IN THE MATTER OF:

Commission of Inquiry into the Circumstances
Surrounding the Death of Phoenix Sinclair

CROSS-EXAMINATION OF:

EVELYN MARGARET WOTHERSPOON

CROSS-EXAMINATION BY:

MR. J. KROFT and

MR. J. GINDIN

CROSS-EXAMINATION DATE:

TUESDAY, MAY 22, 2012

Jill Proctor
Official Examiner, Q.B.
(204)669-6186
jillproctor@mts.net

The Cross-examination on Affidavit of EVELYN MARGARET WOTHERSPOON, viva voce, on oath, had and taken by Jill Proctor, an Official Examiner in this Honourable Court, at the offices of Myers Weinberg LLP, in the City of Winnipeg, Province of Manitoba, on Tuesday the 22nd day of May 2012 at 10:08 a.m.

APPEARANCES:

On behalf of the Witness: Mr. G. Smorang

On behalf of the Media Group:

Mr. J. Kroft, Ms. B. Chisick

On behalf of Kim Edwards And Steve Sinclair:

Mr. J. Gindin, Mr. D. Ireland

On behalf of the Department Of Family Services and Consumer Affairs:

Mr. S. Paul

On behalf of CFS General, North, South, ANCR:

Mr. L. Bernas

On behalf of Intertribal Child and Family Services:

Mr. H. Kahn

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<u> </u>	1			3
1	TUESDAY, MAY 22, 2012 10:08 A.M.	1		largely in Alberta?
2		2		A It has.
3	EVELYN MARGARET WOTHERSPOON, BEING FIRST	3	3	Q And just to deal with what we spoke about
4	DULY SWORN, TESTIFIED AS FOLLOWS:	4		a moment ago, you don't hold any degrees in
. 5		5		adult psychology?
6	CROSS-EXAMINATION	6		A I do not. My degree is in a Master of
7		7		Social Work.
8	BY MR. KROFT:	8	4	Q You are not an expert in neuropsychology?
و	1 Q Just a couple of things to start that your	9		A I have a lot of training in psychology by
10	Counsel may want to help you with, and I don't	10		virtue of the work I do with the Norlien
11	mind if he interrupts for those parts anyway.	11		Foundation in Alberta. Around, I attend every
12	I guess the first is, we should mark a	12		year a symposium in early brain and biological
13	copy of your affidavit as an exhibit.	13		development, which is, a lot of that is
14	MR. SMORANG: She has a clean copy in front	14		neuropsychology.
15	of her.	15	5	Q For children?
16	MR. KROFT: Why don't we mark your copy.	16		A But it is not my area of expertise.
17	This is your affidavit that was sworn in the Matter	17	6	Q You have never written a paper on that,
18	of the Commission of Inquiry Relating to the Death of	18		conducted any experiments, anything like that?
19	Phoenix Sinclair and other things?	19		A No.
20	THE WITNESS: Correct.	20	7	Q You are not published in the literature?
21	MR. KROFT: Exhibit 1, please.	21	-	A No, not in that area of neurodevelopment,
22	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	22		no.
23	EXHIBIT # 1 - AFFIDAVIT.	23	8	Q Or neuropsychology for adults?
24		24	Ū	A No.
25	MR. KROFT: Mr. Smorang, this is for you.	25	9	Q You haven't conducted any of your own
1	minimizer of the chorang, and is is just	~-	J	Tour navoir Contaution any or your own
	2			4
1	-	1		research in decision making theory?
1 2	Are you putting Ms Wotherspoon forward as an expert	1 2		research in decision making theory?
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	40	5			7
1	16	Q And, in fact, relied on, when you gave	1		A Possibly. My memory isn't that good as I
2		your report, and came to your conclusions,	2		get older.
3		correct?	3	29	Q If I told you she was a journalist as
4		A Correct. Mh-hmm.	4		well, you wouldn't disagree with that?
5	17	Q And in particular, you cited him in	5		A I wouldn't disagree.
6		respect of adult decision making theory?	6	30	Q Her background and training is as an
7		A Correct. Mh-hmm.	7		editor and reporter, correct?
8	18	Q Can you tell me what is Joseph Hallinan's	8		A Now that you mention it, that is probably
9		qualification?	9		true.
10		A Joseph Hallinan, I am not sure what his	10	31	Q And you have relied on the Munro Report?
11		background, or biography is, I mostly, my	11		A Correct.
12		interest in him was in the book that he wrote.	12	32	Q And, just so I am clear, because I am new
13		And so that is my familiarity with him, is	13		to this field myself, this was, as I understand
14		specifically to that book. But his book,	14		it, an independent review conducted into child
15		actually is fairly consistent with a lot of	15		welfare practices, and operations across
16		decision theory.	16		Britain?
17	19	Q Just I want	17		A Correct.
18		A I don't know his specific biography.	18	33	Q It was commissioned, I think, by the
19	20	Q Right. You cited Hallinan?	19	ŮŮ.	British government, maybe?
	20	A Correct.	20		A Yes, I believe so.
20	21	Q Correct. And you don't know what his		34	Q And Munro is the name of the person who
21	Z I	•	21	34	•
22		background is?	22		who authored the report, who was appointed by
23		A No. I couldn't tell his specific	23		the government? A Correct.
24	20	biography.	24	25	_
. 25	22	Q If I suggested to you he was a journalist	25	35	Q And, do you know her background is?
		6			8
		ŭ	l		•
		and had no training in nevehology would you	l 1		A Social worker She is I believe with
1		and had no training in psychology would you know that one way or the other?	1		A Social worker. She is, I believe, with
2		know that one way or the other?	2		the London School of Economics, but her
2		know that one way or the other? A No, but it wouldn't surprise me. People	2	36	the London School of Economics, but her background is social work.
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III. ana manhahlu aawaant	
19 are probably correct. 19 opposition to. I would characterize it as	
20 51 Q And, in fact, her view is that when 20 questioning a position, but I wouldn't say it	
information is not readily shared, it can 21 was necessarily in opposition.	
actually promote inaccurate reported, do you 22 61 Q Do you have a copy with you? 23 remember reading that in the report? 23 A I think there was a copy	
C. C. C. L. Adv. that about a first of the control	
of information is, I would say that sharing of 25 MR. KROFT: I don't right now, I should	

