



INQUIRY RESPECTING THE TREATMENT, EXPERIENCES AND OUTCOMES OF INNU IN THE CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEM

English Transcript

Volume 5

*Commissioners: Retired Judge James Igloliorte, Dr. Mike Devine and
Anastasia Qupee*

Friday

17 February 2023

P. RALPH: (Inaudible) the Inquiry into the Experiences, Treatment and Outcome of the Innu in the Child Protection System.

Our interpreters – I see one here right now. I'll ask Anne to go back, and I think Gerry is back there already. I'll just give them a few minutes to get in place.

Are you –?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

P. RALPH: What's that?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

P. RALPH: Oh they're gonna – are they gonna sit – oh, they're gonna sit up here, aren't they?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.
(Inaudible).

P. RALPH: Or we have Gerry inside?

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: I'll just take a moment to recognize the good work of our technicians: David with the provincial IT and Andy and Curtis with Eastern Audio.

Thank you very much for your excellent work.

P. RALPH: What's that?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Gerry is here –

P. RALPH: Yeah, he's coming.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: He's there, sat down.

P. RALPH: What's it – where's Gerry?
Okay. Yeah.

Anne's on the way in.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

P. RALPH: Okay.

I don't think she needs to be – she doesn't need to be sworn again, Commissioner.
Thank you.

Welcome to the fifth day of the Inquiry into the Experiences, Treatment and Outcome of the Innu in the Child Protection System.

And to get our day started, I'd ask for Tshaukuesh Penashue to come up and start our day with a prayer.

ELDER PENASHUE: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

P. RALPH: Thank you, Tshaukuesh.
(Inaudible.)

Before we get started –

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can I translate what she just said –

P. RALPH: Okay.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: – before her prayer?

P. RALPH: Okay.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I – I think it's important to put on record of what she just said before her – before her prayers, is that she said: May – may those that have passed on be here with us, and that they're listening as well.

So I just want that noted.

Thank you.

P. RALPH: Just wanted to talk about a couple of things before we get started with Tshaukuesh's testimony. The – the Commissioners understand that many people in the community are anxious to speak to them directly and –

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

P. RALPH: Anne?

People in both communities – in Sheshatshiu and also in Natuashish will be given many opportunities to speak directly to the Commissioners, whether it's publicly or privately.

The next time we'll be in Sheshatshiu will be March 20 to 24. And like I said, at that point all those tables with the lawyers sitting at them will be gone, and people will be sitting directly in front of the Commissioners.

And I understand that some people are perhaps disappointed that they haven't had that opportunity yet to speak to the Commissioners.

But the Inquiry – the Commissioners decided that it was important that they hear from Innu witnesses to learn about Innu history and Innu ways.

ELDER PENASHUE: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER NUNA: Can you repeat that? Elizabeth was just talking to me.

P. RALPH: The Commissioners decided that the first thing they wanted to do is they wanted to hear from Innu witnesses – to talk about Innu history, and also to talk about Innu ways.

And that's why this week we've heard from three Elders: Penote Antuan, Joachim Nui and Tshaukuesh Penashue.

The Commissioners wanted to hear about Innu history directly from – from the Elders.

And they also wanted to hear from other Innu witnesses who could give us the Sheshatshiu and the Natuashish timeline.

And all the witnesses that are appearing this week, all their testimony is being live-streamed and the media are reporting on their testimony.

So not it – not only are – is this information and this history going to the Commissioners, it's also going to the rest of the Province and the rest of the country. And that, the Commissioners thought, was very important too.

This morning we will continue to hear from Tshaukuesh Penashue, and she'll in fact be our last Innu witness this week.

Our first non-Innu witness will be a woman, Jennifer King. She is Anishinaabe and she works for the Caring Society.

And the Caring –

INTERPRETER GREGOIRE: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

P. RALPH: Sorry go ahead, Gerry, go ahead.

INTERPRETER GREGOIRE: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

P. RALPH: And the Caring Society is an organization – it's a reconciliation-based education, research and support organization, which promotes the safety and well-being of First Nations children, young people, families and nations.

There – I want to point out again that there are healing services workers here. They're – they're wearing blue vests and so if – if someone needs support, if someone is having a difficult time because of some of the information they're hearing, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Also if you are watching live stream, I understand that there are telephone numbers, which I think are gonna be posted shortly.

I'll come back to that – I understand they're gonna post it on that screen and on the live stream but I'll come back to that – so Tshaukuesh Penashue is gonna talk to us again and – and she may be asked some

questions and I – and I – I hope that everyone here and listening online understands that we are asking Tshaukuesh questions because of the respect that the Commissioners hold her in.

The Commissioners appreciate that Tshaukuesh has a great deal of knowledge about the history of the Innu and also about Innu ways.

