

Special Edition March 1996

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This special edition of Suvaguuq is for the benefit of all to learn more about what happened to the young children who attended Joseph Bernier School and Turquetil Hall, and to support the former students in the options they may choose as their paths for healing.



Healing is possible for those who have been harmed and injured by abuse. And healing can begin to occur in various unexpected ways.

For myself, it was through the written word. Previous to this form of healing approach, I had started sharing some of my experiences of victimization in a general way. However, I was able to go only so far. I finally went for help to a professional therapist. It was only then that I realized that there was so much more that I needed to share for healing. My problem was that I could not voice verbally the trauma I had gone through. The therapist I was

An insert into Nunatsiaq News, March 01, 1996

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I went through a stage of not being able to sleep with a pillow. Memory pains in private areas occurred routinely, which I thought was natural, until a physician having knowledge of such symptomatic conditions explained to me the childhood trauma associated with it. I just realized recently that it had took several years of gradually building up my trust before this physician was able to give me a physical check-up for medical diagnosis. My therapist had also indicated that when I was abused and traumatized during my childhood, I was probably unable to understand the English language. My native language is Inuktitut (Inuit language). In therapy, I was learning to speak about these childhood experiences of having been abused and traumatized in another language. Because I was not able to speak at first but write about it, learning to speak about the abuses in another language had somehow allowed me to get enough distance from the past victimization and finally start sharing more of my experiences in a way that extends to all aspects of my life personal or public. Because this kind of experience affects every manner of social life, it takes some time and practice to learn to share appropriately what had been held secret for so long.

This newsletter is something special for those former students who have contributed articles, for those who have worked closely with these former students, and for those who have been diligently promoting awareness and education in these extremely serious matters of physical, sexual, emotional, and cultural abuse. The contributors to this newsletter know what it means to feel invalidated by media and press releases that somehow seem to minimize the severity of the offences and abuses reported by the former students. These contributors know about the need to speak up against this potential minimization of these issues. That is what this newsletter is about also - ensuring that no one is mistakenly misled to believe that serious cases of abuse and offences were not inflicted upon children. Through this newsletter, it is hoped that the public will understand better the tragedy and seriousness of the situation in the way Inuit children were subjected to abuse while attending Sir Joseph Bernier Federal Day School and while residing in a hostel operated by the Catholic Church and the Federal Government of Canada in the 1950s and 1960s.

This newsletter is the voice provided for the former students. This voice is based upon experience. This voice reflects the truth of those former students who were taken away from their families and communities to be sent to a residential school in Chesterfield Inlet. This voice is not influenced by any institutions of religion or government. In being given this opportunity to voice the truth of their experiences the former students are grateful to Pauktuutit, the Inuit Women's Association. In addition to the sponsorship of this Newsletter, Pauktuutit has been a

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source of major support to me in more ways than could have been expected. What is extremely difficult to convey in writing is the emotional encouragement provided by this organization and its workers. It is just as difficult to express in writing the gratitude that I, as editor-coordinator, feel for such emotional support so freely and kindly provided. The subject matter and nature of the issues covered in this Newsletter would have been next to impossible to articulate without the supportive understanding that this type of undertaking requires. In other words, the support provided has greatly facilitated the healing process and this Newsletter is part of the healing process itself. For it is in this forum that the secrecy inflicted upon the victims is now being disclosed and set free as the articles exemplify themselves in here.

Another contributor to this newsletter is Nunatsiaq News. For those who are on the path of healing and for those who are dealing with very difficult and emotional issues of abuse, a gift of free space provided is something that pierces straight into the heart and spirit of gratitude. Pauktuutit, Survivors' Tasiuqtit, and contributors to this article extend a special message of thanks to Nunatsiaq News for providing an insert to this Newsletter free of charge.

This Newsletter could not have materialized without the articles contributed by the former students. These articles are from their own words based upon their actual experiences. It takes courage to bring into written disclosure about personal experiences — about what really happened. This disclosure occurs against the face of disbelief by many, and going against the moral preachings of "forgive and forget". For many, it is hard to believe that little children were subjected to abuses at Sir Joseph Bernier School and Turquetil Hall Student residence. It should remain hard to believe since those abuses should not have occurred. The important thing is that the former students contributing to this Newsletter are setting an example for those who may be searching for ways to reach out into a healing path. To the contributors, Quyanamiinguyusi.

It is important for me to express a note of thanks to the Consultants, Mary Crnkovich and Linda Archibald who helped with their expertise. Writing about very sensitive issues such as childhood abuse requires special knowledge and skills when the material is going to be open to the public eye. This is where I needed special help. Friendships evolve and form also in this kind of work. There were more than a few times when I was so discouraged and confused while working on this newsletter. I needed guidance, and guidance was provided. Before I started working on the Newsletter, I did not know what I was going to do with the material that I was writing for my healing journey. Mary was instrumental in the birth of this Newsletter idea. On behalf of Survivors' Tasiuqtit, on behalf of the contributions to

this Newsletter and on behalf of the former students, I extend a special thanks to the consultants Mary Crnkovich and Linda Archibald. And, Mary - Quyanamiik!

Janet McGrath ("Tamalik") - Quyannamiimarialuk for translation, interviewing the elders and support to this cause!

Simeonie Kunnuk



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Broken Lives

The following is my personal account of the experience of attending Joseph Bernier Residential school. At this time, I wish to have my name removed. Many children went through many of the same treatment and problems. I hope it will provide an insight into our predicament.

I have been having to deal with the fact that I was abused sexually, emotionally and physically as a child. The abuses occurred in the residential school and hostel in Chesterfield Inlet, Northwest Territories where I was sent for education. PI saw counsellors, spoke on the radio and on TV and wrote articles about it. Very few people paid attention to all of this. It made me feel that this was an isolated case, which did not help me any. It seemed that only a small number of people understood the effects of trauma suffered as a child on adults. I knew though that I was not alone. It would be many more years before I fully realized the extent of the damage that was inflicted upon us.

In the fall of 1992, it was decided that the only effective way that we could get the undivided attention of the church, government, media and the general public was if all of the former students of the Sir Joseph Bernier Federal Day School spoke out

collectively against abuse. A reunion was thus organized.

At the reunion, some 40 people disclosed that they were abused in one form or another. We had managed to catch the attention of the media on a grand scale. The RCMP initiated an investigation. The Territorial government commissioned a study by a prominent lawyer.

You see, all previous reports about the residential school were very positive. The church had always been very proud of

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their achievements in educating us. Yet, we who at this school were suffering deep inside. The effects of abuse manifested itself in many forms. We were scarcely aware of how it affected us ourselves. Action to correct all this was urgently needed.

