been brought up and the way they were treated. And they wanted them to be good people, and sometimes they would make them. And that's not right.

How many people here has family that drinks and drugs, and they pray for them? How can we start to heal? I don't know. Alls I do know is that I used to have an Indian name I had when I was a young man. It was a dreamer's name, Chelan.

25 I set that aside because, for many years, I did

1 alcohol and drugs, things that I was ashamed of. And I
2 was brought up the old way; so I don't use that name in
3 public anymore. I set it aside out of respect, respect
4 for our people. To me, you're all my people. Some day,
5 maybe, if I feel comfortable, I will choose my own name,
6 because that's my right as an elder.
7 I hope everyone here has heard the things going
8 on. But I appreciate those that had the chance to speak
9 from their heart, to open up a little bit. Because only
10 thing I know is that when you have some guilt and shame
11 from abuse or sexual things or all these things that have
12 happened to you, if you don't get them out of your heart,
13 out of your soul, out of your being, they eat you up
14 inside. They make you uncomfortable. They make you want
15 to do things that you don't want to do.
16 Find somebody. Find somebody that you can love
17 and trust in your life. And when you do that, open up to
18 them because sometimes when you share something -- like
19 some of the people here shared from their hearts --
20 they'll step out a little bit more easy. And that's very
21 important.
22 My father was on the Council for many years, him

and Twa-lop-pa-til (phonetic) were some of the first ones that were educated. Pastor Sherman -- his name changed too, and he was one of the first lawyers back in D.C.

working for the people.

My cousin, Lucy Covington, fought termination, and she tried to get Indians into schools, that we taught our language and other things. She helped get started the NCAI. (Inaudible) Tonasket, my other cousin, elected him to the -- as chief. Some of you would say "chairman." I don't choose that.

And I take exception to when I heard people here saying "the stories." These, to me, the way I was raised, these things that people say are teachings. Teachings, not stories, not legends, not other bullshit. These are teachings, teachings that they want to pass on so they don't happen to any of our other young ones and our children in our lives.

I know and hope and pray that you do the best you can and as much as you can and that you fight for our people.

My father always told me that just think of what we could do if all of us tried to work together. I know we have to fight for money from the government because

they'll never give us what we need. But the more we can do as Indian people, as one nation, the better chance we have to heal and go on in this world.

I ask you, whether you just think good thoughts or if you pray or if you're religious, to take a moment

here and think of some prayers and good words for the leaders here today that they do their best they can, that they work hard for our people.

I want to leave you all with something. All my elders always said -- you know, because we don't know how long we're here on this side, they always told me, "I don't wish none of you a long life. I don't wish you a short life. I wish you a good life from this day on. May you all be blessed."

Thank you for allowing me to ramble.

CHAIRWOMAN TERI GOBIN: Thank you. I know there was some other people that would have liked to have spoken. But these guys are on a tight schedule, and they've got to be getting out of here really soon.

So at this time, I will call up Antone George, and it is the boarding school song -- and the drummers and singers to do this right now.

So this is a song that Antone George wrote, and

it's honoring the survivors and the children who never made it home.

(Boarding School Song, 4:10 p.m.)

CHAIRWOMAN TERI GOBIN: So next, we will have one more song, and then we'll get into closing statements and have a closing prayer. And after this

event is over, there will be more going on for people who can stay with us. So the woman's warrior song.

(Woman's Warrior Song, 4:21 p.m.)

CHAIRWOMAN TERI GOBIN: Thank you.

Okay. Next, we're going to go through some closing remarks, closing statements, and have a prayer.

So, first of all, I would like to thank you all who had the courage to share your memories and stories with us. Having the truth be told is the only way to truly move to healing our communities. We will continue to keep the survivors in our prayers and honor those children who never made it home.

I want to thank Secretary Haaland and Assistant Secretary Newland for coming to our homeland and all the hard work you do on behalf of our tribal nations.

It's been a very heavy day today for all of us, and we knew it would be. So we planned a cultural jam following this event for those who might need a cultural uplift. But we understand if you need to go home and be with your families. But after the event, they will be clearing out some tables, and they will stay here. And we've, you know, invited the other tribes to come and participate.

But I want to thank you all for witnessing this

event today. And we wish you safe travels home.

And before we go into closing remarks, I would like to honor Secretary Haaland and Assistant Secretary Newland with a blanket from our tribe.

So now I'm going so pass this off to you for closing remarks, and then we'll have a closing prayer.

SECRETARY DEB HAALAND: Thank you very much, Chairwoman. And thank you all so much for staying. For those of you who shared, I'm very honored to hear your stories.

And for those of you who didn't share but stayed to listen, I appreciate that just as much, because I know that the people who did share appreciate your support. And we're all a community here; so I'm very grateful for

that.

I really do want to, of course, thank my colleague and friend Assistant Secretary Bryan Newland. But I also wanted to recognize all of my staff here who -- nothing would ever happen without them, and I'm very grateful to have their support in everything that we work to do. So this is not in order of everything; it's just how I remembered writing it down.

Heidi Todacheene is my senior adviser in my office from the Navajo Nation.

Wizi Garriotte, Deputy to Assistant Secretary.

Wizi? Wizi. Thank you.

Rose Petoskey, thank you very much.

And some of these folks are in my office, and some of them are in the fourth floor in Bryan's office.

Joaquin, thank you. Everybody knows Joaquin because he's the face of everything, it seems like. Thank you, Joaquin.

Amanda, scheduling in advance. She plans all our trips and does such an excellent job making sure we're all organized.

Tyler Cherry, our press secretary and so much more.

Melissa Schwartz, our communications director.

