IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

IN THE MATTER OF:

HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN

- v -

JAMIE MARK TAKAZO

Transcript of the Reasons for Sentence delivered by The Honourable Justice V.A. Schuler, sitting in Norman Wells, in the Northwest Territories, on the 17th day of July, A.D. 2008.

APPEARANCES:

Ms. T. Nguyen: Counsel for the Crown

Mr. T. Boyd: Counsel for the Accused

(Charges under s. 88(1), 348(1)(b) x2, 279(2) x2, and 85(1)(a) of the Criminal Code of Canada)

THE COURT: Well, first of all, I would
like to commend counsel for bringing this very
sad case to a resolution without the necessity of
a trial.

Jamie Mark Takazo is a 33-year-old man who has pled guilty to, and been convicted of, six charges involving two separate incidents, the first having occurred on January 16, 2008, and the second having occurred February 8 and 9, 2008, here in Norman Wells. What I have referred to as the second incident is really a series of related occurrences over a period of approximately 36 hours.

The Agreed Statement of Facts that has been filed and that will be marked as an exhibit is very detailed. It was read into the record, and I will try to summarize it, acknowledging that I am condensing and probably over-simplifying the events. I would suggest that anyone reading this sentencing decision look at the Agreed Statement of Facts to get the full and complete picture.

In the January 2008 incident, Mr. Takazo was being given a ride home by Ms. Gray, who had been his girlfriend a year previous. He was intoxicated. They had a disagreement about where she was going to take him, and Mr. Takazo pulled a knife and threatened her with it. While they

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struggled for the knife, Mr. Takazo pulled out a second knife. Ms. Gray was able to get both knives away from him, although he retrieved one of them. She was concerned that Mr. Takazo was suicidal and she was also concerned for her own life. She eventually drove Mr. Takazo to the place he wanted. He later called and apologized to her. Ms. Gray was not injured and did not report this incident to the police right away.

The actions of Mr. Takazo with the knives are the basis for Count 1 in the Indictment: possession of a weapon for a purpose dangerous to the public peace, contrary to Section 88(1) of the Criminal Code.

The remaining counts in the Indictment arise from events that began on February 8, 2008, just before one o'clock in the morning.

Mr. Takazo kicked in the door of the residence of Ms. Gray and her boyfriend. He entered the residence with a rifle. Ms. Gray encountered him and he pointed the rifle at her and pursued her to the bedroom where her boyfriend closed the door. Mr. Takazo kicked that door open and then fell back when Ms. Gray's boyfriend swung a bat. Mr. Takazo then left the residence. Those events are the basis for Count 2, break and enter and commit assault with a

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weapon, contrary to Section 348(1)(b) of the Criminal Code.

3 The victims of that offence did call the RCMP, who subsequently found Mr. Takazo. Mr. Takazo held a rifle to this chin and threatened to kill himself. The RCMP members 7 attempted to negotiate with him, but he would not drop the rifle and, instead, walked away holding 8 it to his head. Mr. Takazo was followed but 9 eventually was lost in the darkness. Shortly 10 11 after that, it was reported that Mr. Takazo had 12 entered the apartment where Ms. Gray's mother was 13 living, and I will refer to the mother as 14 Ms. Gray, Sr. Mr. Takazo had a rifle with him, 15 and when Ms. Gray, Sr. tried to get it away from him, he pulled a knife out and held it over her 16 17 head. He directed her where to go in the 18 apartment and he also fired a shot from the rifle into the ceiling. He demanded that Ms. Gray, Sr. 19 20 telephone her daughter. When she refused, he 21 pointed the rifle at her and then at himself, 22 pointing it at his chin. Ms. Gray, Sr. was able 23 to leave the apartment when she said she needed 24 her glasses to call her daughter. Mr. Takazo 25 then left the apartment. Those are the facts giving rise to Count 3, 26

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break, enter and commit an assault with a weapon,