I know that this action has divided Inuit people across the north. Anything new and revolutionary usually does. After all, the clergy and the white people in general were held in high regard for many years. The clergy had done many great things in public. Behind closed doors, however, it was a totally different story. Not many people will willingly admit to that. The fear of God was put in the hearts of many Inuit. In addition to all this, the members of the church went to people individually to try and gain support for the church. Divide and conquer. Get people in the communities to work against each other rather than risk exposing the truth. In any case, the alternative to taking action was to do nothing. And to do nothing was to admit defeat and to remain a victim.

If nothing was done, we would still be in denial, continuing to cope with anger in dysfunctional ways, such as taking it out on others who were not responsible and maybe even pass the problems on to the next generation. The church would have continued to praise themselves and pretend that they had never made mistakes and never could.

I know that my statements will anger some people, but it is about time that Inuit faced the fact that the church did many bad things against us. They abused their power over us and the authority they had over us in many unspeakable ways. The church continues to deny responsibility. Why? Could it be that they are afraid that they will lose their congregation and their financial support? Are they afraid to admit that they are only human and nothing more? Do they fear that they may have to be punished on earth as well as in hell? In more practical terms, I suspect that they fear facing public condemnation and legal and financial responsibility.

All I know is that the law was broken, trust was broken, hearts, minds and souls were broken and many lives were broken. That is what it boils down to. The bottom line. What is the price tag on a human life? There is none. But the need to repair life to its basic functional self is vital for individuals, families and whole communities. Some resources are required for that. Commitment is needed for that to happen.

Damage was done and something must be done. That is the message. We know that harm was done. We know who did the damage. We have no idea why, but it was done. Sure, the abuse happened many years ago. We continued to use dysfunctional and destructive ways trying to deal with the fact of having been abused and that this truth was not known as the cause of our subsequent problems. We now have a responsibility to start making changes. We also have to deal with loss — loss of cultural wisdom. We have a chance to help ourselves and others.

Let's focus on that and let us begin or if we have already started, continue rebuilding our lives. No one else will do it for us.

We have the education (thanks to the church and government), the will, and the power to make fundamental changes. Did the church and our people not teach us that we should do the right thing?

I know that we will succeed.



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Chesterfield Inlet School enterance, Peter Ernerk and Robert Katterrannuk 1958. "We were taught to make fish nets by an elder named Pierre Karlik. He was well respected in his home community of Chesterfield Inlet Robert and I are holding nets we made with him. Karlik now resides in Rankin Inlet."

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Between God And The Devil

Telling the truth about the Chesterfield Inlet School

By PETER ERNERK

Nineteen fifty-eight was the year I felt I had permanently turned my back on my Inuit culture and language. That was when I was taken by the Roman Catholic Church to live in Turquetil Hall residence and attend the Joseph Bernier School in Chesterfield Inlet. I have been carrying the wounds ever since.

I was transported by boat to Naujaat(Repulse Bay) from Tinujjivik, a fishing and hunting camp 15 miles away. Even more depressing was the single-engine airplane ride from Naujaat to Chesterfield Inlet. The only feeling I had during that plane ride was homesickness for my parents.

Looking back, I realize my departure was forever. Every spring I would come back to my parents, both the closeness, the love, the emotional attachment towards them was never the same.

The airplane ride seemed to take forever. In Chesterfield Inlet we landed at Tasiraaluk, a landing lake for small airplanes. In those days, airplanes also landed on a picturesque little bay just east of Chesterfield Inlet. The first thing I noticed were these strange-looking women with hoods and long dresses wearing little crucifixes around their necks, greeting us. Throughout the years I spent in Chesterfield, those sisters would become my "mothers" with their Mother Superior being our supreme head.

I remember walking from the landing lake with Paul Manitok to Turquetil Hall. It was a beautiful sunny day. The hall, or 'igluqjuaraaluk' seemed huge. It made me realize that there were building in the world other than the R.C. mission and Hudson's Bay Company houses in Naujaat. In Naujaat, I grew up in a 12-foot by 14-foot tent or 15-foot diameter iglu, or a similar-sized qammaq (a sod or stone house). Five of us lived comfortably in those dwellings. To me, our living quarters in Naujaat were as good as the White House or the Prime Minister's residence in Ottawa. The three-storey Turquetil Hall was awesome and scary to me.

I was 11 years old when I left home. It was the first time

I ever saw a bathtub, and it was the first time I ever had a bath assisted by a nun. As a matter of fact, I was assisted in bathing by the nuns until I was 14 years old. At home, it would have been considered inappropriate for my mother or sister to have assisted me with bathing.

The nuns dressed us with new clothes, such as new jeans, new socks, even shoes. I had never worn shoes at



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home, nor even seen shoes in my years at Naujaat. As a matter of fact, I had never heard of shoes, because my parents always dressed me in seal-skin boots or caribou-skin kamiks. Wearing shoes was something new to me.

Meals were something else, as well. Boys and girls ate at the same time, but separately, with the boys on the west side and the girls on the east side, facing the bay and the sun. The nuns ate in their own dining room.

Their boiled Arctic char made me sick every time I ate it. This was because the fish was never gutted before the cooks boiled it, and that was the we were expected to eat it. The other meat we ate was beef - frozen. I never did develop a taste for this, as I would never have eaten it at home. We had maqtaak(which was OK), corned beef once a week, and every Saturday morning, corn flakes and corned beef. I used to look forward to eating corn flakes and corned beef. I still wonder how I survived.

Sickness was assured once a week, on account of a particular soup that was always served to us for lunch. The soup was probably leftover bread, mixed with various vegetables, and perhaps some leftover soup from the nuns' meal. The nuns used to tell us they ate exactly what we ate.

What cruelty! I remember when I worked with Jacob Ikipiriaq, throwing garbage into the sea. We had a pail of leftovers from the dining room, and I remember eating the peel of an orange that the sisters had eaten. They told us they never had any oranges.

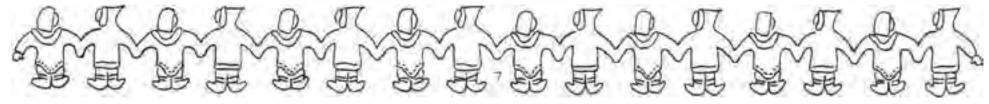
When I was growing up in Naujaat, I was taught the importance of relatives, and grew up knowing who my relatives were in many parts of the North. In Naujaat, I knew who they were. But only during my second year at Turquetil Hall did I find out that I had relatives in Chesterfield Inlet, mostly aunts and cousins. And because visiting with the local people was forbidden to us, I never became friends with them until years later.

Cultural education was non-existent. Inuktitut language instruction was non-existent and absolutely forbidden. After being at the Joseph Bernier School for one month, I can still hear my first nun teacher telling me, "Don't ever let me hear you speak that language in this classroom again!"

This policy is confirmed in the December 1955 issue of Eskimo Magazine, published by the Oblate fathers of the Hudson Bay vicariate: "English, therefore, was adopted as the medium of instruction, and first of all the children must learn the language. In class, only English is used and the teachers do not speak Eskimo. However, let no one be left with the impression that, even in the present circumstances, the children are encouraged to forget their mother tongue. On the contrary, religious instruction is given exclusively in Eskimo (the psychological importance of this point cannot escape notice) and the fathers teach syllabic writing to those who do not already know it." What was the psychological importance of this point?