And the knowledge that they are gaining from Tshaukuesh will – will guide them throughout this process over the next coming months as they hear from other witnesses.

So the purpose of the – of the question, I think, is a show of respect in many ways 'cause we are trying to learn as much as we can from Tshaukuesh.

I – I guess we're ready to get started. I was hoping they were gonna put those numbers up, Caitlin, I guess that –

C. URQUHART: They're working on it.

P. RALPH: Okay, they're working on it.

This morning when we get a chance we'll have the numbers on, so if there are people watching that are upset and need to speak to someone, those numbers will be up shortly.

Benjamin, you can continue with your witness.

B. BROOKWELL: Good morning, Tshaukuesh.

As with yesterday, I understand you wish to share and speak first, and I may have some questions after that, but please go ahead when you're ready.

ELDER PENASHUE: Okay.

Good morning, everybody.

I know my English not – not very good but every time when I speak always I try – I try so hard and then sometimes I'm thinking: That – that's okay, I'm not akaneshau, I'm Innu.

Yesterday when I speak it's very, very important – I forgot – I forgot about that – when I talk about I was born Nutshimit – Kanekuanakau, there was nobody there, only one tent – only one – my – my mom, my dad tent – only one tent. And my dad helped my mom when I was born. There's nobody there just – just my dad and help my mom.

And then every time when I think about it and when I stay in the tent I'm so proud, I'm so happy: Oh, this is – this is place – this is tent I was born.

And then when I – when I finish speak, I went in my chairs – sat down – and then my cousin – my sister's son, (inaudible), she said to me: Tshaukuesh, did you know when [sic] you born Meshikamau Lake – long beach – I forgot that – [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken]?

INTERPRETER NUNA: Kanekuanakau.

ELDER PENASHUE: Kanekuanakau, yeah; Kanekuanakau.

Tshaukuesh, did you know Kanekuanakau, they all flat. I was – I was very sad. I didn't know. I know a lot of place, Churchill Falls, when the government make a – [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken].

INTERPRETER NUNA: Dam.

ELDER PENASHUE: Make a dam – I know. A lot of Nutshimit, everywhere, flat – water. Everything under the water is so important – burial grounds, trees – there's lot of things died – too many things. I seen that when I went – when I go to Wabush.

And I didn't know. First time I heard yesterday, my – my cousin – my – my

sister's son explain to me. He said:
Tshaukuesh, when [sic] you're born,
Kanekuanakau, they're all flat. I was very
sad.

And then, like I said yesterday, I want – I
wanna go there. I want to see
Kanekuanakau when [read: where] I was
born. I should ask Innu Nation to help me –
can you take me? I want to see before I'm
gone. I want – I want – I wanna go there. I
want to see when [read: where] I was born.

I'll try not to – not cry.

I'm thinking – I'm thinking of my nephew
explained to me: Oh, it's too late – it's too
late. I want – I was gonna go there. I was
thinking I'm gonna ask Innu Nation to help
me. But I'm thinking after, when I go home,
because always I'm writing, always I make
my journal. I sat down and I'm writing that
what my nephew told me – everything what
he told me. I was really sad.

And then I was thinking: No, I still wanna go.
I still wanna go before I'm gone. I'm gonna
ask Innu Nation: Can you take me there?
And then I'd be happy. Helicopter take, get
up, walk – walk in a little bit: Oh, this is
place I was born. It's very important. I can –
I can ask someone – just gonna make fire,
cup of tea. Stay a little bit, and then go
back.

And just one more – one more thing I want
to say short.

If I make it to go there, I can talk in my mind
the government. I can say in – in my mind:
Government, what did you done? What did
you done our land?

It's not you – it's not yours. It belongs Innu
people, the land.

You kill environment. So many things –
water, trees, everything, animals. I know the
government's not gonna be there but I
wanna talk myself: Look government, what

you've done. So many things. You kill
environment – Innu land.

[Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken]

I'm gonna try to speak Innu – Sheshatshiu –
long time ago. I remember when I was –
when I was young and then every time
when I make my own – my journal, always
some talk about.

Innu people always stay Nutshimit – always,
always – and Innu people and the children,
when she stay Nutshimit, we never had
problem – nothing. Nobody's sick. And kids
– young kids – today there all kind people
sick. Diabetes, high blood pressure, cancer,
kidney, everything. We never had – I
remember, we never had that before.
Because we stay in Nutshimit, we got
everything there in Nutshimit – our
medicine. Innu eat animals fresh, every day.

When I was young, my brother and my
sister – I never thought when I wake up: I
gonna eat bologna, eggs – no. I know my
mom's cook fish, meat, bread.

