

SYMPOSIUM ON MMIW – MARCH 21ST 2015
CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER

In reporting on the presentation of each of the speakers, I have added context and details of some of the history and the writings in order to demonstrate the solid foundation for the call for a national inquiry. This information is readily available on the internet and worth a deeper reading and analysis by those who want to become more knowledgeable and to become part of the political and social action on missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

Marion M. Lynn, Aboriginal Issues Working Group

Background

This symposium was organized as a follow-up to the Teach-In on Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women and Girls (MMIW), held on March 8, 2014 at Toronto's Church of the Redeemer to mark International Women's Day. Since that time, this tragedy has continued to garner a great deal of political, international and media support.

The speakers at the 2014 Teach-in were: Dawn Harvard, President of the Ontario Native Women's Association and Vice-President of the Native Women's Association of Canada; Crystal Basi, Executive Director of The Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto; Carolyn Bennett, MP and Liberal critic for Aboriginal Issues; and Mary Eberts, a lawyer with more than 20 years experience working on Aboriginal rights. All continue their work to bring justice to the women and their families.

Many of the 160 people who attended the 2014 Teach-in, spurred on by the discussion groups, began working with local organizations, pressured politicians to establish a national inquiry, attended vigils and memorial ceremonies, and called for changes in educational curriculum so that Canadians know more about Indigenous history and culture.

The Challenge

A few months ago, members of the Aboriginal Issues Working Group at the Church of the Redeemer were asked to organize a follow-up event to evaluate what has happened over the past year in terms of the missing and murdered Indigenous women, and to determine how we can contribute to the elimination of this national tragedy. In response, an event was organized for Saturday, March 21, 2015, following the National Round Table in Ottawa on February 27. We agreed to mirror the form of a round table discussion, with speakers, presentations, questions and answers, ending with an hour-long discussion and establishment of action plans and strategies. We were fortunate to have the return of three of the speakers from last year: Carolyn Bennett, Mary Eberts and Dawn Harvard, currently President of the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC). In addition, we were honoured to have Audrey Huntley, one of the leaders of "No More Silence," Victoria Pezzo, the current Executive Director of the Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto, and Kim Stanton, Legal Director of the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF).

The Symposium

True to the concept of the roundtable, this event was held in the Parish Hall of the Church of the Redeemer, where the space was conducive to forming two concentric circles of chairs. All participants could see each other as well as the speakers, who formed part of the circle. When the numbers unexpectedly swelled from 50 to 85, more chairs were placed at the back, still within the form of a circle, creating the physical form of inclusivity. People began to register shortly after 11 a.m., went into the boardroom and helped themselves to a buffet lunch, provided by Bernice Hookimawillillener from Council Fire. As they found seats within the circle, people introduced themselves and talked with each other, a positive starting point for conversation. The event was opened with a prayer and smudging by Andrew Wesley, an elder and Anglican priest, and by drumming and singing by Mii Quan. The discussion then began with introduction of the first two speakers, Audrey

Huntley and Victoria Pezzo, both of whom are Indigenous women and leaders in the grassroots communities in Toronto.

Audrey Huntley set the stage for the 2015 discussion of missing and murdered Indigenous women by referencing a number of reports and events that have contributed to the chronological unfolding of information and action. Audrey is of mixed European and Indigenous ancestry. She holds a Master's Degree in Political Science from Philipps University of Marburg, Germany and is a documentary filmmaker and a paralegal at Aboriginal Legal Services in Toronto. She is a co-founder of No More Silence and has organized the February 14th Strawberry Ceremony, held in front of the Toronto Police Headquarters, to honour the memory of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls and others who have died violent deaths. This event marked its tenth anniversary in 2015 and is attended by hundreds of supporters.

