R. v. Andre, 2016 NWTSC 58

S-1-CR-2014-000023

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

IN THE MATTER OF:

HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN

- v -

ANDY JOSEPH ANDRE

Transcript of the Reasons for Sentence delivered by The Honourable Justice K.M. Shaner, sitting in Yellowknife, in

the Northwest Territories, on the 23rd day of September, 2016.

APPEARANCES:

Ms. W. Miller: Counsel for the Crown

Mr. S. Fix: Counsel for the Accused

(Charges under s. 271 of the Criminal Code of Canada)

No information shall be published in any document or broadcast or transmitted in any way which could identify the victim or a witness in these proceedings pursuant to s. 486.4 of the Criminal Code of Canada

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THE COURT: This is the sentencing hearing
for Mr. Andy Andre. Mr. Andre was found guilty
of sexual assault by a jury in Inuvik on July
20th, 2015. This is his sixth conviction of a

5 crime of a sexual nature.

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The salient facts can be summarized as follows: In late November 2013, Mr. Andre entered a residence in Inuvik in the Northwest Territories. It was approximately 3 o'clock in the morning, and all of the occupants were asleep. He was uninvited and he was not a friend, nor was he a relative.

The victim is a little girl who was three years old at the time. She was visiting her grandparents and she was asleep on a mattress on the floor in the living room with her grandmother when Mr. Andre entered the residence. He rubbed the victim in her vaginal area. The victim's grandmother awoke to the sound of the victim crying and she alerted the other occupants of the house. The police were called and Mr. Andre was arrested. He was highly intoxicated at the time.

The victim was subsequently taken to the hospital. The physician who examined her noted redness in her vaginal area and testified at the trial that this was consistent with hard rubbing.

There was no evidence of penetration.

1	This crime has had a profound effect, no
2	doubt on the victim, and I have no doubt that it
3	will have an effect on her for the years to come
4	It also has had a profound effect on her
5	grandmother, who prepared a victim impact
6	statement and asked that it be read out loud in
7	court. And so I am going to do that now. This
8	is the victim impact statement of S.J., which is
9	marked as Exhibit S-2: (as read)
10	The crime affected the whole family emotionally and psychologically. We
11	were devastated that this should happen in our home: [S], sober 41
12	years as of November 2015; [F], sober 23 years as of February 2015.
13	The crime hurt us because sexual abuse should never have happened in
14	our sober home. It has affected us to not trust male visitors in our
15	home, not trust anybody to babysit our grandchildren, to not allow our
16	grandchildren to visit their school or daycare buddies.
17	We lost trust in our extended family and community. We would never
18	want to see the accused around our family.
19	The Court experience brought the whole incident back to me as the
20	grandmother. It was very emotional to the point of not remembering
21	certain things the day it happened. Incidentally, I am usually alert
22	to my situations but found, in retrospect, that I had forgotten
23	things that I did that day. I was stressed, devastated, angry, and
24	emotional. I would never wish this sort of crime on any families. Prior
25	to this incident, I have never been to court to testify. I found this
26	very humiliating especially when my name was mentioned on CBC regarding
27	the case. This incident was kept within the family and not even the

1	biological mother knew of the
2	incident. The reason: The biological mother is an
3	<pre>intergenerational victim of the residential school. She would go off the deep end should she find out.</pre>
4	The biological father is in Fort McPherson at this time, and, if
5	and when he heard the CBC news, would probably turn to alcohol.
6	We will have/have been vigilant about keeping our granddaughter with
7	us at all times to protect her. This will be her life until she reaches
8	the age of 18.
9	My/our children were affected by this crime also. As a mother and
10	grandmother, I had to advise my children not to retaliate. A day
11	after testifying, I am very emotional and find the tears coming
12	unexpectedly. I would not want any contact with the accused nor with my
13	family and specifically with my grandchildren. I would not want him in Inuvik or Fort McPherson or
14	anywhere that our family resides.
15	The date on this is the 8th
16	day of July 2015.
17	This sentencing proceeding started off as an
18	application to have Mr. Andre designated a
19	dangerous offender. As part of that application
20	process, Mr. Andre was examined by Dr. Philip
21	Klassen, who practices in the field of forensic
22	psychiatry. Dr. Klassen prepared a report which
23	was made an exhibit in this proceeding on consent
24	and without the necessity of having Dr. Klassen
25	here to testify.
26	The Crown now applies for a finding that
27	Mr. Andre is a long-term offender and not a

dangerous offender, pursuant to the provisions of
Section 753.1 of the Criminal Code.