And I remember Nutshimit – when you stay
Nutshimit, the people – Innu people and the
children – that's why you never had no
problem. Always we eats fresh food. And
animals eat the tree – eat something on the
ground – a grass, like a goose, ducks, eat a
grass.

Eat – animals eat trees as a medicine – all
kind of trees animals eat. Beaver eat the
tree – and when animals eat the – in the
woods, the trees. And then Innu people,
when they get the animals and then eat the
animals, it help, just like a medicine
because animals eat – eat medicine – Innu
medicine in the woods.

And then I'm thinking, when I think about
Nutshimit, when I say (inaudible) my
parents. That's why I'm saying Innu people,
they got everything in Nutshimit: medicine,
animals, eat fresh animals every day. Like I
said, I never think about I'm gonna eat

eggs. Sometimes Innu people eat porcupine in the morning – beaver, partridge, robin, fish, bread – Innu bread.

And Innu people – I never, never see when I was young, the people stay – stay all day. Always moving, walking, work. Only I see my mom and my dad rest when she sleep at night. When a wake up in the morning, start work, work all day.

[Dialogue between Elder Penashue and Interpreter Nuna in Sheshatshiu-aimun.]

ELDER PENASHUE: And I'm not talk about just my parents, my dad and my mom; all Innu people same: go Nutshimit. Québec people, Sheshatshiu people, Natuashish people, all people same. She's very, very happy when he go Nutshimit hunting, to get some food for the – the children or grandchildren, and everybody very happy.

Yeah, I remember so many, many things when I was young. Innu people very, very happy in Nutshimit and their children. And Innu people, when she stay Nutshimit, there was no – nothing. No houses I remember – no houses – nothing. Innu people stay in the tent winter and summer.

And Innu people when she stay Nutshimit – or should I say English [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken] – smart?

INTERPRETER NUNA: Mm-hmm.

INTERPRETER GREGOIRE: Smart.

ELDER PENASHUE: Innu people very smart.

I look many, many times my parents, sat down after breakfast in the morning. This is we – what – what we gonna do today. And then, man hunting all day. Soon when he's ready my dad – I'll never forget – soon as he's ready she's gonna go. She's got the hunting bag, you got a gun, snowshoes, and she said: Don't worry about me if I'm not

come home tonight, she said. I listen, and my mom said yes.

My dad went hunting all day. Evening she's getting dark, still my dad not come home. He – she knows, my mom, my dad what – what – what she said: Don't worry about me if I'm not come home tonight – she knows. My mom said: Okay, we're gonna go to bed now. My mom, she did everything like my dad what he did. He make fire all night. He afraid of getting cold, the children.

And I want to say two more things before we get break or –

This is hard – this is very, very hard to say English. I'm gonna show you. I'm talk about my dad. She's not gonna come home. Don't worry about me if I'm not come home, she said.

I want to explain to you why – why my dad she's not gonna come home. He's walking, walking far away, far away and then she found the – he found the caribou walking – would follow the caribou meshkanau to caribou walking. And then he think, my dad: I'm not gonna come home tonight. If the – my dad come home back to tent, caribou they gonna walk far away and my dad – if you don't understand me just let me know – and – and my dad, he think, I'm gonna – I'm gonna be here tonight, make fire. If I go back our tent, caribou they're gonna walk far away in the morning. And then she stayed there all night, make fire.

Soon, in the morning and then go, follow caribou meshkanau and then caught caribou. You understand what I try to say?

Yeah, I want to explain to you why my dad didn't want come home. He afraid the caribou they gonna walk, walk, walk far away. Then he think, I'm gonna stay here tonight and make fire all night. She sleep a little bit and awake, put some more wood, go back to sleep again.

P. RALPH: Tshaukuesh, I just want to make sure I understand.
So your father slept outside to stay close to the caribou?

[Dialogue between Elder Penashue and Interpreter Nuna in Sheshatshiu-aimun.]

INTERPRETER NUNA [providing English translation]: Yes, near.

ELDER PENASHUE: And it's not only my dad, a lot of people same thing – Innu people.

And when my dad come home next – next evening, I was very happy. I wonder – I wonder my dad he brought some meat. Soon I see hunting bag, little bit of blood, I was very happy. And then soon I see moccasins – moccasins, little bit blood. Oh my, was – I – I was so happy. I didn't wanna say nothing, I just wait my mom. I know my mom will – same thing, very happy.

And before I forget; Innu people, Nutshimit is got everything. Even no priest, Nutshimit – no priest, just Innu. Praying every night. In the morning before breakfast, praying. Sunday get together. Who's got a big tent? Let's go. Let's go big tent. People stay together praying.

Even the babies born, I remember, my dad baptised the baby. I never, never forget that.