Audrey discussed some of the history of Aboriginal women's organizing and grassroots activism, going back 25 years, emphasizing the need to honour our predecessors in this work. This takes us back to the late 1980s and early '90s, when Aboriginal women in Vancouver's downtown Eastside began holding vigils on Valentine's Day to remember their missing daughters, mothers and sisters. In late fall of 2001 and winter of 2002, the *Vancouver Sun* ran a series about the missing women, and the police were beginning a detailed search of the property of Robert Pickton (see Stevie Cameron "On The Farm," 2010). In 2004, a Canadian government survey indicated that Indigenous women and girls had between 3 and 5 percent greater chance of being victims of violence than other Canadian women. Also in 2004, Amnesty International released a report entitled "Stolen Sisters: A Human Rights Response to Discrimination and Violence against Indigenous Women in Canada." This report documented some of the underlying causes of attacks against Indigenous women including: widespread and entrenched racism; poverty and marginalization; and inadequate protection by police and government services. In 2005, the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) began the first initiative

of the organization Sisters in Spirit, using a story-telling methodology to gather information from families, community members, service organizations and police about missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. The researchers travelled across Canada, putting up posters in community centres and laundromats, in cities and villages, encouraging families to come forward and tell the stories of their missing and murdered sisters, daughters, mothers and, in some cases, grandmothers. When the second edition of their report came out in 2009, entitled "Voices of Our Sisters in Spirit: A Report to Families and Communities," it detailed the names and information of approximately 582 missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls. These numbers were challenged by government and RCMP officials, and the Sisters in Spirit project's funding was cancelled in 2010.

In 2013, Maryanne Pearce, a federal civil servant and researcher, completed her doctoral degree in law from the University of Ottawa; the title of her dissertation is "An Awkward Silence: Missing and Murdered Vulnerable Women and the Canadian Justice System." This dissertation examines the disappearances and murders of women, particularly in British Columbia, Alberta and Manitoba. Of the more than 3,000 women who fit into the category of missing and murdered, her research uncovers the fact that 824 -- almost 25 percent of the total numbers -- are Aboriginal. In her research, Pearce details the findings and analysis of the Robert Pickton cases of missing and murdered women and the failings on the part of the police and court systems.

After publication of the findings of Pearce's research, the RCMP finally published their own report in late 2013. This report, entitled "Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women: A National Operational Overview," states that the known numbers of Aboriginal female homicides are 1,017; when 164 missing Aboriginal women are added to this number, it brings the total of missing and murdered Aboriginal women to 1,181.

Audrey concluded her presentation with an emotional and heart-felt reference to having just come from the trial of Bradley Barton in Edmonton, charged with the murder of Cindy Gladue, the Native woman who bled to death in a hotel room in 2011. The not-guilty verdict, and the shocking way in which evidence was presented at the trial of the accused, are the latest examples that the criminal justice system provides no justice for Native women. On a more optimistic note, Audrey suggests social indifference is being counteracted by heightened attention on the part of the media, governments, and the general public to the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women. This leads to some hope that a national inquiry will take place and make a difference for Aboriginal women.

Victoria Pezzo is currently the Executive Director at the Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto. She is a citizen of Missanabie Cree First Nation and is in her second year as the duly elected Deputy Chief. Victoria holds a Master's Degree in Public Policy, Administration and Law from York University. She volunteers on the Community Council at Aboriginal Legal Services Toronto, working with people who are diverted from the mainstream judicial system.

Some 30 years ago, a dedicated group of Aboriginal women recognized the need for a meeting place in Toronto for Aboriginal women to share resources, support one another, and to practice their traditional ways. Based on this vision and determination, a basement office was opened in 1985. Now the Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto (NWRCT) is housed in a four-storey brick house at 191 Gerrard Street East, and continues to honour the vision of the founders by providing a welcoming atmosphere for all Aboriginal women and children in the Greater Toronto Area. Their philosophy is guided by the Seven Sacred Teachings: Wisdom, Love, Respect, Bravery, Honesty, Humility and Truth. Aboriginal teachings, traditions, and cultures inform all of the activities of the Centre. Recognition is made of the causes of vulnerability of Aboriginal women: racism, colonialism, poverty, lack of education, lack of knowledge of colonialism and of their own cultural

heritage, status discrimination under the Indian Act, gender discrimination, and sexism.

Among other activities, the NWRCT hosts the city-wide October 4th Sisters in Spirit Vigil in Toronto. In 2006 there were 11 such vigils across Canada; in 2014 there were 216. The Vigil raises awareness about, and honours the lives of, the missing and murdered Indigenous women in a culturally safe space. It is held in Allan Gardens, with many candles lit in memory of these women, who were daughters, sisters, mothers and friends. A few hundred people gather to listen to speeches, music, poetry and memories. Focus is not only on the women who have been victimized, but on the historical and systemic factors which contribute to their vulnerability. The history of colonization, residential schools, gender discrimination and lack of structures to protect and defend Indigenous women and girls, all play a part in these tragedies.