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The government's instructions were to teach in English, which they did. However, the Church's top priority was to ensure that Inuit were converted, and given religious instruction in a language that would produce the most profound impact. Since



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Inuit children understood Inuktitut, religious lessons were in that language.

In this new world, I was told to forget my own culture, because I would never use it again. I was there to learn to speak and write English and arithmetic. They meant it, so I learned relatively well. It also meant that I forgot many of my cultural values.

Today, many issues are being debated by former students of Turquetil Hall and the Joseph Bernier federal day school. Issues such as the loss of parenting skills, alcoholism, marriage breakdown, the loss of love for the neighbor, the loss of emotions, and poor adaptation to the modern world.

What of the discipline used by the Roman Catholic nuns and priests? Certainly the students at both the hall and the school were continuously scolded. Was it because we were mean and dirty?

The nuns, in particular, always invoked their God and Devil. One day, in early 1959, we were all gathered in the boys' playroom and a nun supervisor - I can still imitate her stood up, and with a heavy French accent, said, "Boys, somebody kissed a girl today. It is a sin to kiss a girl. You don't kiss the girls. If you do, you are going to go to hell!" I never knew what was said to the girls.

Apparently, a boy of 14 had somehow got to kiss a girl that morning, against Roman Catholic rules. At home, my parents taught me it was natural for a man and woman to be attracted to each other. It was also natural to kiss a girl.

And my father's words still ring in my ear - spousal assault is just not accepted by Inuit society. Also not accepted by Inuit society were bestiality, incest, even masturbation. Again, I remember my father's advice when referring to masturbation: "It is against the Inuit belief to make love to your aggak(hand)." All of these values that I had learned at home were apparently non-existent at Turquetil Hall and the school. We were only punished if a transgression in their eyes was made.

While still a member of the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories between the years 1987 and 1991, I made two major statements in the House calling upon the Government of Canada to hold a public inquiry into the operation of Turquetil Hall and the Joseph Bernier federal day school.

Personally, I am convinced that issues like sexual, mental and physical abuse, forceful removal from parents and the loss of culture and language can be dealt with to the satisfaction of students and clergy. I am convinced more than ever that a healing process can begin - and soon.

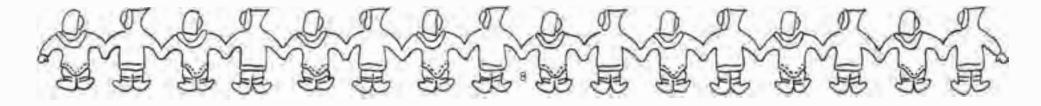
But I am also determined that the rest of the world appreciate and understand what at least 250 of us went through. I want to see the Roman Catholic Church admit they wronged the Eskimo and apologize for the damage they caused.

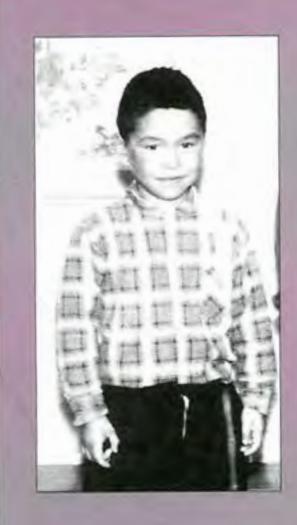
Most of all, I want to make peace with myself, with my

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family, and with my neighbors. In the meantime, social workers and care-givers have a right to know and appreciate our history. I do not wish to pass these problems on to my children and grandchildren.

The time has come for truth and healing to prevail.





the wind once blew from a direction, having an invisible force that made visible things move...while a bird seemed able to use the wind as a means for successfully staying suspended in one place in mid-air — separate from all possible places on earth and separate from, though a part of, the whole universe.

A MOMENT OF PEACE

by Simeonie Kunnuk

one time as I was walking out on the land of arctic wilderness it started to drizzle

then, on top of a small hill, i saw a black bird sitting with its back to me its head would look this way and that way as if suspiciously aware of my presence - perhaps, in semi-alarm....

i picked up a rock - almost as large as my hand silently, i walked towards the bird

the distance between me and the bird shortened to within jumping distance i stopped and pondered - uncertain as to throw the rock at the bird or jump towards it in an attempt to catch it

i jumped up while at the same time i raised my arm to throw the rock at the bird i landed and swung down with all the power i could muster seeing the rock come out of my hand as if in slow motion

then the rock hit solid ground, landing just beside the still bird - an audible thump i looked at the bird because it had not moved at all to fly away other than to move its head sideways in response to the rock's thump - otherwise it did not attempt to move away or escape

i wondered - "is it hurt, injured or too young to be able to fly?"

i stood in embarassment also since i had missed the bird at such close range; i asked myself if this made me a poor hunter....

i did not know what to do anymore

then I bent down to pick up the bird

suddenly, it moved from between my feet and took off to fly away from the hill, swooping downwards first then upwards

i looked around to see if anybody might have witnessed this such strange set of events

then i looked into the distance

from where i stood and from where the bird had been, i saw the scene before me there was the rugged tundra and rough rocky hills - grey, brown with patches of white spring snow; in the distance beyond this tundra, was another view but blended to the tundra - the white snow-ice of the sea where there were splotches of blue shallow water on the ice; then beyond that also blended the scene of another distant land having the color purple-blue haze caused by such distance then i finally felt the wetness of the light rain-drizzle which i had forgotten about completely; i listened....

no sound silence calm i listened no more peace for there was nothing to hear

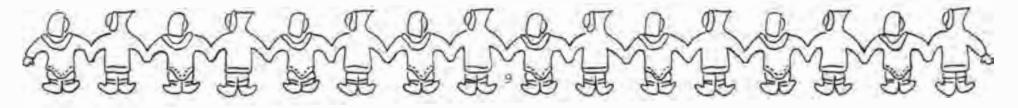
bird and since the wind was not even whispering

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"If a child is abused and told not to say anything, the child will then take on the responsibility of carrying this burden of silence at whatever cost to themselves."

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Mariano Aupiliardjuk, Rankin Inlet Elder



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From Silence

For almost three decades, silence was my life even when I tried to pretend that it was not. This silence was with me for a span of approximately 27 years, from about 1966 till about 1993. I was seven years old when I went to Chesterfield Inlet for school in 1966. I do not remember the reasoning or explanation I was given when I was going to be taken from my home community.

I was taken away from my family and from my parental care to another community far away for an education that was completely alien to the Inuit educational system of the time. As I was to find out later, my parents and their generation had an educational upbringing that was free of the non-Inuit education system. So in that sense, the commencement of non-Inuit education of Inuit was a historical event of its time.

