



Woman tells of grim trail of abuse

Project Truth Inquiry hears more unsettling allegations

By Canadian Press – June 7, 2007

CORNWALL — A former city woman told an inquiry on Monday that she was sexually and physically abused by a Children's Aid Society caseworker and even held for a period of time in the trunk of the man's car.

Jeanette Antoine first became a ward of the CAS when she was five years old in 1965 and over the course of the following 11 years endured what she claims was repeated physical and sexual abuse at the hands of foster parents and even her own caseworker.

Antoine told the inquiry probing the institutional response to allegations of systemic sexual abuse in the Cornwall area that when she was 16, she and a handful of other teens ran away from a CAS-run group home where she says they were being abused by workers.

The group broke into a cottage in Summerstown, and stayed on their own for a few days before being apprehended by police and dropped off at the CAS office in Cornwall. Antoine said there were a group of workers there to take the kids from the police.

"One worker would take a kid," said Antoine, who said she was under the care of her caseworker, a man by the name of Brian Keough. "Brian grabbed me and put me in the trunk of his car while the other workers talked to the kids."

The woman, who is now 46 years old and lives in Edmonton, said she can't remember exactly how long she was in the trunk, but she remembers she fell asleep.

"He came out and took me back into the CAS office into this big conference room," said the woman. "I remember all the kids were there and there were a lot of workers there."

The woman said she and other teenagers who

were living at the group home in the 1970s were physically and sexually abused by Keough and other workers on a regular basis.

"He (Keough) would do something to at least one of them every week," said the woman. "Each week it would be a different girl."

Antoine said she remembers a time when all the girls in the home were prescribed birth control pills, although she says she was never in danger of becoming pregnant.

"He (Keough) never actually had sex with me," said Antoine. "He molested me, but it was never sex."

Antoine testified she was also sexually abused by other men during her time in foster care.

When she was six years old and her sister was eight years old, the girls were living in a foster home in the city. Antoine said her foster father began to sexually and physically abuse her and her sister within months of their arrival at the home.

"He would come downstairs (to the girls' bedroom) and get in bed between us and put his hands on both of us at the same time," said Antoine, speaking in a voice barely above a whisper. "He would tell his wife he was reading us a book."

Antoine said she was also physically abused by the man, his wife and their biological daughter.

She said she told Keough about some of the incidents of abuse, but wasn't believed.

"He said I was a liar," said Antoine. "He said that was the best foster home they had and I was lucky to be there."

No one has ever been charged with any crime related to Antoine's allegations.

The inquiry continues.