- contrary to Section 348(1)(b) of the Criminal
- Code, and Count 4, unlawful confinement, contrary
- 3 to Section 279(2) of the Criminal Code.
- 4 After leaving that apartment, Mr. Takazo was
- 5 seen by the police and again he threatened to
- 6 kill himself and held the rifle under his chin.
- 7 He went into a home and continued to yell at one
- 8 of the police officers from there and to make
- gestures with the rifle while the police were
- 10 mobilizing to deal with the situation. At some
- 11 point after that, Mr. Takazo went into the house
- of Mr. McDonald, who awoke to find him holding a
- gun and barricading the door. He would not let
- 14 Mr. McDonald leave the house and swore and ranted
- about the RCMP and Ms. Gray. When Mr. Takazo
- 16 went into a bedroom, Mr. McDonald escaped from
- 17 the house. These events --
- 18 MS. NGUYEN: I apologize, Your Honour.
- 19 THE COURT: That is fine. Do you want to
- 20 -- I do not know if there is any water.
- 21 THE COURT CLERK: The sheriff has gone to get
- 22 some.
- 23 THE COURT: I think we will stand down.
- 24 (ADJOURNMENT)
- 25 MS. NGUYEN: I apologize for the
- interruption, Your Honour.
- 27 THE COURT: That is fine, Ms. Nguyen. I

1 am sure it has happened to all of us.

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Madam Reporter, I think where I left off was

here, so if I am repeating myself, just bear with

me.

I was dealing with the incident where

Mr. Takazo went into Mr. McDonald's house. He

would not let Mr. McDonald leave the house and he

swore and ranted about the RCMP and Ms. Gray.

When Mr. Takazo went into a bedroom, Mr. McDonald

escaped from the house. These events comprise

Count 5, unlawful confinement, contrary to

Section 279(2) of the Criminal Code, and Count 6,

using a rifle while committing an indictable

offence, contrary to Section 85(1)(a) of the

Criminal Code.

Mr. McDonald and Mr. Takazo were each observed leaving the McDonald house. On encountering police officers, Mr. Takazo again held his gun to his chin and threatened suicide and eventually led police back to the apartment where he had held Ms. Gray, Sr. That building and others nearby had to be evacuated.

Subsequently, over a period of 30 or more hours, police used various methods to negotiate with Mr. Takazo while he continued to threaten to shoot people, to do battle with the police, and to kill himself. He eventually laid down the

rifle and a knife that he had also been using to
make gestures with and was taken into custody.

A huge amount of police personnel and resources were used in dealing with Mr. Takazo and significant disruption resulted to people in the vicinity as described in the Agreed Statement of Facts.

Mr. Takazo has been in custody since then,
February 9, 2008. He has been seen by a
psychologist and a psychiatrist and diagnosed as
schizophrenic. The opinion of the professionals
is that his likely aim in the standoff with the
police was suicide. It also appears that
Mr. Takazo suffered a serious head injury in
October 2007 during a beating by a cousin.
Family members report that his behaviour has
changed significantly since then. Severe alcohol
addiction was also noted by the professionals,
and his family reports that his negative
behaviour is aggravated by alcohol use.

Mr. Takazo has one related conviction from 2004 for careless carrying of a firearm. He received a \$500 fine plus six months' probation. I was not told the facts of that case, but, clearly, it is relevant and that it does involve Mr. Takazo and improper handling of a firearm.

The offences and the circumstances

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surrounding them are very serious. The facts
really speak for themselves in this case. The
use of weapons, the repeated intrusions into
other people's homes during the night, scaring
them with weapons, and the repeated threats to
cause harm to others are all aggravating factors.

The main mitigating factor in this case is Mr. Takazo's guilty plea, and it is a significant mitigating factor. By pleading guilty, Mr. Takazo has spared those involved from having to testify. His guilty plea came without any preliminary hearing, without a trial obviously, and so even though no Victim Impact Statements were filed, people who, I am sure, were quite traumatized by Mr. Takazo's actions have not had to come and testify in court and relive the terrible experience that they had. Mr. Takazo has also saved the time and expense of what would likely have been a lengthy trial. All of that, along with his cooperation with the police and health professionals after the offences and his apology to Ms. Gray after the January offence and, also, his apology here in court, indicates to me that Mr. Takazo is remorseful for what he has done, he is sorry, and he is taking responsibility for his actions.