On a daily basis the NWRCT provides a number of ways to be supportive of Native women and their families. Their programs fall under five broad categories: Housing and Advocacy, Youth, Families, Employment & Education, and Culture & Spirit. There is help with health issues, parenting and clothing. Lunches are provided. Women come to the Centre to have a shower and to do their laundry – people living on the economic edge do not always have the money to go to a coin wash. Women work together in a number of different artistic and craft groups: to make jewelry, paint and sketch, learn to knit and make quilts. This is a place to find community and to reduce isolation. In the area of education, rather than focusing on the lack of literacy, women tell their stories. Teenagers participate in creative writing. Together, and with support of staff, these women and girls are better able to plan their future, knowing they have support, back-up and friends.

One of the most exciting events provided by the NWRCT is the MINAAKE Awards dinner and celebration, now entering its third year. Minaaake is an Ojibwe word, meaning “people who are on a good path.” The 2015 celebration, presented by lead

sponsor CIBC, took place mid-April at the CIBC in downtown Toronto. It was a memorable evening, hosted by Carla Robinson, a Canadian broadcast journalist and TV host, proud Haisla and Heiltsuk woman. The evening included a delicious dinner with traditional foods, a silent auction and musical performances by Eagle Woman Singerz and Metis fiddler Alicia Blore. Six awards were presented to Aboriginal women and youth for community achievement:

Leadership: Joanne Dallaire

Good Path: Christine Smith (McFarlane)

Challenger/Youth: Cheyenne Squires

Advocacy & Human Rights: Monica McKay

LGBTQ2S: Monica Forrester

Culture Keeper: Pauline Shirt

Additional sponsors included: Ryerson University, Native Women's Resource Centre, Symcor, Dasd Contracting, Scotiabank, Ontario Power Generation, Capital One, Intervolt Electric Ltd. and Airway Systems Ltd.

There are a number of ways in which non-Aboriginals can support the work of the Native Women's Resource Centre: donate money and time as a volunteer; attend an open house and buy the crafts made by the women; read the history of First Nations in Canada; listen to and learn the stories; acknowledge our shared history; work to eliminate the harmful and illegitimate distinction between "Aboriginal" and "Canadian" history and culture; talk to other people about Native issues; start the conversation and keep it going.

Carolyn Bennett has been the federal Member of Parliament for St. Paul's riding in Toronto for almost 20 years. Carolyn has been awarded a number of honours for her work that enhances the lives of women. As a medical doctor she has been an outspoken advocate regarding women's health, and as a member of the Older Women's Network she takes a strong stand on women and aging. She is currently

the Liberal critic for Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development and Chair of the National Liberal Women's Caucus. On February 14, 2013, Carolyn tabled a motion calling for the creation of a special Parliamentary committee to study the issues of violence against Aboriginal women and girls, and sat as its Vice-Chair. Carolyn's voice is clear and her presence is felt across the country in support of Native rights and especially the rights of Native women to be free from violence, trafficking and death. She is a visible and vocal presence at the February 14th Strawberry Ceremony and the October 4th Vigil honouring missing and murdered Indigenous women.

Given her background, one would certainly expect Carolyn Bennett to have been invited to the Roundtable of February 27 in Ottawa. She was not; however, she did attend the parallel Roundtable in Calgary on the same day.

Carolyn framed her presentation at our symposium with three questions regarding missing and murdered Indigenous women:

- What could and should government be doing?
- In what ways must we all be involved?
- How do we all go forward?