15 have, but I didn't bring it. 1 couldn't say with certainty they have adopted. 2 THE WITNESS: I think I saw it earlier. that that quality assurance council is now in 2 MR. SMORANG: I have one that is attached 3 3 effect. I do know that is, or was to the best to an e-mail, that I probably wouldn't want you to of my knowledge, the plan. 4 4 see the top part of it. 5 72 Q It currently is the plan, you haven't 5 MR. KROFT: If we can agree that is the 6 heard anything to the contrary? 6 wording, that is fine. Why don't we take a moment, No, I have not, 7 7 and you can do that. 8 73 Q In terms of the quality assurance council, 8 MR. SMORANG: Okay. 9 in your article you oppose it? 9 (CROSS-EXAMINATION RECESSED BRIEFLY) I challenge whether it will actually serve 10 10 BY MR. KROFT: 11 the outcomes it intends to. I had some 11 62 Q All right, we have a copy of the article 12 questions about it. I wouldn't say I opposed 12 in front of us. 13 it, I didn't have enough information with the 13 Α Mh-hmm. 14 details to say that I specifically oppose it. 14 63 Now I understand that the government But I certainly had some questions, and 15 15 appointed a, a panel in the late 2000s, to look 16 challenges for whether it would achieve the 16 into various aspects of child welfare in benefit it intended. So my question was, would 17 17 Alberta? 18 it actually make children safer. 18 The, there was discussion of it. It 19 And I think it is reasonable to say that I 19 hadn't actually occurred. There was an do have some concerns, about whether it will 20 20 announcement by the government this was the have the intended effect. I fear none of 21 21 plan. 22 these things will be accomplished with a 22 Q Yes. Sorry, I guess, I am going back 64 quality assurance council. That is expressing 23 23 further. a concern, as opposed to stating a definitive 24 24 A Pardon me. Sorry. 25 position on it. I don't know if it matters. 25 16 65 Q There was this recommendation, that is the 1 74 The reality is you didn't think it was a 1 subject of your article? 2 very good idea, and you published an article 2 Α Mh-hmm. about it. 3 3 Q 66 Began with a panel, as I understand it, of Correct. I had many concerns of whether 4 4 experts the government appointed. that would achieve the effect of keeping 5 5 That's correct, yes. children safer. 6 6 And, this was one of their recommendations 67 7 75 Q And this, the proposal, was to have a 7 to the government? council that would have a mandate to 8 8 Correct. systematically assess service quality, and 9 9 68 And the government announced that it report its findings to the government from time 10 10 accepts this recommendation? to time. 11 11 Correct. 12 I believe that my understanding of what 12 69 Q And the recommendation was for an the quality assurance council mandate would be, 13 13 accountability system involving --14 would be to investigate specifically deaths and 14 Quality assurance council. injuries that occur in child welfare practices. 15 15 Q. 70 A quality assurance council. Yes. 16 16 Α Mh-hmm. 17 76 And the panel that made this 17 . 71 They announced in the fall they were going recommendation, did it you read its 18 18 to proceed with this recommendation, they recommendations? 19 19 adopted it? 20 I did not. I was responding to what the 20 I am not sure where they are in the media reports on, so I didn't have detailed 21 21 process. There was an announcement where this information at the time. It was not made 22 22 was the planned course of action, we have had 23 23 available to the public, or at least not to me. an election and a lot of other things, I am not 77 I read it on the Internet, so. 24 24 sure where they are in that process. I Α It may have been subsequently put forward. 25 25