On a personal level, my stay in Chesterfield Inlet at Turguetil Hall was one of the most eventful experiences that I shall ever have in my life. For it was at this time, it was at this place, and it was at this frame of my life I learned about the rules that were to form much of my fundamental beliefs, no matter how erroneous they were. I was not to speak of the events that happened that I witnessed while I was there. I was not to speak of the events to which I was also subjected as an object of convenience. The experiences that I had were ones of victimization and of trauma. I was told never to talk about the sexual abuses that I experienced.

I was staying at hostel, like many of the Inuit children who were taken from parents from various other surrounding communities and regions, and sent to this residential school. Turquetil Hall, the hostel, was supervised by nuns, lay priests (called "brothers") and priests. I remember that the boy's dormitory was on the second floor of the hostel, the girl's dormitory was on the third, and there was a ground floor that had a coat room.

There was a nun who was very nice. Her name was Sister Arcand. When I first arrived to Chesterfield Inlet by plane and we were outside waiting for something, I was getting cold but Sister Arcand put her coat around me. There are numerous other events of which I remember that were fun, interesting and exciting; these events, however, were experiences which were generally associated with the other boys and girls that I was staying with at the hostel or were classmates from the community. The older boys, in addition, to interpreting for those of us too foreign to the English language, would look after us and pull us around with sleds. They would run so fast that we would have to hang on for dear life.

There were many other things I learned about when I was at the student resident hostel. I first ice-skated in



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Chesterfield Inlet. I learned about having to be separate from the girls. In July 1993, at the former students' reunion in Chesterfield Inlet I saw a photo dated 1966. It was a photo of me and my older sister. This photograph reminded me of the time when it was going to be taken that my sister was telling me that we should not be too close physically since it was a rule. I remember also sitting in church and seeing her on the other side of the

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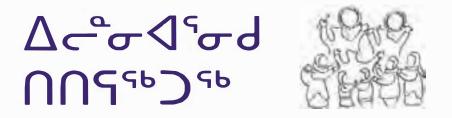
aisle where all the other girls sat opposite from the our side of seats. I wondered about why we had to be separate. For some reasons nothing other than the notion of sin seems to be the most compelling explanation. Another memorable time with my sister was when she was telling me to speak to a radio saying that my mother would be able to hear me if I spoke. For some reason, I could not bring myself to speak to the radio; rather I listened as the radio made noises that were barely understandable as words. I remember hearing the word "over" through this radio a number of times.

I did not experience physical abuse as some did and particularly about the ones that I would hear about from the older children. I kept hearing about this one name "Mr. Demel" or something like that. Everyone, it was seems, was terrified of this one individual. I got scared just hearing about him. The other experience that I can associate to physical abuse is the time when everyone was in the cafeteria. I think the older children were given chores of helping with the serving of the food or its preparation. Anyway, we were in the hostel cafeteria and there was this very loud "smack!" which turned everyone's head. It was just at that instant I happened to look in the direction and see a nun backing away from one of the older boys. It appeared she had just slapped him. I could see her hand retreating. There was a total silence which filled the whole atmosphere for several seconds. Then everything went back to normal.

Finally there were very personal experiences which shall be a part of my life forever. Once I woke up suddenly because my arm and legs were immobilized and something was covering my head at the same time so I could not see who was doing what-I tried moving. I tried shouting and I fought with all the strength I could muster. But it was useless and then all I could do was try to breathe in the air that would not come. Then a strange sensation came, which I was never able to understand until decades later when I was given a medical check-up for physical scars. Now I know that night in the residence I was raped. A nun may have saved my life for it must have been right afterwards that I woke up again because she was slapping my face and telling me in whispers to put on my pajama pants. I hardly had the energy to put them on. Another time, this older boy raped me also when we were on a walk excursion of some kind. There was this time too when a bunch of us boys were in the brother's room. One of the older boys had to do the interpreting for me because the brother couldn't speak or understand Inuktitut and I could not speak or understand English. The brother must have had a great time. I remember pushing his head away from my private parts because I thought I was going to get bitten. I remember clearly being told to "DO NOT SPEAK OF THIS!" Sometime later, the nuns took us to the cateteria and

asked us if we were given or offered candies in brother's bedroom.

There was also this older boy who would take me to various places and to the act to the extent that I learned the intensity of the sexual experience. I remember asking "Could I do it too?" to which I was answered, "Not right now!" These experiences were not as physically painful until years later especially when I started wondering if what I had gone through had made me become a homosexual. That even the body of child could be c^{sb})^all <u>a</u>^ll^b σ^{s} V σ^{b} $\Pi C a^{c}$ $\Delta \dot{\sigma} A^{s} a^{c}$ $\Delta A^{l} a^{c} a^{b} a^{b}$ $\Delta \dot{\sigma}^{s} a^{c}$ $\Delta \dot{\sigma}^{s} a^{c}$ $\Delta \dot{\sigma}^{s} a^{c} a^{c} b^{c} A^{c} a^{c} b^{c} a^{c} b^{c} A^{c} a^{c} b^{c} a^{c} b^{c} b^{$



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made to respond to a stimulation of sexual nature was something that provided one of the most healing aspects of therapy I receive for the abuse that had afflicted my life. It was not until well into several sessions of my therapy that I realized how serious the abuses I had been subjected to as a child of seven were. To talk about it is to experience a disorienting and dizzying sensation. To talk about it is to feel inadequate. To speak about it is to close any coherence of when to begin where and of when to end or change the subject. But all of this is better than not to speak and be silent about what happened.

When I was told not to ever speak of what I went through and of what I had seen I had said "yes" and promised to myself many times afterwards that I would never speak or utter a word that would disclose any of the events of abuse. I now know that when I had said "yes" that it had become my word and not that of the perpetrator that ruled my life. It was the same thing with the promises which I had made and kept saying to myself that had become laws of my personal making. As of this moment, I am working to continue this assertion in a way that is more healthily conducive to my physical well-being and mental capacity. I am becoming less afraid of getting close to people since I have worked with the issue of what one of the perpetrators had told me after I was raped. This individual said to me that time so long ago, "I did it to you because I like you!"

I now speak about what I have gone through. I know of the suffering that abnormally imposed silence can bring. I also now know of the healing that can immerse a former victim into such a frenzied state of need for answers that everything else such as daily events become unimportant. Through all this process, the support I continue to receive makes such a difference in addition to being very emotionally overwhelming. It seems like I'm making many new-found friends. To all who have made a difference in my life- THANKS.

The author of this article has requested that we withold his name at this time.

Letter from

I thought it was most fortunate that I was included with the students who were going to Chesterfield Inlet Federal Day School. Little did I know how it would affect my life and the children I was to have. It came as an unbelievable surprise, when [a former student] admitted to having been sexually abused in Chesterfield Inlet residential school.