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As I will explain later, there is disagreement between counsel respecting the length of the custodial portion of the sentence; however, they are in agreement that this proceed as a long-term offender application and that, following a period of custody, Mr. Andre be supervised for six years.

To find Mr. Andre is a long-term offender, I have to be satisfied of three things: these are enumerated in Section 753.1(1)(a), (b), and (c) of the Criminal Code.

First, I have to find that it would be appropriate to impose a sentence of more than two years for this offence; second, that there is a substantial risk that Mr. Andre will re-offend; and third, that there is a reasonable possibility that his risk may eventually be controlled in the community.

Turning first to the length of the sentence, the Crown and the defence agree that four years is appropriate, although the Crown is asking that I add 90 days to the sentence to allow time for the Correctional Service of Canada to assess

Mr. Andre's needs and obtain a decision from the National Parole Board on the conditions of

supervision. I am going to deal with this issue later, but for now, I will say that I agree four years is certainly in the range of appropriate sentences for this type of crime, having regard to the circumstances of the offender and the aggravating and mitigating circumstances.

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There are a number of aggravating factors.

This was a sexual assault on a very young child.

In addition to the vulnerability that arises

simply because of her age, the victim was

sleeping when the assault took place.

Mr. Andre entered a house uninvited in the middle of the night. This crime was predatory and it was opportunistic. This crime was also brazen. It occurred while the victim slept beside her grandmother. Mr. Andre was apparently completely undeterred by this.

The victim was physically injured as a result of Mr. Andre's actions. She expressed to her aunt that she was experiencing soreness in her genital area following the assault. A medical examination revealed redness in the victim's genital area, which, as I said earlier, the physician testified was consistent with hard rubbing. From that, I concluded that this was not just a fleeting touching. It was sustained, which made it even more serious.

Mr. Andre's extensive criminal record, which I will discuss in more detail later in these reasons, is also highly aggravating. It dates back to 1977 when Mr. Andre was 16. Particularly aggravating are six convictions for crimes of a sexual nature, inclusive of this one, three of which attracted penitentiary-length sentences. The record also contains six convictions for crimes of violence including one for assault causing bodily harm on Mr. Andre's domestic partner and some 27 additional convictions for crimes against the administration of justice; breaching conditions; breaking and entering; theft; impaired driving; escaping lawful custody, and uttering threats.

In determining that a sentence of four years is in a range appropriate for this crime, I have taken into account that Mr. Andre is an Indigenous person who, like many who appear in this court, has a number of systemic background factors which have no doubt played a role in his accumulation of criminal convictions. But for the Gladue factors and considering the aggravating circumstances and the proposed supervision order, this crime may well have attracted a greater custodial sentence than four years.

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The Gladue factors were detailed in

Dr. Klassen's report. Although Dr. Klassen did

not prepare his report for this purpose, what he

brought out with respect to Mr. Andre's

background is nevertheless very helpful.

Mr. Andre attended residential school for a brief time. The school was in Inuvik, over 100 kilometers from his home and his family.

Mr. Andre relayed to Dr. Klassen that he was physically and psychologically abused there. He was hit on the head for no reason. He was hit with rulers on his hands. He was touched sexually on at least four occasions over his clothes by a supervisor.

Mr. Andre did not do well in school. He was expelled at the age of 13 with the equivalent of a grade 5 education. Despite his limited education, he has been employed in various labour intensive jobs, and he has also made money carving.

Importantly, Dr. Klassen opines Mr. Andre has an alcohol abuse disorder and notes that alcohol is significantly associated with his offending behaviour. Indeed, it appears to be a prominent factor in all of the sexual crimes of which he has been convicted and in the lion's share of the others.

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I have to say it is tempting to tell an offender, whose criminal behaviour is linked so closely to alcohol abuse, that they cannot blame alcohol for their actions. It is tempting to say that the solution is a simple one: Quit drinking.

The reality is, however, that it is just not that simple. Mr. Andre faces a number of systemic barriers stemming from his Indigenous status and it does not take much of a leap in logic to conclude that these barriers make it very difficult to attain and maintain sobriety.

Based on the information in Dr. Klassen's report respecting Mr. Andre's work history, I conclude that he is not a wealthy man. His lack of education has no doubt limited his employment options and stifled his income potential. And taking another step back, Mr. Andre's experience at residential school no doubt contributed significantly to his disinterest in and ultimate expulsion from school. I also have no doubt that his experience at residential school is one of the root causes of his addiction.

For many Indigenous offenders who are educationally, socially, and economically challenged as a result of colonialism, getting effective treatment for an addiction problem is

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not feasible. A private treatment program, which typically costs thousands of dollars, is not a realistic option for someone who is trying to pay rent, buy food, and otherwise eke out a living.