My dad said: Go get the water – clean water on the river – the clean water. I don't know, my brother or my sister get the water, the clean water, and then he put on the stove just little bit – just warm. And I never, never forget. I watch it. I – I wonder my dad what's he's gonna do to baby, baptise.

I watch and then her mother holded the baby. And then she said, my dad when he poured water on the head – I never, never forget that – my dad said when he poured the water: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken].

I don't know how to say English – Anne, she's gonna say it. [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken] – and he put the cross – he poured water, cross on the head: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken]. After that my dad he put a name. It was a boy, Dominic.

Thank you. If you wanna, ask questions when she finish.

INTERPRETER NUNA: I think the word that she's meaning to say when her dad baptised the baby – he spoke in his words, saying as he poured the water on the baby's forehead: This is a blessed water that I am put – that I am pouring on you. And the name he gave that – to the baby was Dominique – means Dominic – Dominique.

B. BROOKWELL: Tshaukuesh, would now be an okay time for a short break?

If –

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE:
(Inaudible.)

Recess

P. RALPH: Inquiry is back in session.

B. BROOKWELL: Commissioners, as a first step, I'd like to propose to make the drawing that Tshaukuesh showed us the next exhibit.

I understand it's Exhibit P-035.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Thank you.

B. BROOKWELL: Tshaukuesh, I want to ask you about your life when you moved to Sheshatshiu. Can you tell me about the first house you lived in?

ELDER PENASHUE: Okay, first I remember when my parents – a new house – I remember. It's not only just me, my brother, my sisters. I was so scared, very

scared. I did – I didn't like it, I wanna go back our tent.

Because Innu people when she stay in the tent at night, she sleep together. Like my mom, my dad, my sisters, my brothers; sleep together.

And when I wake up in the morning when our – not in the morning – when I wake at night, I just want to turn this way or this way. First before I turn, I look my mom and my dad and my sisters. Oh! I was very happy, everybody's there asleep. I gotta go back to sleep, I was thinking. I was very happy.

And then after when I stayed the house, I don't see anymore my dad and my mom and my sisters. I was so nervous I couldn't sleep. I got up, walking slowly – I don't want make a noise – where I should squeeze, I want to sleep with my mom and my sister.

B. BROOKWELL: At that time, do you remember were Innu told to live in houses?

INTERPRETER NUNA: Can you repeat that please, I didn't hear.

B. BROOKWELL: At that time, were Innu told to live in houses?

ELDER PENASHUE: Yeah, I – I remember, like I said, no houses, just tent.

Everything what happen I just blame two people: the government and priest – two people, every things what happened.

The priest visit Innu tent – that time I'm talking about, no houses, that time – priest visit – visit Innu tent. And I remember when I was young, priest when – when he came our tent my dad was home and my mom and my sister and my brother. First when – when he came our tent, the priest, first she talk nice: Oh, what nice tent. It must be your daughters help you a lot. You got nice tent, nice – very nice. And then she sat down.

And then later, priest said – my dad was named Simon, my mom Mary – priest said – told my dad: Simon, why don't you stop what you doing? Why don't you go hunting just a man – with man? Your – your wife is gonna stay here, and your children. Go to school. Nobody's answered – my dad, he didn't say nothing, and my mom.

After the priest leave in the tent – maybe he went visit another tent – my mom and my dad argument. My mom, she wants to listen to priest what she said: not to go Nutshimit. No – my dad said: No, we're gonna go Nutshimit, all this family. We'll go Nutshimit. And my mom, she wants to listen to priest what she said.

That's why I'm saying, how many people the priest asked don't go Nutshimit, don't go in the bush. Stay here.

And then when the people stay in Sheshatshiu, keep the houses. Move to the houses – not stay in the tent anymore.

B. BROOKWELL: Can you tell us, how did your life change after you started living in Sheshatshiu?

ELDER PENASHUE: Oh, it's a big change – big change.

We lost everything: our food, animals – [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken] –

INTERPRETER NUNA: Game warden.

ELDER PENASHUE: – game warden.

Is not allowed to kill caribou anymore. And a long time ago Innu people get animals. He didn't worry about anyone – akaneshau – game warden?

INTERPRETER NUNA: Mm-hmm.

ELDER PENASHUE: – to come. She just – she just get animals how much she – you want to bring the – to feed the – the children and his wife – all people.

It's a big change. All kinds of change and there was no – like I said, there's no priest in Nutshimit. People praying; same thing – praying.

Every time when I – when I think about it, it's a big – every thing change – our life. The government and the priest, that's what I blame, what happened.

And there was no alcohol and drugs; and then you see what happened, our children, our grandchildren. Everything change, and I don't think just me. A lot of people – Innu people – very sad. Sometimes when we stay together – women had cup of tea together – always talk about that.