27 I also have to consider that Mr. Takazo

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appears to have been suffering from a mental disorder - schizophrenia - at the time of the offences. That, combined with the fact that he was intoxicated during the events on January 16 and February 8 and 9, likely helps to explain at least in part why he acted the way he did. It does not, of course, excuse what he did.

I said at the beginning of my remarks that this is a sad case, and indeed it is.

Mr. Takazo, along with the mental disorder that he suffers from, has had some very troubling experiences in his life as referred to before me.

During these offences, Mr. Takazo also caused great fear to people, although no physical harm to any of them. He caused the police to go to a great deal of difficult and dangerous work. At the same time, it appears that his thinking in all this was to either take his own life or provoke the police into taking his life, and I accept he must have been extremely distraught and troubled to get to the point where he would do that.

The fundamental purpose of sentencing is the protection of the public, the community, so that it is safe. Clearly, I should impose a sentence that will help to deter Mr. Takazo from committing offences like this again. The

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sentence should also deter others who may be in a state of mind to act like Mr. Takazo did. It should also signify how society, the community, frowns on and rejects this type of behaviour, especially because of how it disrupts the community and its sense of safety and security and it focuses valuable police and other resources on one individual, like Mr. Takazo, and diverts them from other needs and urgencies.

Rehabilitating an offender is also an aim of sentencing. After all, helping an individual to become a productive, contributing, law-abiding member of society is a way to discourage that person from committing crimes. In this case, because the psychiatrist -- or psychiatrists have been able to identify Mr. Takazo's mental disorder, attention can be focused on treating it.

The fact that Mr. Takazo from all accounts was a law-abiding citizen until the age of approximately 30 and the letters from the individuals in Deline who talk about his helpfulness give the Court some hope that he can become a law-abiding citizen again.

I am also required to consider Section 718.2 of the Criminal Code which says that all available sanctions other than imprisonment that

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	1	are reasonable in the circumstances should be
	2	considered for all offenders with particular
	3	attention to the circumstances of aboriginal
	4	offenders. Mr. Takazo is an aboriginal man from
	5	Deline. Section 718.2, as interpreted in case
	6	law, does not mean that because a person is
	7	aboriginal, they should get a lesser sentence,
	8	and it also recognizes that there are instances
	9	where offences are so serious that there will,
1	.0	really, be no reasonable alternative to a jail
1	.1	term. Counsel have recognized by their
1	.2	submissions that in the very serious
1	.3	circumstances of this case, no sanction other
1	.4	than some imprisonment is reasonable in the
1	.5	circumstances, and I concur with that. The use
1	.6	of weapons, whether actual use against a person
1	.7	or as a threat, is far too common in the North.
1	.8	The circumstances of this case are far too
1	.9	serious to make an entirely non-custodial
2	20	sentence a reasonable sanction. Moreover and
2	21	most importantly in this case, the conviction
2	22	under Section 85(1)(a) of the Criminal Code,
2	23	which is Count 6 in the Indictment, carries a
2	24	minimum term of imprisonment of one year. That
2	25	means I have to impose a jail sentence of at
2	26	least one year.
2	27	What counsel have submitted as a reasonable

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sentence is two years less a day in jail followed by probation on strict conditions for three years. Subject to what I will say in a moment about the time that Mr. Takazo has been in remand, the sentence proposed by counsel would effectively put Mr. Takazo under supervision by means of jail and then probation for a period of five years, and it is only if the jail portion of the sentence does not exceed two years that I can impose any probation at all pursuant to Section 731 of the Criminal Code.

The only thing counsel have not agreed on is how I should deal with the time that Mr. Takazo has been in remand, amounting to 158 days or five months.