Rachael Taylor, my dear friend and chief of staff.

John Grandy, who's also in that comms department.

Maria Wiseman, the right-hand to Bryan Newland.

And Chelsea -- where's Chelsea? Chelsea started with us just a short while ago, and I was able to meet her in person here.

And, again, just want to thank Director Dearman for everything that you do for Indian education.

As everyone was up here singing, I felt like this is what healing looks like. Right? It's practicing our culture, practicing our traditions.

And, you know, when you're young, you don't realize how fortunate you are. But when I was young, I used to go down to the cornfield with my grandfather a lot and help him in the field. And I didn't realize then how lucky I was to have his wisdom just with me talking about everyday things. And I'm now very grateful for that.

But it also -- as I got older, it made me realize that my grandparents' era, they were -- both of my grandparents went to boarding school. They were products of the assimilation era, moved off of the pueblo to go

work on the Brown Road in Arizona. And they ended up staying in Winslow for 45 years. My grandfather was a diesel train mechanic.

And even though he spoke four or five languages, he was a musician, an artist, an athlete -- you know, if we have a student like that nowadays, we want to make sure they go to an Ivy League school and become a doctor or a lawyer. Back then, those opportunities weren't afforded to Native American people.

But in spite of all of that, my grandparents' era, that era of people at Laguna, safeguarded our customs and traditions for us. And I know that they worked very hard to protect those for us. And even though I don't speak my language, I know my culture. And so perhaps in all of the, you know, extra time that I have, I might be

able to learn more of my language.

But I am grateful for all of the people -- your parents, your grandparents -- who safeguarded your customs and traditions because they knew that's what would carry us through.

And one last thing. As we were driving here this morning, I felt, like, how lucky you all are to live with all of these beautiful trees. You can tell they're old,

big, beautiful trees. I live in the desert; so we have some cottonwoods and a few cedar trees, but we don't have trees like this. And so I am thankful that you get to live in such a beautiful place.

And if there's anything that I've learned since becoming secretary, it's that nature will heal a lot of what ails us. If you can, get out in nature, which you can here, I feel like that goes a long way in helping us to heal.

So I wish that for all of you -- you find days or times where you can just go out and feel the power of nature around you and know that it is a healing force and Mother Earth is here for us always.

So thank you all again so much. It's been such an honor to be here with all of you. Thank you for the delicious meal. It was just beautiful. We all enjoyed it immensely. Thank you for all of your hard work.

I know all these tables and chairs didn't just get there by themselves. There were people who worked hard to set this room up and do everything for us, and we're very thankful.

Thank you to the honor guard for helping us to honor the flags here today.

And just know that, yes, I work for the federal government. Yes, the federal government did terrible things to our people. But I feel very strongly that we're working hard to find ways to heal from that past. And, God willing, we'll do as much as we can while we're here.

Thank you very much.

CHAIRWOMAN TERI GOBIN: Thank you, Deb.

Okay. I'm going to have David Bean come up and say the prayer for us, close in prayer.

DAVID BEAN: Thank you, Chairwoman.

I'll ask each and every one of you to pray in your own way.

Grandfather, we thank you for this day. Grandfather, we thank you for all the work that has been done leading up to today and the work that will continue from this day forward.

Grandfather, we thank you for each and every one of the folks here that shared. We thank you for giving them the strength to share their stories, for in telling

their stories, Grandfather, there is healing. So we thank you for this day of healing.

We want to thank our Tulalip (Indigenous speech) for hosting and opening up your home. Today, we raise our

hands to each and every one of you and to the community.

We thank Secretary Haaland and Assistant Secretary Bryan Newland. Thank you folks for all your work. Thank you for your team's work that you have done and the work that you will do. We know the work is hard, but we know it does not end here today.

One thing I want to ask, Grandfather, is to watch over these folks as they continue to allow others to share their stories and to heal. We ask that you watch over them, put your loving and healing hand on each and every one of them who do this work, Grandfather. It is heavy work. But it's necessary to help our communities heal.

We ask that you watch over those who could not be with us here today, Grandfather, those who wanted to be here, those who are sick, those who need your loving and healing hand, Grandfather. We ask that you lay your loving and healing hand on them.

Grandfather, those who could not share today, those who couldn't find it within them -- we ask that you watch over them and heal them as well.

Grandfather, we thank you for this day and every

day that follows. We ask that you bring those who could not speak -- we ask that you bring them home, Grandfather.

For those who spoke today spoke for those who could not be here, for those who could not speak.

Grandfather, we ask for all these things in your name. Clo-bee-sees-ta.

CHAIRWOMAN TERI GOBIN: Thank you, David.

That concludes this event. And I know they're on the time line. I wish I could have left it open for more people to speak but they have planes to catch and places to go.

(Meeting concluded, 4:35 p.m.)

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C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF WASHINGTON)
) ss.
COUNTY OF KING)

I, Rachel M. Helm, CCR, RSR, RPR, a certified stenographic court reporter in the State of Washington, do hereby certify:

That the foregoing tribal consultation was conducted in my presence and completed on April 23, 2023, and thereafter was reduced to a typed format under my direction;

That this is a full, true, and complete transcript of the proceedings, transcribed to the best of my ability;

That I am not a relative, employee, attorney, or counsel of any party to this matter or relative or employee of any such attorney or counsel;

That I am not financially or otherwise interested in the action or the outcome thereof;

That I am herewith securely sealing the said transcript and promptly delivering the same to Annette Romero, Office of the Secretary of the Interior.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 9th day of April, 2023.

_____
Rachel M. Helm, RSR, RPR, CCR
Certified Court Reporter No. 20120397
Certification expires on 11/30/23