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The free programs, where they exist, are frequently limited, culturally irrelevant, or both. Moreover, while they are effective for some people, for others they are not. We see proof of that in this court all the time.

Addiction is an individual disease and it requires individualized treatment.

In Mr. Andre's case, it seems his inability to maintain sobriety outside of penal structure has kept him trapped in a cycle of serious criminal conduct. He is without the tools and the resources he needs to control his alcohol addiction, which is a key factor in his criminal conduct. His criminal conduct is clearly linked with his experience as an Indigenous person in this country.

Certainly, that does not mean that this

Court views this offence as being less serious

nor does it lessen the importance of

denunciation, deterrence and the protection of

victims and the public as considerations. Sexual

assault, particularly against a child, is among

the most serious and the most heinous of crimes.

Mr. Andre's alcohol addiction does not absolve him of responsibility. Ultimately, he has to address this. But, viewed through the lens of systemic barriers and historic wrongs, one cannot escape the conclusion that Mr. Andre's moral blameworthiness is less than that of someone who is not so burdened and this must be taken into account in determining what is a fit and proper sentence.

For those reasons, I think a sentence in the range of four years is appropriate, subject to what I am going to say later.

Turning to the question of whether there is a substantial risk that Mr. Andre will re-offend, the evidence presented in this hearing satisfies me that a substantial risk does exist. Section 753.1(2) of the Criminal Code directs that the Court shall be satisfied that there is a substantial risk of re-offending if, first, the offender has been convicted of certain offences, sexual assault being one of them; and second, if the offender has shown a pattern of repetitive behaviour of which the predicate offence is one that shows the offender causing death or injury to others or inflicting severe psychological damage on others, or by conduct in any sexual matter, the offender has shown likelihood of

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1 causing injury, pain, or other evil to others in the future through similar offences. The first part of this has 3 been satisfied as Mr. Andre has been convicted of sexual assault under Section 271 of the Criminal Code. 6 The second component of this is satisfied by both the results of Dr. Klassen's psychometric 8 9 testing and the pattern displayed through the various convictions on Mr. Andre's record, 10 11 particularly those respecting sexual crimes and domestic violence. 12 1.3 Dr. Klassen opined Mr. Andre is nearing the end of a period of significant risk for sex 14 15 offender recidivism. This is due largely to Mr. Andre's age. He is currently 56, and 16 Dr. Klassen indicates this type of re-offending 17 decreases after age 60. Dr. Klassen places him 18 19 in the moderate risk category for general violent 20 recidivism. And finally, Dr. Klassen states 21 Mr. Andre remains a high risk for domestic 22 violence recidivism. 23 At page 38 of his report, Dr. Klassen states 24 the following: (as read) 25 From a purely psychiatric perspective, this gentlemen presents 26 with a probability of violent or sexual recidivism currently. I would 27 expect, however, that, by the close

of a fixed sentence that this

1 gentlemen might receive, I would no longer endorse probability of 2 violent, sexual, or domestic, in particular, recidivism. At that 3 point, however, I believe that this gentlemen's risk for violent recidivism would still be substantial looking in particular at domestic violence. 6 As a judge, I am particularly influenced by the pattern of behaviour that 7 emerges from Mr. Andre's criminal record and the 9 information respecting the circumstances of the sexual and violent offences for which convictions 10 11 were sustained. 12 As noted earlier, Mr. Andre has a long and varied criminal history. It includes five 1.3 previous convictions for sexual assault and 14 15 indecent assault. The convictions were sustained in 1977, 1985, 1986, 1996, and 1999. 16 17 involve both children and adults. And, while the circumstances of each are unique, they share the 18 19 features of being opportunistic and predatory and 20 that Mr. Andre was using alcohol in each case. 21 The conviction in 1977 was for indecent 22 assault. Mr. Andre was 16 years old at the time. 2.3 He entered the home of the victim, who was 13, 24 while her mother was out and he sexually 25 assaulted her at knife point. Two children aged 26 7 and 3 years were present in the house at the 27 time. He was sentenced to three months, and he

1 was using alcohol at the time.

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In 1985, Mr. Andre was convicted of sexually assaulting his nephew, who was then 11, as he slept. He pulled the victim's pants down and pulled on his penis. He attempted digital penetration. This occurred in Mr. Andre's 6 brother's house while his brother and wife were present. Mr. Andre was living with the family at the time. He was sentenced to four months.

> Mr. Andre was convicted of sexual assault again in 1986 and sentenced to three years and four months. This was a very violent crime. The victim was intoxicated. Mr. Andre and one of his brothers took turns raping the victim while the other held her down.