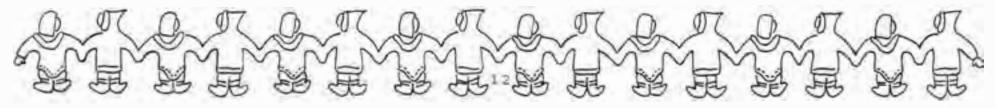
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Our education was of the highest quality and for that I'm grateful.

I have always thought that the Roman Catholic Church personnel never did any wrong doings (sins) because we, as children, were taught never to think bad thoughts. But as a child,



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my understanding of bad was (as follows, for example): chewing gum in church; rather, when all along there were sexual thoughts.

I could never understand why my spouse was against the priests and their roles. It wasn't until a few minutes prior to my departure to Chesterfield Inlet for the reunion that he informed me about being one of the former students who was exposed to sexual abuse. I can understand his anger towards priests now. I know my life would have been easier had they not abused him when he was innocent and trusting of their roles.

Even our parents tell us that their sins are long forgiven and that we should not pursue this. Little do they know how it affected our lives, or is it that they do not want to admit to the wrong doings of our past supervisors?

Our parents must wonder why we do things that are not up to their standards. Do they ever question our behavior when we are troubled and have no trust towards them or anybody?

My one wish is that any person who was sexually abused will get the courage to speak up after reading about the courageous people who spoke up.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to say something about this.

Regards, Marie-Lucie Uvilluk

Bounced Around

When I was a baby I had a very bad eye infection that got worse. So my mom packed me and, with my dad and his brother accompanying her, they walked from Pelly Bay to Cam 4, a D.E.W. line site, 8 miles away. From there, I was sent down south in Montreal, to a hospital. I was later placed in a foster home when I got better. I honestly thought that the foster parents were my real parents. After 2 years of persistent efforts by Father Vande Velde, a priest stationed at Pelly Bay, to get me home, I arrived at Chesterfield Inlet. It was 1961 then and I was 4 years old.

I started in kindergarten immediately with Sister Rocan. I was the youngest and the smallest at Turquetil Hall. Sister Desoniay was my Supervisor. During my stay in Chesterfield Inlet I remember Sister Arcand, Sister Servant, Sister Pelagie, Brother Paradis (who later died of a heart attack in Churchill), Father Courtemache, Father Henri, Maria and Qayaaq (who were patients at the hospital), Mother Superior (I don't remember her name), Jimmy Komaksiutiksak, Sister Lemaire, Mr. Demuele, Mr. McNamee, Miss Fitzgerald, Miss Ona, Father Fafard, Danny Autit's dad (who was the baker at the hostel), and most of the students. I completed Grade 6 with Mr. McNamee when I was 11 years old in 1968. After I went home for the spring and summer of that year, the Government decided to let most of the students have schooling at home, since most of the small communities were then being provided with schools. Some had the opportunity to go to school in Inuvik or Yellowknife. My parents decided to send me to Inuvik since there was a Catholic Hostel

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«Δc_C (L25 \c-(ے לסד, הביוסר there. In Inuvik, I attended Sir Alexander MacKenzie School and later attended the Samuel Hearne Secondary School. During that time I lived at the Grollier Hall. I graduated from the Matriculation Program in SHSS in 1975, at the age of 17. By then, I had spent 14 years of my life in Catholic hostels. My first time to spend Christmas with my family was when I was 15 years old. I thought I was not going to survive the cold when I got home, but I found that the temperature was the same as Inuvik's. It was not until then, when I was seventeen, that it was my first time to ever spend a whole year at home with my real family.

I remember bits and pieces of my childhood, most of which were traumatic for me. It's hard for me to write this article, but I feel I can do it. I have a lot of mixed emotions while typing

this up, mostly a feeling of wanting to cry. I also have this feeling of being abandoned and at looking at my own kids now. How could THEY have done all of that to ME? WHY? We were so small yet we SURVIVED!

I started therapy and counseling in 1983, and I still am in it today. I even have my own Psychiatrist. I've been to Women Support Groups and Healing Circles. I've done a lot of praying, a lot of talking to the Lord, I think that was got me through and stopped me from committing suicide many times. My faith in the Lord, even when the people around seemed not to know that He exists, I prayed silently.

In 1993, I went to the Reunion in Chesterfield Inlet and I'm

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glad I went. I found a lot of answers while I was there and I am still searching for answers. I will still pursue answers, I know now I am strong enough for it.

I was devastated when I heard no one was going to be charged with anything when they did the investigation into the allegations of all types of abuses during the time Joseph Bernier School and Turquetil Hall were open. I tell you I can not forget the face of the man who abused me and other students. I was really hoping he would be charged. He needs to pay for his mistakes, if not now, in the next life.

We need to speak out our feelings and not let those feelings eat us up inside and destroy our lives. The wrongdoing that happened in Chesterfield is now in the open and there is no looking back. We have each other, those who are left. We will find ways to deal with our pain in a healthy way.



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An Elder's Thoughts

The following is an excerpt from an interview with an elder whose children attended Joseph Bernier School and resided at Turquetil Hall. At the request of the elder, we have not used his name.

Tamalik: I want to talk with you as a father whose children were sent away to Chesterfield Inlet for schooling....would you begin by just sharing your memories of that particular time....

Elder: Yes, very well, I will speak of the things that I know and from my own perception, as I cannot relate things that didn't pertain to me. I can talk of my experiences, my own thoughts, my own perceptions. It is hard for me to talk in detail on what is something I have only heard of and not experienced.

Tamalik: Did parents have any sense of control over whether their children were to be sent away to school?

Elder: In general, I don't know whether that was the case or not. I don't know of any parents who actually inwardly were opposed to their children being sent away. For me, I had the sense that an education was very important for our children. Many of us at the time were envious of those who could speak English, and were were merely committed to giving our children the opportunity to go to school. We want to help our children and support them in having the opportunities... that is one thing I am sure that each parent had in mind... I couldn't speak English, like the rest of the Inuit of our generation. We wanted our children to have that opportunity of being fluent in English. This was at the time that no children ever went to school yet. When children started to go away for schooling, we watched our children want to have the same chance as the others, and I wanted that for them too. This was my reasoning at the time.

Tamalik: Yes. When the children were collected, did the Inuit feel pressure to follow what was going on...did they feel obligated to send the children away because their neighbours were sending theirs away...

Elder: Yes, when the people came to pick up the children by plane - for me, I just recognized that it was time to go away to

school - that was my only motive I think.

Tamalik: Who was it that approached you to tell you about this - someone from the government, for instance?

Elder: There were absolutely no government representatives back in the time when our children first began going away.... we had no government people here in this area. Our so-called



Boys and girls in Naujaat in 1958/59. Back row: Nick Amautinnuaq, Paul Manitok, Peter Ernerk, Francois Nanorak and Agatha Crawford. Middle row: Josie Kusugak, Catherine Airut, John Ningark, Michael Arvaaluk Kusugak, Annie Siutinnuaq. Front row: Maria, Theresie Unglak, Theresie Tungilik and Gemma Anaqturniq.