I miss so much our life long time ago. We stay Nutshimit, hunting. The children happy. Nothing – no alcohol, no drugs. And I never, never see in my life when I was young, suicide. It's so many – so many children died young.

I never see.

And mothers, grandmothers, grandfather and dad very sad – very sad. Always talk about our life, it very, very important everybody was happy – happy life – and the children.

B. BROOKWELL: I want to ask you now about school. Did you know anyone who was sent away to St. John's for school?

ELDER PENASHUE: (Inaudible) – I just remember Penote Antuan and my husband. Just two boys, I remember, went to school St. John's.

And you heard Penote when he talk about that – when he talk about that. Same thing, my husband, that's what happened.

My husband after he come home Sheshatshiu – after when I married – always, always talk about that didn't – happy. I didn't want to go back – I didn't want to go back again, she said.

Same – Penote what he talk about, the same what happened to my husband.

And every time when I think about it, what happened Penote and my husband, when I think about it, hurt me so much.

Government, maybe you think: Innu people, they wouldn't know. She's not going to know what I'm doing. Everything – school, and what he done our land – everything what he did, the government.

Government think: Oh, the people? They wouldn't know. He don't mind. He – they wouldn't know. Nobody speak English – Innu people, he don't speak English. They wouldn't know.

Now, Innu people, he talk about many, many times; hurt me so much when I think about it. Before my husband he died, we talked together. Hurt me when I think about it; just like a government, priest, teacher. Innu people, they wouldn't know, nobody speak English.

Now many, many people speak English; a man and a women.

B. BROOKWELL: Could you tell us, please, what your husband's name was?

ELDER PENASHUE: Francis – oh sorry.

INTERPRETER GREGOIRE: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

ELDER PENASHUE: Francis Penashue. [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.] Francis Penashue.

B. BROOKWELL: Do you know what it was like for his family when he was away at school?

ELDER PENASHUE: My husband, when – when he was young, very young, he lost her mom, when he was young. And then she stay always different – different people – I

stay with my grandmother – I stay until – until he's grown up.

Same thing, if my husband still live [read: alive] her mother, I don't think they would be happy, what happened. Her dad, Matthew Penashue, didn't happy. She was very sad because always talk to her dad. He couldn't talk to her mom, he – her mom – my husband mom, he [read: she] died when – when she was young. I think she'd be same, she wouldn't be happy what happened her son in the schools in St. John's.

B. BROOKWELL: I have a last question for you, Tshaukuesh. Looking to the future, what do you want to see change for Innu children?

ELDER PENASHUE: That's – that's why I went walk, snowshoes, tobogganing Nutshimit every spring. I do it over the ten years. Walk Nutshimit, to teach the children – like, I don't want to see the children get lost our culture. It's very important.

Sometimes people think: Tshaukuesh, he wants go back way, way, way at – we're from – long time ago. I'm not mean – I want to save – save our life, our culture. To teach the children, not get lost, before old people die. Not too many people still alive – all people died. I wanna teach the children before I'm gone, not get lose our life, our culture – very, very important.

That's why I invite the children when I walk; canoe trip Churchill River, and walk. And I'm talk to him every evening. Sometimes he said – he ask me: Tshaukuesh, are you gonna make story before going to bed tonight? And I said: If I'm not too tired. Always wanted a story before go to bed.

And the children talk different in Nutshimit: Oh, what a nice day, Tshaukuesh. What are we gonna do if you see animals: pineu, uapush – porcupine. I said: We're gonna try to kill to eat. Oh, he said.

It's a big change, the children in Nutshimit. That's what I wish – like if I'm gone – I wish that some – someone – somebody do the same thing what I'm doing, to teach the children. It's very important to keep our culture for the children.

And I'm worried about that the children in the schools she lost Innu-aimun – Innu-aimun. Very sad – even very small, very small, the kids speak akaneshau-aimun. But there's a lot of people – teachers, Innu teachers, try to help the children to speak Innu-aimun, not get lost.

I blame television and – [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken] –

INTERPRETER NUNA: iPad.

ELDER PENASHUE: – iPad – it's a small machine.

Even the small kids – when I was young, I never, never see television and the – that little machine. Nothing, no telephone, no television. But the Innu people he try so hard to help the children.

Innu – not get lost our culture and Innu-aimun. Very, very important.

[Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]]

INTERPRETER NUNA: She says we should break, 'cause she's getting hungry.

B. BROOKWELL: Well thank you; those are my questions and if you're ready for lunch, so am I.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Elizabeth, on behalf of everyone here, the Commission and Commission counsel and all the lawyers, we thank you for demonstrating your love for the children, your love for your people, Nutshimit, your love for your language. And we have learned many lessons from you and from Penote and Joachim, and we will hear from many other Elders yet.