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		17		19
1		I don't know. I didn't have it at the time.	1	they must have.
2		No.	2	88 Q And they were all named in the public
3	78	Q So, you are not, is it fair to say,	3	judgment, I put to you?
4		familiar with the reasoning that underlay this	4	A I honestly I can't remember, because, that
5		recommendation?	5	particular case, I am not sure I am not
6		A No, no.	6	sure if social workers actually testified.
7	79	Q And in particular, you, if you don't know,	7	Because I know that there were, it was an
. 8		you don't know, I am putting to you that the	8	appeal related to an administrative review
9		panel found that the reason why this	9	panel decision. So, I am actually not I
10		recommendation was necessary is because there	10	can't be certain. I really don't remember if
		was lack of external oversight over the process	11	there were specific social workers mentioned in
11		· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		that decision. That was the only one that I
12		in Alberta?	12	•
13		A That is entirely possible that they would	13	read. So I do recall that in citing his
14		come to that conclusion.	14	reasons Sanderman discussed the testimony of
15	80	Q Now, I understand that you have testified	15	the experts, but I don't recall him mentioning
16		in Alberta court cases involving young	16	specific social workers, case workers.
17		children, and abuse of young children?	17	MR. KROFT: I am going to need those cases,
18		. A Correct.	18	could you go get them?
19	81	Q And your name has been reported in the	19	MS CHISICK: Sure.
20		judgments?	20	THE WITNESS: He may have mentioned a social
21		A I am sorry, I am not sure I am following.	21	worker, I can't be sure.
22		Name has been reported in the judgments?	22	MR. SMORANG: Are there a number of them?
23	82	Q Yes, the cases were decided, and judges	23	MR. KROFT: I have three. I have them on
24	QL.	issued reasons?	24	my computer, maybe I will try to refresh your memory,
25	^	A Correct, I believe so.	25	so you don't have to wait.
25		A Correct, Therieve So.	25	so you don't have to wait.
1				
1	• •	18	 	20
	02	And other cooled workers testified in		MP SMOPANG: If we could even print them
1	83	Q And other social workers testified in	1	MR. SMORANG: If we could even print them
2	83	Q And other social workers testified in those cases?	2	MR. SMORANG: If we could even print them out. If they are not lengthy, I can get them on
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that a witness who is going to be crossed right after probably shouldn't be present, and it does have some 2 3 effect on her credibility, having heard the previous crosses. 4 MR. SMORANG: I take your position. 5