The Supreme Court of Canada, in a case called The Queen v. Wust, recognized that remand time is generally considered hard time because the person awaiting trial in remand does not have access to the same programs, such as counselling or education, as a serving prisoner does and because no remission is earned on remand time as is earned on time served. The Supreme Court of Canada also said that while how much credit should be given for remand time in any particular case is in the discretion of the sentencing judge (in other words, it is up to that judge to

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decide), a credit of two months for each month in remand is appropriate in many circumstances.

Crown counsel says that Mr. Takazo had access to programs while at the North Slave
Correctional Centre and that he was not treated differently there from serving prisoners, nor was he treated differently from other patients while being assessed at the University of Alberta
Hospital, save for the fact that he was in custody. The Crown counsel says that only a few days spent in police cells could be considered hard time and, therefore, the remand time should be credited at face value with only an addition to reflect the remission -- or the lack of remission. In the result, Crown counsel proposes a credit of six to six and a half months be given against the jail sentence proposed.

Defence counsel, on the other hand, asks that the remand time be credited at two for one. His information is that Mr. Takazo could not have access to certain programs while on remand, specifically anger management and the land program at the facility in Fort Smith, and he also refers to Mr. Takazo not being able to attend his grandmother's funeral while he was at the University of Alberta Hospital because arrangements could not be made in time. Defence

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counsel therefore submits that there should be a ten-month reduction in the proposed sentence.

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I should say, first of all, that I think that the sentence proposed by counsel, two years less a day and three years' probation, is reasonable in all the circumstances and will, by its combination of jail and probation, serve the objectives of denunciation, deterrence of both Mr. Takazo and others, and rehabilitation of Mr. Takazo, and, also, reparation to the community. So I am going to accept counsel's recommendation in that regard. I also note that that sentence is similar to the one imposed in the case of The Queen v. Jones, 2005, CanLII 22449, a decision from the Ontario Court of Appeal. That was a case involving similar circumstances, although in Jones there was no mandatory minimum sentence attached to any of the charges. The sentence that counsel are proposing also, in my view, does conform to the proportionality principle. It reflects the seriousness of the offences while also taking into account that Mr. Takazo's moral culpability, his responsibility for these crimes, has to be viewed in light of his serious mental condition. The issue about the remand time does leave

me in a bit of a difficult position because of

this difference -- or in part because of this difference between counsel as to whether

Mr. Takazo did or did not have access to programs while in remand, and without evidence on that point, I really cannot resolve to my satisfaction the issue of how much Mr. Takazo's time on remand differed from time spent by prisoners serving a sentence. I would also say that in different cases I have been told different things about that. In other words, as to the extent to which remand prisoners do have access to the full range of programs at the Correctional Centre in Yellowknife.

I do accept that while at the University of Alberta Hospital, the conditions of remand for Mr. Takazo would not have been harsh, the term that is often used to describe remand, although he also would not have earned remission on that time.

Having spent some time considering this issue of remand, I have concluded that my primary concern, really, should be: How long should it be that Mr. Takazo remains in jail before he is ready to return to the community on probation?

And that involves consideration such as: Does he have better recourse to psychiatric help at North Slave Correctional Centre than he will have in

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1	Deline? Does he have better access to
2	counselling, perhaps to medications, at the
3	Correctional Centre than he will have in Deline?
4	What type of programing, what type of assistance,
5	are the Social Services people, the probation
6	officers in Deline able to offer to someone like
7	Mr. Takazo? I do not have very specific
8	information about that, and it may be that there
9	is not specific information available in terms of
10	exactly what kind of treatment Mr. Takazo needs.
11	But I do have a concern that if he is released
12	too soon into his community of Deline, and
13	considering that the proposal is that he live in
14	a home where, as I heard in evidence from his
15	mother, there is some drinking, specifically by
16	his father and his friends, is he going to be
17	able to deal with that? Is he going to be able
18	to resist the temptation? Does he need more
19	structure and more control, supervision,
20	attention that is available in the Correctional
21	Centre than he is likely to get in Deline? And
22	having said that, I do take seriously his
23	mother's, Betty Takazo's, evidence that she will
24	report him if he breaches any of his conditions.
25	At the same time, she is not going to be there
26	every minute to supervise her 33-year-old son.
27	So this is something that I have given some

consideration to, and I appreciate that there is only so much I can do in terms of predicting how long it may be before Mr. Takazo really is ready to return to the community. In the end, what I have decided to do is to credit eight months for the remand time.