> The 1996 conviction involved a woman who was passed out in her bed due to intoxication and awoke to find Mr. Andre penetrating her digitally. The victim was in a relationship with one of Mr. Andre's brothers at the time. Mr. Andre received a custodial sentence of 39 months.

> Following the conviction in 1999, Mr. Andre was sentenced to four years for sexual assault. In that case, the victim, her boyfriend and Mr. Andre were out drinking, first in a bar, and then at the home of the victim, which she shared

with her boyfriend. She passed out and awoke in
the morning to find Mr. Andre sexually assaulting
her.

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Three of the convictions for crimes of violence, which were sustained in 2007, 2011, and 2012, arose from offences committed against

Mr. Andre's domestic partner. The 2007

conviction resulted from Mr. Andre punching his domestic partner in the face and trying to drag her behind the house. He was intoxicated by alcohol at the time.

He was convicted of aggravated assault against his domestic partner in 2011. The evidence was that Mr. Andre punched her over 20 times with his fist and with an object. He was intoxicated.

In 2012, Mr. Andre was convicted of assault against his domestic partner once again. He punched her in the face that time, and again, he had been using alcohol.

The final question is whether there is a reasonable possibility the risk Mr. Andre poses can be controlled in the community. The Crown and the defence counsel submit there is and, based on the evidence from Dr. Klassen that there is psychiatric support for this, I agree.

27 Dr. Klassen's conclusion is premised on the

imposition of relatively robust community
supervision conditions including initial release
into a community correctional centre or community
release facility, a structured daytime routine,
active addiction treatment, possibly
alcohol-deterrent chemotherapy, domestic violence
treatment, and very close supervision throughout.

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Given the foregoing, I conclude Mr. Andre should be declared a long-term offender. It is clear he poses a risk of harm to others and that he needs close supervision. It is also clear, however, that with appropriate programming and structure the risk that he poses can be managed in a community setting.

I am now going to deal with the issue of whether the length of the custodial portion of the sentence should be increased. As I said earlier, the Crown is asking for an additional 90 days to be imposed, and the defence counsel is opposed to this.

The purpose of this additional time is to allow the Correctional Service of Canada time to obtain all of the documentation from the Court's file including a transcript of the trial, which must be prepared, and to complete its assessments and obtain a decision from the National Parole Board respecting the conditions of the

1 supervision order.

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Taking into account the time spent in custody awaiting trial and then sentence and giving credit for same, Mr. Andre can be considered to have served, at this point, 49 months, one month in excess of what the Crown and defence jointly submit is a fit custodial sentence.

So what Mr. Andre proposes is that he be released into the community pending the assessments that have to be done by the Correctional Service of Canada and the Parole Board's decision subject to what were referred to as "special instructions" from the local Correctional Service of Canada officials.

Alternatively, he proposes that, if he is to remain in custody for a further period of time, that period of time be less than the 90 days proposed by the Crown.

During the hearing on Wednesday, the Crown called Ms. Cindy Sparvier as a witness in relation to this issue. Ms. Sparvier is a parole officer supervisor for the Correctional Service of Canada here in Yellowknife. She has some familiarity with Mr. Andre's case. She explained the process by which the long-term supervision orders are put into place. The process starts

1 with a preliminary assessment report, which provides a brief snapshot of the offender. Following that, the intake assessment starts. 3 For this, the CSC requires copies of all reports on the Court file as well as a transcript of the trial. The CSC must then complete several more 6 reports to address a variety of issues including what facilities are available for treatment and housing of the offender. In all, there are over 9 400 questions that have to be asked during this 10 11 assessment.

The reports and information and assessments are then forwarded to the National Parole Board, which must then determine and impose the supervision conditions. It makes its decision based on the information it receives from the Correctional Service of Canada.

Ms. Sparvier indicated that it is possible to expedite the process and that she has met with Mr. Andre once already. This is not ideal, however, and she indicated she felt it would be difficult to assess Mr. Andre properly in the community. She also indicated that, while she can give Mr. Andre special instructions to cover off the interim period, these would essentially be unenforceable because the CSC would not have jurisdiction over him.

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Mr. Andre, for his part, said he would comply with any special instructions he was given. I do not doubt his sincerity, but I do have serious reservations about his ability to comply in the absence of clearly structured and supported conditions.

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Mr. Andre's record for noncompliance with court orders and directions is substantial. I am particularly concerned that he will not comply with the special instruction to refrain from alcohol consumption and that he would then engage in the type of criminal behaviour that brings him here today setting himself up for even more significant consequences and possibly causing harm to another victim.