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government at the time was the Hudson Bay Company and the Catholic church. For us personally, it was from the church that we were informed that the children had to go away...it was a short explanation.

Tamalik: Would you like to add any more thoughts?

Elder: I can add a little bit...I will speak of my own experience - regarding that time, I had a sense of inadequecy for not knowing English. I didn't want my children to be like that how can it be described - I felt limited by the way I was, and so I wanted my children to be educated. But in the end my children both got good educations and some quit in the middle as well. Now I don't have the same push for them to get schooling, while I still encourage them to do so. It's only now that I am aware of some things, like they had a hard time. My reason was I didn't want them to be stuck like we were. And of those in charge, there was a death among them, and it was my way of supporting them. But the main reason was that they needed to be schooled. I do not have the same strong opinion now, however. That's all I wanted to add - I really wanted them to have an education.

A New Understanding: A Father and Son Talk about the Past

Father: I have a few questions I have pondered over which I can elaborate on...regarding the issues you are looking into. Basically, what is all your work leading towards?

Son: It is basically to help others who were at the residential school. To clarify the facts of what went on. For many, our time at the school and residence was the cause of great suffering...if what went on can be made public, and understood, it can be talked about. Those that are in pain can come forward and open up if the right support and understanding is evident to them...some need help and support on many issues, but they are helpless in what to do about it. For instance, I was completely lost as to who to talk to...but when I became aware of this process to help the former students, I slowly came forward...in spite of it all. We'd like to hear from an elder who has had children sent away to school...we'd like to know what you were told by the one's who were taking the children away.

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Father: Yes...I guess the first question would be - and one that was asked before - "Were you first asked permission about the children going to school?" We were not asked first... I should know myself, anyway, we were not asked first. But the $\Delta c^{\bullet} \sigma \langle \Delta d^{\flat} d^{\flat} \sigma \delta \Delta^{\bullet} \rangle = \Delta L^{\bullet} \delta^{\bullet} \delta^{\bullet$

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Inuit response to the opportunity was to immediately indicate our support, at least some of us, we supported the children in what seemed to be important for them.

Son: Were they clear in speaking about what school was about, or was there any expectation from them that the children should go? Did they approach it with the attitude that your permission was required?

Father: Well, it wasn't evident that they gave us the choice... they never came and said, "Do you want your children to go to school or do you prefer them not to..." And then, and now we hear of some of the students have been severely traumatised by it...Personally, I really wanted my children to go to school so that they could develop skills that I didn't have. ...I have lost two of the children that I supported so much in going to school...I tried to give what would empower them...so now I am not so strong in my opinion about school as I was that time.

Son: But without the sense that you were being asked permission, though, did the authorities in anyway take advantage of the power they knew they had?

Father: I would say so...they would have recognised very soon back then that they had a lot of power. We had only just come in contact with the government and we feared and obeyed them.

Son: What about the the power that the new authorities, the church, had through their religion did they speak with such confidence...was this a factor at all in what choices you made as you now look back on it?

Father: If the question is whether the church was to blame, I'd say both the church and the government were to blame.

Son: So you trusted them because they seemed trustworthy?

Father. Yes, I had the impression that they should be trusted...they did help us in many ways...and our children were given opportunities...however, they did some damaging things to them - effecting their lives - and as parents we didn't know what was going on as we had never been to school ourselves...we were without that knowledge....

Son: The Inuit were generally mystified by the Qallunaat and interpreted them as being helpful, but that the Qallunaaq government and their church had power, and were revered by the Inuit...was their any question that if you wanted to say no, that you wouldn't be able to out of fear of them...now that you can reflect on it ...would you have not said no if you wanted to?

Father: I can't really say... the attitude of the Inuit back then was to act in complete compliance...this is very difficult for me myself to say...

Son: ...it must be very difficult to listen to painfully sensitive issues, for these are not easy topics of discussion. To first hear of them must be a shock.

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Father: It is a shock that penetrates deeply, and it is accompanied by a sense of disbelief....then later there is a process of learning to accept what is said... after a while the information is all processed....but it leaves you really thinking about it all for a long

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time...I think that hope probably lies in "mammisaq", it is by healing in therapy that they can recover. This is just from my own guessing, as I have not had the experience of therapy myself. I come from the old Inuit ways, and I don't know about these things.

Son: What do you think about the process of getting together to help one another on this.

Father: They seemed to be of great support to one another when they went to Chesterfield Inlet for a reunion...I believe it was very helpful for some of them ...that they could begin to have a better life. I also think that if there is the money to have another gathering, that they would be further along in their healing. ...I wouldn't really participate, so that the victims could really connect with one another.

Son: That the story is out, there are more people coming forward. It seems to some, though, that this is about going against the church. Some are really attached to the Catholic church, and it is a big part of how they live their lives. Some say that talking about it means going against the church, and that creates problems of its own and that it makes negative waves...could you speak on this?

Father: This is so, for sure...the Catholic church people would prefer this to stop all together, yet some are looking with compassion upon their fellow Inuit, and just want to see them fully recover. Inuit are divided on this...some want it to stop, and don't want any mention of this...I know there are people with this attitude...and others have the attitude that the victims need the opportunity to heal and better their lives...that's all I can say about that.

Son: The reality is that it has effected many lives....there are more than 50, more than 60, there are somewhere over 80 people that have come forward and said that were victimised. There are probably more than that in total, because some have not opened up about it. There were between 400 and 500 children that went through the school in the 1950's up to 1970... 86 have already come forward.

Father: And there are very likely others who haven't come forth as well.

Son: Well, I don't have any more questions...do you have anything to add to this?

Father: No I don't have much else to say...I have no more to say... I do have one small thing to add, and that is this. As parents, we didn't know what was going on, obviously, but in reflecting on the past situation...it was just time for our children to go away and get an education...and when they returned, and we saw what new behaviour they had, we rejected them and scolded them (him) harshly...as that was all we could do...and now I realise that I was ignorant of how he had been hurt. I was unaware of what had gone on, and how the schooling experience had damaged him...all I could do was react and scold him. As parents we judged him out of our ignorance...that we had not known what they had gone through...yes, that was all I wanted to add.





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In the Spirit of Healing: A Special Reunion

The following are excerpts taken from the report written by the Chair of the Bernier Project, Marius Tungilik entitled In the Spirit of Healing: A Special Reunion.

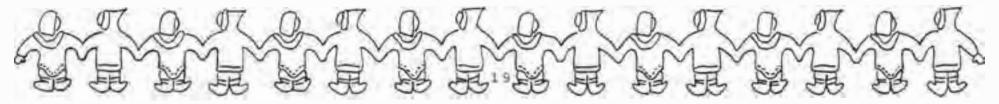
The Stories

The former students, many now in their thirties and forties, recalled stories of how they were sent to school and had to adjust to a foreign lifestyle. Some also had told stories of how well treated they were and how grateful they were for the opportunity of a formal education.