Tshenashkumitin.

ELDER PENASHUE: This the last thing now. I want to tell you a funny – funny story.

Yesterday, when the finish – have a break, and I went to see this – this man. I hold the hand and then talk, talk to him.

[Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

And then I said: I want to make a small acting – I want to talk to you. And then I said: Your government, why did you come Labrador, make a – damage our land, environment – and kill environment, it's many, many thing: rivers, trees, animals, medicine. Why did you come Labrador, do that? And then I said: Did you ask Innu when you –

Yeah that's what the – that's – when I sat down here, and then I said: You dress nice, oh, just like utshimau – just like a big boss. And then I'm thinking for the government, you're government and – [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken] –

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Elizabeth, you can't have him. He's married. Sorry.

ELDER PENASHUE: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: I also want to say thank you very much to Edward for offering his support as well. Thank you, sir.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Mm-hmm.
[Innu-aimun spoken.]

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: 1 o'clock, please.

Recess

P. RALPH: Good afternoon.

There has been a change in our schedule this afternoon; we had planned to call Jennifer King.

However, we're going to continue to hear from Tshaukuesh Penashue. Not quite sure how long that will be, but we've decided that we'll move Jennifer King to Tuesday afternoon.

So we'd ask Tshaukuesh to come up again – Ben, did you want to say something?

B. BROOKWELL: No, other than Tshaukuesh wishes to share some more with us today, and we'll ask her to go ahead when she's ready.

P. RALPH: Great. Thank you.

[Dialogue between Elder Penashue and Interpreter Nuna in Sheshatshiu-aimun]

B. BROOKWELL: Tshaukuesh, when you're ready you can begin.

ELDER PENASHUE: I try – I try remember some important thing I wanna talk about little bit. Bit – like, I want to talk about a little bit Innu – Innu life, long time ago. Very, very happy. I never heard Innu or my parents to say that: No I'm tired – I'm tired, we not gonna go tomorrow, no.

Always Innu people very happy, do something every day, every day. Maybe that's why Innu people had no problems; he never – he never sick. Always walking, exercise, exercise, pull the toboggan, walk snowshoes.

And the baby – small baby in – in toboggan. Pull the – women pulled the baby, and men pull some stuff like a tent, stove, food, blanket.

I'm thinking about the people, Innu people. Maybe that's why I never heard the – the people say – the Innu people and my parents – I never heard – heard her say I'm tired, I'm tired. No. She's – she's too happy

– very happy, what he done; all day, walking. And when – when he's walking, pull the toboggan, sometimes found a porcupine or partridge.

Everything what he did, Innu people, walking, hunting – same thing. Women pulled the baby. Maybe she think: Oh, the baby. She so nice. He never cry and she's so nice, very nice. She loves I pulled the toboggan.

Maybe that's why Innu people never said I'm tired, I'm tired. We're not gonna go tomorrow we're gonna stay.

Always happy. They make you happy, what you're doing all day. I think same thing young children – the girls and the boys very happy walking with dad and mom – very happy. Sometimes the weather is so nice – a blue sky – nice day. Oh, sometimes she said, mom, grandmother, I'm so happy walk with you, I'm so happy. And I wait, I wait, I wish to see animals – found animals this walk. Pineu, uapush, porcupine – they're all kind of animals.

And then soon when we stop – sometimes four o'clock, sometimes three o'clock – and then stop, put the tent. And then everybody work together. The boys cut the trees. The girls get some boughs – (inaudible) – the boughs put on – inside the tent. Same thing, the children very happy – very happy to help his mom and dad.

And then, very, very fast put the tent, and my dad put the stove, get some wood, get some water, my mom cook, make some tea, and make me supper. If not too late, me and my brother we playing outside.

And the children – we never buy toy in the store, never, I remember that. Now the kids buy little truck or little helicopter, little doll – no. I never had that when I was young.

I make my own – my own toy to play. I remember I make a – a doll. Not the same kind, I make – I used a – a cloth, like a

dishcloth. I can – I can show you how I – how I make my doll when I was young.

I use any – any sheet or towel or – or tablecloth, and make my (inaudible). I just make like this, see? A face. And then I make a – what you call – swinging...?

INTERPRETER NUNA: Hammock.

ELDER PENASHUE: Yeah. And I put it here – and my mom, she said: What – what are you doing? I said I wanna make a – I wanna put asleep my –

Yeah. We never buy in the store. Same thing my brother – the boys – he went in the woods. She said: Do you wanna come with me in the woods? I'm gonna try to find a toy, to play on a ice.