The Crown's request is not unprecedented as demonstrated by Justice Trotter's decision in R. v. Levert, which is unreported. It is a 2012 decision of the Ontario Superior Court of Justice. It must be considered in context.

This is not a regular sentencing proceeding. It is an application for a long-term supervision order, the purposes of which are to protect the public and to provide for rehabilitation. Both of these can be realized only if there are enforceable conditions in place which allow for appropriate treatment and supervision for

1 Mr. Andre and which are meaningful to him.

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That process, in turn, can only happen if
the National Parole Board has before it properly
conducted and thorough reports, assessments, and
other information to properly inform its
decision. A hasty decision based on rushed and
potentially incomplete material may well result
in an inappropriate plan for Mr. Andre, and there
would be very little point to that.

Having made the findings I have, respecting the substantial risk that Mr. Andre will re-offend if he is not supervised, it would make little sense to release him into the community without a properly crafted supervision order being in place to manage his risk.

Ms. Sparvier's evidence was that 70 days at least is required to complete the work and obtain the order.

Considering the effect of remission, I will add an additional 90 days to Mr. Andre's custodial sentence, and this will result in a sentence of four years and four months as the custodial portion.

Mr. Andre, please stand up. Andy Andre, for the crime of sexual assault, you are sentenced to a period of four years and four months. Having regard to the time you have spent incarcerated

awaiting trial and sentencing, you will have

90 days remaining to serve on your sentence.

Upon finding you a long-term offender, your

incarceration will be followed by a period of

supervision of six years upon the terms to be

imposed by the National Parole Board. You can

sit down.

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I am going to make the following ancillary orders: First, there is going to be a DNA order which will require Mr. Andre to submit to the taking of bodily substances reasonably required for forensic DNA analysis.

Second, pursuant to Section 490.012(3)(a) of the Criminal Code, Mr. Andre will be required to comply with the terms of the Sex Offender

Information Registration Act, and that will be in effect for life.

For six years from the date of your release, you will be subject to a prohibition order under Section 161(1)(a) and Section 161(1)(c) of the Criminal Code. Specifically, Mr. Andre will not be allowed to attend a public park or swimming area, where children under 16 are present or could reasonably be expected to be present; or a daycare; school ground; playground, or community centre, and he may not have any contact with a child under 16 unless he does so in the

supervision of someone the Court considers

appropriate. And that means communication by any

means, be it face to face, telephone, texting,

Facebooking, Skyping, or any other means of

communication.

There will be a Section 109 firearms prohibition, which will also be in effect for life, subject to any exemption granted upon application under Section 113 of the Criminal Code.

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There will be a non-contact order prohibiting Mr. Andre from contacting F.J., S.J., or J.J., and that order will be in effect for the custodial portion remaining in your sentence. I will recommend that this term be included in the conditions that the National Parole Board ultimately imposes.

With respect to some of the other conditions that the Crown asked me to recommended to the National Parole Board, I am declining to do so; and the reason for that is that I think the individuals who structure and come up with the terms that are going to be effective for Mr. Andre will have a better insight into his needs, and I do not want to do anything that might interrupt that process.

27 Finally, with respect to the documents

1		pursuant to Section	n 760 of the Criminal Code, I
2		order that a copy	of Dr. Klassen's report and a
3		transcript of these	e reasons and a transcript of
4		the trial be prepare	red on an expedited basis and
5		forwarded to the Co	orrectional Service of Canada
6		by the Supreme Cou	rt registry in accordance with
7		its usual practice	
8		Is there anyt	hing else from the Crown or
9		defence?	
10	MR.	FIX:	No, Your Honour, on behalf of
11		Mr. Andre.	
12		Mr. Andre, if	there's any of that that you
13		do not understand,	just call the office, okay?
14	THE	ACCUSED:	Okay.
15	MS.	MILLER:	Nothing from the Crown,
16		Your Honour. Than	k you.
17	THE	COURT:	All right. Counsel, thank you
18		very much for your	very helpful submissions.
19		Mr. Andre, I	do hope that your
20		rehabilitation is	successful this time.
21		We will close	court.
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1	CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIPT
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3	I, the undersigned, hereby certify that the
4	foregoing pages are a complete and accurate
5	transcript of the proceedings taken down by me in
6	shorthand and transcribed from my shorthand notes
7	to the best of my skill and ability.
8	Dated at the City of Edmonton, Province of
9	Alberta, this 29th day of September, 2016.
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11	Certified Pursuant to Rule 723
12	of the Rules of Court
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15	Janet Belma, CSR(A), B.Ed.
16	Court Reporter
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