During the plenary sessions and small group discussions called "healing circles" many were able to, for the first time in some cases, disclose the horror they were forced to experience as small children in the school. Some spoke in anger, others spoke with compassion.

In defense of the survivors, some of us were eager to respond to those who pleaded for the former students to forgive their abusers. In the spirit of healing this was not the primary objective, as many felt it was too early in the recovery stage to deal with forgiveness. For those who delivered these messages, we wish to apologize for the rapidness in which we opposed this concept. We hope that we will eventually arrive at this conclusion (and should not feel guilty if we cannot); however, it was not the time to deal with this difficult act. We apologize for any hurtfeelings this may have caused.

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∆ב״ושי זוכ-⊅בשו הארבחיבירי בירישיביטי ארביטשי ארביטשי. secrets they were forced to keep and the guilt of keeping such secrets for such an extended period of time. Finding ways to cope with the abusive cases meant for many that they developed unhealthy ways to cope with life's difficulties.

While we cannot disclose what happened in the healing circles, we can report the intensity in which the former students spoke with the supportive role they willingly played in these session. The need to continue playing a supportive role in our communities was emphasized.

The entertainment provided during the week also helped in keeping the sprits up and helped to relived some of the intensity of the events.

Child Sexual Abuse

Approximately forty former students came forward to disclose the fact that they were survivors of child sexual abuse. Given the publicity of this event, it is quite possible that many cases were not reported. However, for those who did disclose, the lifting of feelings of isolation was overwhelming.

One perpetrator (a Christian brother) was chiefly responsible for the damage caused to so many innocent lives. It was reported that some Grey Nuns and priests were involved in child sexual abuse; however, the extent of the abuse may not be known. There is some evidence that some staff members knew that crime was being committed at the boarding school residence.

While it is unknown how many cases which were known by staff members went unreported to the authorities, it is also unknown how such cases were handled given the isolation of the worksite.

For every child that was sexually abused, many more were directly affected. For instance, one person cited a case where he passed his traits which he had learned as a child abused by a supervisor. He stated that he could not maintain a relationship with anyone intimately.

During one of the healing circle sessions, nine out of the ten [men] reported being sexually abused [as students]. As the circles grew throughout the week, it became more evident that a large number of children were abused. It also became clear that the survivors were at various stages of recovery. Some were just starting to deal with the fact, while others were well on their way to full recovery.

The lack of professional resources at the community level was discussed at length. While the survivors were committed to working out their problems through support groups, it was also necessary to have qualified counsellors available to facilitate healing. It is crucial to have help available to survivors, their partners and children in order to halt the dysfunctional coping patterns from continuing on the next generation. Some survivors were forced to keep the child sexual abuse a secret for over thirty years. Many factors were involved in this phenomenon. Most, if not all, were told by their abusers not to tell anyone. The fact that the abusers were men and women of God also played a powerful role The shame and guilt was also another important fact. The media



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had become more sympathetic to the victims and survivors over the last few years. The efforts of such courageous individuals at Mount Cashel and the Manitoba Assembly of Chiefs served as an inspiration in this unfolding.

Physical Abuse

While it is common knowledge that discipline was carried out differently in the 1950's and '60's, it was, nevertheless, dramatic for Inuit children to be punished severely at the hands of people other than their parents or guardians.

The discipline given by the teachers and hostel supervisors were unduly severe by an standard. This was the topic of discussion and debate during the second day of the reunion.

During the small group discussion, the moderator in our group, asked us to discuss physical abuse that we were subjected to at school, after we had just finished talking about sexual abuse. The mood changed very dramatically. It seemed that it was nothing compared to the previous subject. We started to make jokes about it. Although it was a serious matter, it did not appear to have such an impact at the time. Once we were able to again discuss it more seriously, some former students recalled how they were hurt physically. Much of the physical abused carried with it emotional scarring, so it was difficult for most to separate the physical pain from the emotional pain that took place.

Being pulled by the ears for doing something which we felt was not serious, when we did not understand what were being punished for, or not knowing what would happen if we made the wrong move was extremely stressful and fearful. We were systematically punished with a ruler for just being there in the class, it seemed.

Emotional Abuse

People spoke of many forms of emotional abuse suffered in school. The homesickness was one. Not being able to see or speak to siblings was another. Cruel and unusual punishment was yet another. Being forced to keep horrible secrets, being told that your culture was not good enough, putting the fear of God Almighty in us, these were other forms of emotional abuse. Not being able to visit people in their homes, and the community not being able to visit us in the hostel, served to distance ourselves from the valuable resources in the community.

Many former students spoke about how they were notable to be close to their brothers and sisters. Some were finally able to hug their brother and sister since going to school. The sense of loss for all the years of isolation and distancing was, for many, overpowering. As the week unfolded, it became increasingly clear that the changes brought about as a result of the boarding school had been far beyond our perception of individual alienation with our families or origin and the strange ways we had deal with problems.

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A woman spoke of her sister who had died at the hostel which went unreported to the parents until months later when the students returned home.

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Undoubtedly, it was traumatic for the parents as well. Having your 4 or 5 year old, even 6 or 7 years old, sent away to a school hundreds of miles away for months at a time was not easy. It also disrupted the division of labour which was necessary for family independence. This lead to further deterioration of the family ties.

With so many people affected by this trauma, and Nunavut being relatively small population-wise, it was clear that a majority of its people where somehow affected by the earlier school system. The sense of urgency with these issues as we strive for self-determination becomes paramount.

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Chronology of Events of the Joseph Bernier Residential School and Turquetil Hall

1912

Father Turquetil builds the first Roman Catholic "Eskimo" mission in Chesterfield Inlet.

1925

Chesterfield Inlet becomes the foundation and starting point for the missionary activity of the Roman Catholic church in the Hudson Bay region.

October, 1950

28 Inuit children attend "Eskimo Hall" of the Roman Catholic mission in Chesterfield inlet for school. Father Roland Courtemanche was the volunteer teacher.

1951

School building, consisting of two classrooms, funded by the federal government and built by the Oblate Brothers was built. 30 children attended the school. Mr. Roland Lariviere was the teacher and distributed government cheques to those in financial need.

1953

Mr. Lariviere replaced by Sister Elisabeth Herauf. She was assisted by Sister Pauline Coté and Sister Thérese Plante.

1954

Inuit children from other communities begin to come to the school. They are brought there by airplane by a company called "Arctic Wings". The students from other communities are lodged in the old mission building and under the care of two Grey nuns, Sister Monique Provencher and Rolande Girard. school and removal from the school had to be authorized by the federal minister.

October 1, 1959

An Agreement between Canada and the Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation of Hudson's Bay signed by the Deputy Minister of DIAND, the Vicar Apostolic and two clergymen of the Episcopal Corporation. The contract sets out the responsibilities of the Episcopal Corporation in operating and managing Turquetil Hall Bishops to run school in Chesterfield Inlet- who signed on behalf of government and the church.