And my brother looking for stick goes like this – like a hockey stick – like that – like a hockey stick. I found it, I found it – very, very happy – I found it. And then he cut it. And he make a – [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken] – he cut a tree – [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken].

INTERPRETER NUNA: He used to cut it up like a – like a puck, but used wood.

ELDER PENASHUE: Mm-hmm.

[Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken] – he used the saw and cut. Oh, we got everything, we got everything, she said and then we'd play on ice – playing like the hockey.

Now everything change – big change. I told many times my grandchildren and my children, when she was young – Kanani, Angela – I told about that. She just laugh and – when – when I told that – that story. I said we had everything Nutshimit.

That's why I'm saying Innu people was very, very smart. He got everything Nutshimit, everything. I never heard the people say that: I don't know what I'm gonna do today. I don't know.

Same thing when you wanna go Nutshimit. Sometime her daughter she's gonna have a baby. Sometimes two months, three months, she's gonna have a baby. She didn't say: I can't – I can't go Nutshimit. I'm scared, I'm gonna have a baby. No, just went Nutshimit and then work – work, help his mom.

And sometimes she stayed their own tent with her husband, she's gonna have a baby. Gotta work, work – like exercise every day. And when the baby born in Nutshimit, very easy. Nothing – no problem.

Now, I hear so many times, women they're gonna have operation. Baby upside down, baby something wrong; it's never happened before, never. Everything was okay, 'cause exercise, eat the good food everyday – (inaudible) and exercise.

INTERPRETER GREGOIRE: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

ELDER PENASHUE: Okay – oh–

INTERPRETER GREGOIRE: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

ELDER PENASHUE: Okay I'm gonna explain to you one more important thing I remember.

When Innu people go Nutshimit –in the country – go Nutshimit, far away all his family. She's gonna go far away. And then he think: We should leave a food, little bit – and they got the bucket – not – not this kind, there's a bucket – big bucket.

And then he think: I'm gonna leave the food here because we're gonna go far away. When we come back, come home, we're gonna walk same place. He put little bit flour – small bag, inside – little bit sugar, little bit tea bags, butter. And then he put the cover – but not – not this kind – and then she put – he put the – the lines, like this. This – everything in here very, very important.

That's what I'm saying, Innu people was very smart. He knows everything what he's gonna do. She's gonna go far, far away, and then she said: Maybe when we come back there gonna be no more flour, no more butter, sugar. I should leave, and then he hang under the tree.

I couldn't believe it. I don't know what happened. How? How? Nobody touch it. Animals, sometimes black bear or another animals – eat – eat something – break it. Nope, nobody touch it.

And then people walking, and then she stay there maybe a month, maybe two months, hunting with all his family. We got caribou, woman make a dry caribou meat. When everything dry, meat, because after when you – when you kill caribou, if you pulled the toboggan, she'd be so heavy. If you dry – dry meat, it's not gonna heavy so much.

And then when he's come home – when the time come home – maybe two months – when the time come home, and then he said: We're gonna try walk same place when we go back. We gotta find some food. And then when he find that food still – still under the tree, very happy. Very, very happy my dad and my mom.

And then put the tent. No more flour – everything's all gone – no more sugar, no more tea bags and very, very happy, after when you put your – put your tent you got everything there and then he make flour – oh yes, baking powder he put in there too.

And then he brought, and it's open and then everything. And my mom make a bread. He make some tea. That's why I'm saying Innu people was very smart. He knows everything what she's gonna do.

And another thing is very important, I just – I just remember. When he stay be – when Innu people go Nutshimit far, far away, and then when the people die – even the babies – when the people die, he couldn't make it to bring the body, put in – in Sheshatshiu

and then people talk together. We were gonna buried in Nutshimit, in the country.

And she got no nothing – nothing. We – you couldn't make it a casket – nothing, you had nothing. And then that body, she just try to find anything white – white sheet. And this is a body, he died, even babies and they just do like this – like that, and then he make the hole, use the shovel on the ground and then put it – put that body and then people stand up circle, pray and pray and pray – women and the man.

That's what Innu people doing, babies and old people. So far away to bring the body, and bury it Nutshimit. And then he make – he make a big cross on the – (inaudible) – he cut a tree – make big cross, put it right here. I hope you understand what I'm saying.

Will you question me – will you question me if – if you wanna ask questions. I'm gonna stop, and thank you everybody listen to me. I try – try so hard remember important thing.

B. BROOKWELL: Thank you very much, Tshaukuesh. I don't have any further questions but I want to thank you for your time, and for sharing with us.

ELDER PENASHUE: Mm-hmm.

C. URQUHART: Thank you, Tshaukuesh. That was very powerful.

We're now going to hand it over to the Commissioners to make some closing remarks for the week.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Go ahead, Sir.