She began by complimenting the organizers at the Redeemer for hosting the event and for using the same haunting Teresa Burrows' art piece as had been used the previous year at the Teach-In. This piece is part of the exhibition, "Walking with our Sisters," organized by Christi Belcourt. It shows two moccasin vamps with a woman's eyes and her response to "Hello, my name is" is: "Who Cares." Carolyn's response was that missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls in Canada shall be faceless no more. We do care. And their deaths are not inevitable if we all act on the basis of our caring. So how do we do that? Carolyn noted the importance of learning about this issue by reading the reports that have been published from various sources. Like Audrey Huntley, she referred to the Amnesty International Canada report of 2004, and the Native Women's Association of Canada research

which began in 2005, with the first edition of their report published in 2008 and the second edition in 2009. The reports from both of these organizations were strategic in demonstrating the disproportionate number of Indigenous women who disappear and are murdered, helping to bring this national tragedy into the public eye. As well, the Oppal Report, entitled “Forsaken: The Report of the Missing Women Commission of Inquiry,” dated November 2012 (Volume I), is an important document as it examines the failings on the part of the police. The mandate of the Oppal Inquiry was to examine and report on the police investigations conducted between January 23, 1997 and February 5, 2002, and to determine why Robert Pickton was a “person of interest” but not arrested until 2002, during which time many women were being reported as missing from downtown Vancouver’s Eastside.

The main focus of Carolyn’s presentation was the critical need for a federal inquiry. She insists that the federal Government must establish a national inquiry to identify the root causes of the historic and ongoing cases of missing and murdered Indigenous women in Canada. And this must be done right, taking time to figure out what an inquiry would look like, possibly using the Oppal Inquiry as a reference. The government must invite partners from both the Aboriginal communities and non-Aboriginal communities to draw on expertise, and establish appropriate and effective guidelines, mandates, strategies and methodologies. Families of the missing and murdered women must be brought into the framing and ongoing work of the inquiry.

Carolyn closed with a number of suggestions for how those of us attending the discussion can become activists in this cause:

- Support grassroots groups in whatever way you can;
- Support the call for a national inquiry every chance you get by signing petitions, following on-line calls, writing MPs and Ministers; indicating ‘like’ and reading such sites as #AmINext, #AreWeNext, #MMIW, #MMIWG,

- #InquiryNow; working as if an inquiry will happen, considering who should be the commissioners, and beginning to draft the terms of reference;
- Preparing for a federal election, asking questions and making public comments about MMIW whenever and wherever possible.

Kim Stanton, a lawyer, is currently the litigation director at the Women’s Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF), and a member of the Legal Strategy Coalition on Violence Against Indigenous Women (LSC).

The LSC reviewed 58 studies, reports and inquiries that contain over 700 recommendations. They have been conducted and prepared by such groups as the Assembly of First Nations and the Native Women’s Association of Canada, Amnesty International, parliamentary committees and ministries, independent academics and grassroots organizations. These recommendations seek action from the federal government, provincial and territorial governments, municipal governments and the RCMP.

Under the title “Violence Against Indigenous Women and Girls: A Consolidated Literature Review” (accessible online), a spreadsheet lists all 58 reports that were analyzed with a link to each document.

The LSC researchers identified 17 recurring themes in the reports and recommendations, such as:

- A national commission of inquiry and national action plans
- Data gathering and publication, public acknowledgement
- Indigenous involvement in program development and delivery
- Indigenous-specific services for victims and their families, such as transportation and safe housing
- Improvement of policing, law reform, investigation and prosecution

- Community-based response, search and rescue, and community-based punishment.

Preliminary conclusions suggest that there is a general consensus about the root causes of violence against Indigenous women and some consensus about measures needed to end the violence. In spite of this apparent consensus, there is no way to determine whether any have been implemented; there seems to be very little government commitment to implement them; and there is little evidence of a coordinated effort towards implementation.

The federal government has rejected the overwhelming number of calls for a national inquiry on violence against Indigenous women and girls, claiming that it is not a sociological problem and that it has already been adequately studied. Analysis of these studies demonstrates that this tragedy needs to be recognized as an institutional and structural problem, and that barriers to implementing the recommendations of these many studies must be eliminated. Drawing on her graduate research on truth commissions and commissions of inquiry, Kim has written and spoken compellingly on the need for a public inquiry in the missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, and what form that inquiry should take. One of the documents she draws on is the “Report on Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women in British Columbia, Canada,” published by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) in January, 2015. This report reiterates that there is general agreement on the root causes of the violence against Indigenous women and girls, beginning with colonization and a history of racial and gender discrimination. Poverty, inadequate housing, as well as economic and social exploitation, all contribute to the ongoing vulnerability of these women and girls. The IACHR Report particularly zeroes in on the failure on the part of the police to investigate the disappearances and killings, and to recognize patterns of violence; they displayed dismissive attitudes towards family members, and failed to provide adequate

resources to resolving these tragedies. And when IACHR asked the Canadian state about establishing an inquiry, they were told that resources would be better spent on action rather than more recommendations.