1990

First public statement regarding abuse at Joseph Bernier School and Turquetil Hall made by MLA for Aivilik riding, Peter Ernerk. He called upon the Government of the NWT to undertake a public inquiry into the treatment of residential school students. Government does not act.

November, 1992

A former student of the school, Marius Tungilik, makes a presentation to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, providing information about the incidents of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse suffered by the children who attended Joseph Bernier School and resided at Turquetil Hall.

November, 1992

One week following Marius Tungilik's presentation to the Royal Commission, Peter Ernerk begins the planning process for a reunion in Chesterfield Inlet.

1954 to 1969

Turquetil Hall operates as a residence for Inult children attending Joseph Beriner School, Over this period, approximately 463 students attended the school, many residing at Turquetil Hall. Some students attending the residence and school were as young as age 6. Length of attendance at the school varies for many students (from one year to the time it took to complete elementary school). Attendance at the

1992-1993

An organizing committee for the reunion, calling itself the Bernier Project, raises funds from the GNWT (\$55,000), federal Government (\$20,000) NTI (\$2,500), and the Roman Catholic Church (\$10,000). The Hamlet and Community Education Council of Chesterfield Inlet provide use of school and community hall for former students and others attending the reunion.

July 19-23, 1993

Approximately 150 former students of Joseph Bernier School and residents of Turquetil Hall attend a reunion in Chesterfield Inlet. During this week long reunion, allegations of sexual, emotional and physical abuse were made by

students against former staff persons of the school and Turquetil Hall.

July 19-23, 1993

At the reunion, Bishop Rouleau presents prepared apology to the former students. The apology made by the Bishop at the reunion was controversial in suggesting that there were only "some" former students who were making an issue of the situation - that there were many people unhappy with what was "alleged" at the reunion.

July 23, 1993

A petition signed by 49 people and addressed to the Government Leader asks for a comprehensive public inquiry into the treatment of students attending Joseph Bernier School and residing at Turquetil Hall during the 1950's and 1960's. specifying the inquiry focus on determining the extent of sexual, physical and emotional abuse suffered.

1993

The RCMP in Rankin Inlet initiate an investigation into the allegations made at the reunion. After completing interviews with some of the students, the RCMP realize that there are many more victims than they originally thought.

October 1993

Katherine Peterson is contracted by the GNWT to begin an investigation (not a public inquiry) to advise the Government on the number, scope and specifics of allegations of physical, sexual and emotional abuse at the Bernier School and Turquetil Hall residence. Her inquiry is not as extensive as the RCMP Task Force.

November 1993 - May 1995

RCMP Task Force investigates 236 allegations of abuse (150 physical and 86 sexual abuse) which occurred at the school and Turquetil Hall between 1952 and 1969. Twenty-three members of the clergy and other staff members were identified as possible suspects. The RCMP interviewed 346 former students, almost all of the former staff members and the suspects. The investigation found that the suspects of the most serious cases of physical and sexual abuse were three clergy who were now dead.

May 1995

Chesterfield Inlet Residential School (CIRS) Ad Hoc Committee is set up by former students. The main purpose of the Committee made up of former students is to develop an action plan which will address healing, therapy and counselling needs of the former students and their communities. This committee begins its work to maintain the truth of the abuse disclosures and to prevent the formal authorities from minimizing the cases of abuse disclosed.

June 27, 1995

Katherine Peterson's Investigation report is released to the public. Peterson's findings confirm that allegations of sexual abuse and forms of physical abuse went well beyond the standard that might have been considered classroom discipline at the time. In the report, she makes 10 recommendations which primarily focus on:

-couselling and support services be provided to former students at the regional and community level,

-a public inquiry be undertaken only if the negotiations between the church and federal government to identify financial and human resources to be committed to healing, therapy, and counselling services for the former students and their families. -taking civil legal action,

-providing support to those wishing to take this legal action to explore what type of remedies this option may provide, -a working group be established made up of representatives of the church, two levels of government and former students

June 27, 1995

Crown attorney (Pierre Rousseau)/ RCMP hold a press Conference announcing no charges would be laid following the RCMP Task Force investigation. The reasons for not laying charges are based on findings from RCMP investigation.

June 27, 1995

Premier Nellie Cournoyea announces that no public inquiry will be held saying it would cause useless delays and draw resources away from individuals who need or want help now. No new funds are committed to deal with the healing programs recommended in Peterson's report. Cournoyea states that "existing programs" should meet the needs of former students.

July 19,1995

Chesterfield Inlet Residential School (CIRS) Ad Hoc Committee holds its first meeting in Yellowknife.

October 25-28, 1995

Ad Hoc Committee holds a meeting in conjunction with the first meeting of the "Working Group" established by the GNWT involving territorial government departments, federal government DIAND representatives, the Roman Catholic Church representative- Bishop Rouleau and the Ad Hoc Committee. During the meeting, Ad Hoc Committee members consult the Manitoba Chiefs and Assembly of First Nations consult to obtain the benefit of their experience and resources in this field. At the Working Group meeting, members of the Ad Hoc Committee called upon Bishop Rouleau to make another apology -one that does not minimize the harm suffered by the former students at the hands of the religious and civilian staff of the school and hostel.

December 1995

Ad Hoc Committee meets in Yellowknife in conjunction with the Working Group meeting. At this meeting the Ad Hoc Committee decides to change its name to "Survivors Tasiuqtit -Forever we Journey Together" ("Tasiuqtit" means "supporting each other") and become a "society" under the NWT Societies Act. At Working group meeting Bishop Rouleau agrees to give another apology to the former students on February 27, 1996 in Igloolik. At this time the Ad Hoc Committee meets with the Director of Prosecutions for the Crown's office. He agrees to reissue a press statement to address the problems arising from the 1993 press release issued by the Crown. Many felt that explanation given for not laying charges following the RCMP investigation suggested the abuses were "minor" in nature and not significant enough to lay charges. This in fact was not the case. The Crown agrees to explain this further to clarify this misunderstanding. Simeonie Kunnuk contacts RCMP by letter and phone to request RCMP to release a new statement to also assist in clarifying the misunderstandings created with their June 27, 1995 press release. RCMP agree to have a letter prepared to be read in Igloolik at the press conference February 27, 1996.



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This issue of Suvaguuq was written by the persons noted as authors in the text. This issue was edited by Simeonie Kunnuk, Janet "Tamalik" McGrath and Mary Crnkovich. All interviews and translations in English and Inuktitut were done by Janet "Tamalik" McGrath. Pauktuutit wishes to thank all of the contributors for sharing their stories with us. Pauktuutit would especially like to acknowledge the strength, courage and commitment of Simeonie Kunnuk in taking on the task of coordinating this newsletter. Production/design: EarthLore, Photographs were provided by Peter Ernerk, Violet Charile and Simeonie Kunnuk.

Thank You

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