So would you stand please, Mr. Takazo. sentence, then, of imprisonment that I am imposing today is 16 months, and that will be followed by probation for three years on the following conditions, and I want you to listen very carefully to these conditions. The first are the statutory conditions that you keep the peace and be of good behaviour, and that just means do not get into trouble; that you appear before the Court when required to do so by the Court; that you notify the Court or the probation officer in advance of any change of name or address. So if you move from your parents' house to somewhere else, you have to notify either the Court or the probation officer before you actually move. And that you promptly notify the Court or probation officer of any change of employment or occupation.

Now, there are some further conditions that

I am imposing. First of all, for the first year

of the probation order -- three years' probation.

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1	For the first year of that, you will abide by a
2	curfew, which means you will be in your home from
3	9 p.m. to 7 a.m. unless you are accompanied by a
4	sober, responsible adult or you have written
5	permission, written permission, from your
6	probation officer. You will perform 150 hours of
7	community service work at a rate of no less than
8	12 hours per month commencing the first month
9	following your release from jail. You will
10	report to a probation officer within 72 hours of
11	your release from jail, and for the first three
12	months of your probation, you will report at
13	least once a week to the probation officer, and,
14	after that, as required by the probation officer.
15	You will take counselling as recommended by the
16	probation officer. You will not have in your
17	possession any knives for any reason while
18	outside your residence. You will live where
19	directed by your probation officer. You will
20	have no contact, either direct or indirect, with
21	the following people. When I say "direct or
22	indirect" that means you cannot talk to these
23	people, you cannot communicate with them, and you
24	cannot get someone else to do that for you. The
25	people, then, that you are not to have any
26	contact with are Tara Gray, Irvin McDonald,
27	Derrick Szmutko, and Sandra Gray. Another

condition is that you will not attend at the residences or workplaces of those people that I have just named. Except in the event of a medical emergency, you will remain within the Northwest Territories unless you obtain written permission to leave from your probation officer. Again, that is written permission. Finally, you will not consume or possess alcohol or any other intoxicating substances except for prescription medications.

Now, the jail sentence and the probation will be a global sentence on the entire

Indictment. I am not going to divide up the sentence between counts.

Now, Mr. Takazo, what you have to understand is that if you breach any of those conditions and you are charged with breaching those conditions, that may result in a jail sentence for you specifically for breaching the probation condition. So it is very important -- I know those are a lot of conditions. Three years is quite a long time after being released from jail. But it is very important, obviously, that you do abide by all of those conditions. The clerk will go over the probation order with you as well at the end of the proceedings. Now, you can have a seat now Mr. Takazo.

1		In addition, there will be a DNA order,
2		assuming that it is attachable to the primary
3		designated offence. Or assuming that unlawful
4		confinement is a primary designated offence,
5		which I believe it is from reading the section,
6		the order will attach that. Even if it was not,
7		it would be my inclination, on the consent of
8		counsel, in any event, to make such an order as a
9		secondary or on the secondary designated
10		offence of break and enter and commit an
11		indictable offence. Do you have a draft DNA
12		order?
13	MS.	NGUYEN: No, Your Honour. My
14		understanding is that the clerk has a form.
15	THE	COURT: All right. That is fine.
16		Thank you.
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		There will also be a firearm prohibition
18		There will also be a firearm prohibition order, in the usual terms, that will commence
18 19		
		order, in the usual terms, that will commence
19		order, in the usual terms, that will commence today and will continue for the rest of your
19 20		order, in the usual terms, that will commence today and will continue for the rest of your life, Mr. Takazo. I am making that order
19 20 21		order, in the usual terms, that will commence today and will continue for the rest of your life, Mr. Takazo. I am making that order pursuant to Section 109 of the Criminal Code.
19 20 21 22		order, in the usual terms, that will commence today and will continue for the rest of your life, Mr. Takazo. I am making that order pursuant to Section 109 of the Criminal Code. That means you are not to have in your possession
19 20 21 22 23		order, in the usual terms, that will commence today and will continue for the rest of your life, Mr. Takazo. I am making that order pursuant to Section 109 of the Criminal Code. That means you are not to have in your possession any firearms or ammunition ever again. And if
19 20 21 22 23 24		order, in the usual terms, that will commence today and will continue for the rest of your life, Mr. Takazo. I am making that order pursuant to Section 109 of the Criminal Code. That means you are not to have in your possession any firearms or ammunition ever again. And if you do have any firearms in your possession, you