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: Okay thank you.

We are now at the end of the first week of public formal hearings, and I think we've had some really – very – we've had – we've had some very interesting Elders who

presented to us and other presentations, such as the timelines that some of my – my colleagues are going to speak of.

I wanted to acknowledge, once again, the healing services and the people who have provided those services this past week. As has already been mentioned, the healing services are an important part of the Inquiry. To have people available for our members of the community – hmm?

Oh sorry.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: As was already mentioned, also, the healing –

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Gerry.

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: Oh, sorry, too.

INTERPRETER GREGOIRE: That's okay, you can cut me off.

[Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: And the healing services workers are available to those who may find some of the testimony difficult, or if it triggers some memories themselves that they find difficult or challenging.

I would like to name the healing services workers, and for those who are here, if you could stand when your name is called please.

Helen Andrew; Christina Andrew; Mary Sillett; Stephanie Rich; uh ...

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: It sounds the same in the –

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: It sounds the same? So you don't need to –

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: You're all right.

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: So is it okay or –

Tiffany Nuna Penashue, Kandice Gosine, Rebecca Gregoire Rich.

And the last three are Peggy Slipp, Audrey Snow and Edward Nuna.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Sir, (Inaudible) –

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: Oh, some are in the –

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: There – there's –

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: – break room?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah, some of these workers are (inaudible) –

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: Ah, okay.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You're just doing all the (inaudible) – there is (inaudible) –

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: Okay.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: – just – just say that they're somewhere (inaudible) –

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: Right.

And some of the workers who weren't here are actually out in the break room – breakout room – so they're here in the building somewhere.

So thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Can you hear (Inaudible)?

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: No.

COMMISSIONER QUPEE: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

Hello. Can you hear me?

[Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER GREGOIRE: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

COMMISSIONER QUPEE: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

I want to thank the people that have come here today and those people that are listening and watching from their homes or for – from where – wherever.

I want to thank the Elders for coming and sharing their stories. And when we had an introduction to the timelines as Commissioners, we agreed that it was important to start this off to educate people. Not just people who are from – who are from not here, or not Innu people, but also our communities and the young people.

There's been a lot of stories that have been shared, and the stories that have been shared have triggered people. And I know that and I've heard that, and there'll be an opportunity for people to come forward and share their stories.

There's – as you can see – there has been a lot of strength and pride and resilience in those stories of what our Elders shared with us. And – and today's testimony from Aunt Elizabeth has really made me think, and I know it – it has made others think of what our future – what we want the future to look like for our children.

And – and I also appreciate the lawyers for the families for when the investigations happen, that they are here as well, because those same families come from those communities and they're walking those roads too and so I think about the families and the children.

And so I – yeah – again I appreciate everybody's attendance and people that are out there listening, and I want to thank everybody.

Thank you. (Inaudible.)

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE:

(Inaudible) to you as well, my good friend Anastasia.

Everybody here knows Anastasia, but they don't know myself and Mike that much.

P. RALPH: Wait for Gerry, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: The first – after the first morning, somebody was talking to Anastasia. Anastasia said: Do you know those two people up there in the front?

And the person said: I don't think so. I think they're just the old men who carry the coffee.

There are two people that we have not mentioned so far this week. Paula Battcock is our Commission Clerk. She makes sure that everything we say is recorded, that all of the exhibits are properly numbered and she makes sure that the Commission is running properly inside this building.

INTERPRETER GREGOIRE: [Mushuau-aimun spoken] – Paul –

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Paula.

INTERPRETER GREGOIRE: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Yes. And in the back, we have Ruth Steele. She makes sure that right from the time we leave St. John's to when we go back, all of the details about our travel, all the details about the food you see here, anything having to do with how the Commission runs is done by Ruth.

We call these two women (inaudible) – they're good girls. Their other name is the bingo girls. You will see them probably playing bingo sometime before we finish.

Both Michael and Anastasia have said what I would like to say about the way the first week have gone, so I don't need to add anything more.

Before I finish, I just want to say see you next week, but Mike has a final comment.

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: Yes, just one more thing to say.

I have the list of support workers, but the bearer of the list didn't include her name. And I certainly should have remembered it. And that is Brenda Reynolds who is our coordinator for the support – healing services.

Thank you.

P. RALPH: Yes, Commissioners, one last thing. We'd ask for Tshaukuesh to finish the week with a prayer and then we'll have Ms. Battcock close it down.

ELDER PENASHUE: Okay.

I just wanna say before I pray, thank you very much listen to me, everybody. Thank you so much.

[Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

P. RALPH: You can do it from there.

ELDER PENASHUE: [Sheshatshiu-aimun-spoken.]

CLERK (Battcock): This Commission of Inquiry is concluded for today.