Kim Stanton addressed the issue of action. She suggested a national inquiry is an important action and will uncover the reasons why there has been little or no government response to the crisis. One important point she raised is that there exists a great deal of ignorance about the missing and murdered women, and that an inquiry in and of itself will act as a teaching tool, especially if well covered by the media. In order to be effective, a commissioner with vision, courage and compassion, respected by the broader community, must be put in place. Terms of reference must be carefully established. The methods of the inquiry must be attuned to the need to engage the entire community, holding public hearings and involving many stakeholders.

Mary Eberts is a Toronto lawyer who has worked in areas of social justice, particularly in justice for Aboriginal Canadians, for many years. She has been a central and powerful figure in a number of previous research projects, reports, and public events over the past 15 years. Mary started focusing on the tragedy of missing and murdered Indigenous women in 2004-2005, when she worked with the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) to secure funding for their Sisters in Spirit Research Project. Mary also helped to put together a national gathering of NWAC representatives and family members at the University of Ottawa, where she held the Gordon Henderson Chair in Human Rights at that time. Since then, she has published on the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women through her legal writings and has spoken publicly at conferences and symposia and in university settings. Most recently Mary has been working with the Legal Strategy Coalition on Violence Against Indigenous Women (LSC). She helped to supervise the research that resulted in the "Review of Reports and Recommendations: Preliminary Research Outcomes, December 6th, 2014," produced by LEAF, as previously noted.

Based on her many years of scholarly work, Mary identifies the root causes of the present tragedy of missing and murdered women, as found solidly within the history and politics of colonialism and the policies and practices of the Canadian state. She argues that the treatment of Indigenous people over time represents deliberate genocide. According to the Resolution adopted by the UN in December 1948, genocide means any of the following actions, committed with intention to destroy a national, ethnical, racial or religious group:

- a) Killing members of the group
- b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group
- c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part
- d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group
- e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group

Mary points out that there are a number of ways in which the colonizing settlers set out to deliberately destroy the Indigenous people: by claiming the land, by the development of The Indian Act, and by the establishment of residential schools. All of these had a particularly devastating effect on the traditional roles, authority and status of the women. They were “legal non-entities,” not allowed to participate in governance; if they married non-status men, they lost their status completely. The residential school system took away their children, denying them what is considered an inherent right of women, to feed, clothe and nurture their children, and to teach them the language, history and culture of their people. These schools began early in the 19th century and were in full force by the 1870s and ‘80s, and the last one closed in 1996. This reflects the treatment of Indigenous women as being confined to what Eberts refers to as a “population of prey” -- fair game for all men, not protected by the police or the criminal justice system.

Dawn Memee Lavell-Harvard, PhD, is a member of the Wikwemikong First Nation. She is the first Aboriginal person ever to receive a Trudeau Scholarship. She has

been President of the Ontario Native Women's Association and is currently President of the Native Women's Association of Canada. She is also the daughter of Jeannette Corbiere Lavell, one of the leading Canadian feminists and activists fighting for the rights of Native women during the 1970s. Along with Yvonne Bedard, Jeanette Lavell challenged Section 12 of the Indian Act that took away their status, their rights to land, housing and band membership for them and their children, if women married a non-status person. Their cases went all the way to the Supreme Court. Although they did not win, their battle garnered such public attention and support that it is considered one of the primary reasons why women fought for Section 15 of The Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Sandra Lovelace took up this fight, taking her case to the United Nations Human Rights Commission, and as a result, that section of the Indian Act was overturned (at least partially) in 1985.