MR. KROFT: I want to put on the record what I have already put on the record before the Inquiry, which is I will be moving to strike portions of the affidavit. I sent you a letter in that regard. And I have agreed to cross-examine before I do that because of the time issues. But, I want to make it clear that I am not waiving the right to make

those motions, I don't think that is in issue. MR. SMORANG: It is not, I have your letter.

MR. KROFT: I will be filing a Notice of Motion in that regard. So that everybody is happy that we followed the correct procedures for the inquiry.

MR. SMORANG: Except for the everybody being happy part, I take your point. I don't think everybody has been made happy in this file yet.

MR. KROFT: I am going to make them happy. The other thing that I wanted to deal with on the record is probably more related to Ms Kehler, but I

well in Ms Kehler's affidavit is that there are

individuals represented by other firms who also wish

to be covered by the ban. 3

MR. KROFT: And they will have to make 4 their own application, and submit their own list, is 5 what my position is.

MR. SMORANG: Make their own motions? MR. KROFT: Yes, if, if they are

representing somebody who is not being represented by you, yes. I think they have done that. 10

MR. SMORANG: Maybe they have. I am not sure the department has. I am not sure McKinnon has.

MR. KROFT: We can go back off the record.

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(DISCUSSIONS HELD OFF THE RECORD)

MR. KROFT: We will mark your article, as 18 Exhibit 2. 19

EXHIBIT # 2 - ARTICLE.

BY MR. KROFT:

89 Q We were talking about, about publicity of 24 the names of social workers, and other experts 25

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am going to do it now, because we have the time. On -- I have taken the position that we are going to 2

need some certainty as to which clients, you're 3 4

representing.

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MR. SMORANG: Correct.

MR. KROFT: You are not prepared, obviously from your motion, to tell me the names of those people, I take it?

MR. SMORANG: I don't know that I have gone that far. Certainly it would defeat the motion to have them publicly named, that doesn't necessarily mean that you and I couldn't come to some accommodation, so you could be satisfied there are real people behind the numbers. I don't see that being problematic.

MR. KROFT: We can deal with that, but that is my point, that some way we need to get a list of the people somewhere, that ultimately we know who you are representing?

MR. SMORANG: As Ms Kehler's supplementary affidavit indicates, there has been a witness schedule, tentative as it is, distributed by Commission counsel, which has names on it, and those names comprise all, and more of the 28, 27, whatever it is right now, that we represent. Indicated as

in related fields in connection with child 1 abuse situations in Alberta. 2

Correct. 3

Q 90 You had mentioned that you had testified, 4 in Alberta. 5

Α Correct. 6

And, I think you said mostly it was 91 7 8

testimony in respect of family law proceedings?

Α Correct.

92 Q Yes. And, I guess in these difficult 10 ones that you get involved in there are issues 11 of child abuse that come up? 12

> Α Correct.

93 Q And social workers have been and get 14 involved? 15

Α Correct.

16 And in those cases, I am suggesting to you 94 17 that there are normally not publication bans on 18 the names of the social workers who testify? 19 20

I would accept that. Mh-hmm.

MR. KROFT: Give me with a minute with Mr. Gindin, and I think I am done.

(CROSS-EXAMINATION RECESSED BRIEFLY).

Multipage MR. KROFT: We are done, with Ms Wotherspoon, thank you very much. MR. GINDIN: I have no questions, either. MR. SMORANG: No questions. (CROSS-EXAMINATION CLOSED). REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE I, Jill Proctor, Official Court Reporter, hereby certify that the foregoing pages are a true and accurate transcript of the proceedings taken down by me in shorthand and transcribed to the best of my skill and ability. Official Examiner Q.B.

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