1	Mr. Takazo, I just want to say that the fact
2	that nobody was badly injured or killed in these
3	events, including you, is maybe because you did
4	restrain yourself from physically harming anyone.
5	Maybe you did restrain yourself from going that
6	far. Maybe it was because the people that you
7	threatened reacted safely and intelligently to
8	what you were doing. Maybe it was good
9	management on the part of the RCMP. Maybe it was
10	only luck that a huge tragedy did not result from
11	what you did. Most likely it was probably all of
12	those things coming together that prevented a
13	serious and very devastating tragedy that of
14	course would go beyond just people being hurt but
15	extend to their families, to the whole
16	community's reaction. So I hope you will think
17	about that, and that you will think that you need
18	to exert control over yourself and you need to
19	deal with your problems, and I am sure you have
20	been told that many, many times by the
21	psychiatrists. Your mother said that she has
22	been encouraging you to get help with your
23	problems. So you have heard that said. You are
24	a mature man, you are not a kid, and I am sure
25	that you will spend some time thinking about
26	that. And I am sure that you understand that
27	what you need to do is to show people that you

1 are the person that is described in those letters 2 from Raymond Tutcho and from Cecilia Baton, a 3 person who is helpful to people, who is looked at as someone who does assist others in the 5 community, that you can be a law-abiding person. And I am impressed by the fact that you did not 7 get into trouble up until the age of about 30 years, which, quite frankly, is not often the 8 case with young men in small communities because 9 of the unfortunate factors that tend to come 10 11 together. So you need to be able to show that 12 you are the person that is described in those 13 letters and that you can leave behind and not be 14 the person who caused so much fear and distress 15 here in Norman Wells back in January and February of this year. So I do sincerely hope that with 16 17 all the help that I hope is going to be available 18 to you both at the Correctional Centre and 19 through the probation office, that you can look 20 at it that way and that you can get back to being 21 the person that you have been in the past. 22 All right. So is there anything else, 23 Counsel, that I need to deal with? 24 MS. NGUYEN: Not from the Crown's 25 perspective, Your Honour. MR. BOYD: Your Honour, on the two 26

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occasions Betty Takazo pointed out to me that

1		what was referred to as the McDonald residence in
2		the Agreed Statement is actually the Melvin
3		Blondin residence. The distinction was important
4		to Mrs. Takazo to clear that up. Secondly, Your
5		Honour, the Agreed Statement did include a
6		defence consent if we're under the secondary
7		designated offence category.
8	THE	COURT: Yes.
9	MS.	BOYD: So that if the matter is ever
10		reviewed and if it doesn't fit the primary
11		category, there was consent for the secondary
12		category.
13	THE	COURT: Yes, I did understand that. I
14		may not have expressed that very well, but that
15		was my understanding was that you were consenting
16		to it on one whether it was for a primary
17		designated offence or secondary. Thank you very
18		much, Mr. Boyd. And my thanks again to counsel
19		for resolving this matter in such an appropriate
20		and, I think, very well thought out way. We will
21		close court.
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3	Certified Pursuant to Rule 723 of the Rules of Court
4	or the Rules of Court
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6	Jane Romanowich, CSR(A), RPR
7	Court Reporter
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