For more than 20 years Dawn has been committed to breaking the cycles of poverty and enhancing the empowerment of Aboriginal women and their children. She was co-editor of a volume on Indigenous mothering entitled "Until Our Hearts Are On The Ground: Aboriginal Mothering, Oppression Resistance and Rebirth." Her latest co-edited publication is entitled "Mothers of the Nations: Indigenous Mothering as Global Resistance, Reclaiming and Recovery" (2014 Demeter Press). The concept of resistance was central to Dawn's PhD research, examining the coping strategies employed and the challenges faced by Aboriginal women who endeavoured to 'fight fire with fire' by using academic achievement as a weapon in the larger struggle against colonization and oppression. Dawn brings this rich background of historical, familial, academic and political experience, knowledge and passion to her commitment to missing and murdered Indigenous women.

Dawn attended the Roundtable on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, held in Ottawa on February 27, 2015. This National Roundtable brought together family members of the missing women, national Aboriginal organizations, and representatives from the federal, provincial and territorial governments. The purpose of the gathering was to discuss the need for action to combat the

staggeringly high rates of violence against Indigenous women and girls. The provinces, territories and all national Aboriginal organizations support an independent inquiry into the issue.

The Ontario delegation included family members and representatives from the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres, Ontario Native Women's Association, Metis Nation of Ontario and the Independent First Nations. They have identified 10 proposed actions, including the creation of a cross-Canada public awareness campaign. A socio-economic action plan for Aboriginal women and girls could help alleviate the root causes of violence against them. A coordinated involvement of all partners around joint actions such as community safety and healing, and improved police and justice responses, would help to end the violence. Hearing from and helping to support the families of missing and murdered women and girls must also be a central part of any solution.

Although the federal ministers attending the Roundtable -- Status of Women Minister Kellie Leitch and Aboriginal Affairs Minister Bernard Valcourt -- do not support a public inquiry, the Province of Ontario's plan has set the foundation for actions to be taken over the next year. A group of provincial ministers has been identified -- The Aboriginal Affairs Working Group -- whose task is to develop a national strategy, including a funding model. A media campaign is necessary because, although there have been dozens of reports and documents published and a great deal of media coverage, Canadians still do not know the facts, and have not heard the stories of the experiences of seven generations.

A national inquiry is central to garnering the requisite knowledge in order to intercept this state of violence. A two-pronged inquiry might be efficient and effective: one part would gather the stories and the investigations from the families, friends and the police and social agencies about the women and girls who are missing and murdered; the other would examine root causes, policies and practices

and funding models, and how to develop action plans. Under the Inquiries Act, the commissioners would have the power to subpoena people and documents.

This issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls must be a central issue in any upcoming election. Raise it every chance you get with voters, workers and politicians. Talk about this issue every day to someone who might vote.

Following the first-ever national round table on missing and murdered indigenous women, it is with a heavy heart that I am writing about this ongoing tragedy – a national epidemic of violence that persists in devastating ever more families each year, prompting a growing number of aboriginal women to ask: “Am I next?”

- Sandra Lovelace Nicholas, a member of the Tobique First Nation and Liberal Senator representing New Brunswick, *The Hill Times*, March 11, 2015

MMIW ACTIONS PROPOSED MARCH, 2015

ACKNOWLEDGE our shared history and work to eliminate the harmful and illegitimate distinction between “Aboriginal” and “Canadian” histories.

READ. READ. READ. Everyone must learn about past and current colonial policies and practices. We must teach real history, undistorted by colonial attitudes.

LISTEN TO -- and learn -- the stories.

RESEARCH authoritative resources. We need stories every day for as long as it takes. We need media contacts and supports. Blogging.

TEACH all teachers at all levels. They need “authentic information.”

MAKE this a key election issue. Talk about it every day to someone who might vote. Draft election questions.

WORK as if an inquiry will happen. Discuss commissioners and draft terms. Then come to LEAF and others for detailed language.

EDUCATE ourselves: “Robust education and discussion will create a robust inquiry.”

SUPPORT the grassroots groups and a National Inquiry every chance you get in petitions and online. Like and read such sites as #AmINext #AreWeNext #MMIW #MMIWG #InquiryNow.

PUSH for book clubs in Aboriginal History Month in schools, libraries, and approach retailers such as Indigo.

DEMAND safe transport on isolated territories e.g. the Highway of Tears.

VISIT and VOLUNTEER at Native Women’s Resource Centre Toronto <http://www.nwrct.ca/> or Native Canadian Centre <http://www.ncct.on.ca/>

SEND money to any MMIW organization or NWAC or ONWA.

KEEP the conversation growing.