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

English Transcript | Volume 40

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

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[redacted]

Recess

[Inquiry in progress at start of recording.]

P. RALPH: – and I met Shelton at the school last week through my sister, Valerie, who teaches there. And Shelton is a teaching assistant at the school.

So I think Commissioner Qupee is doing a private session so it will just be two Commissioners this afternoon or until she finishes that.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Shelton, on behalf of the Commission of the Inquiry Respecting the Treatment, Experiences and Outcomes of Innu in the Child Protection System, we'd like to welcome you.

S. TOMA: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: We're asking you to tell us what's on your mind or why would you like to address the Commissioners.

S. TOMA: Okay.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Your life, your experiences, your opinions: anything that you'd like to say to us we're happy to hear it.

S. TOMA: Okay.

I should start telling about how I felt for the past two months. I've been having weird dreams and after those months, I keep having anxiety attack. And, to me, I try to figure it out, understand how I'm feeling.

I think it's because I was alone for the whole eight years, I guess, without my mom and dad. I was with my mom and dad when I was 13. That's the last time I was with my mom, spending time with her, having fun.

And then my uncle-grandpa passed away, Johannes. I didn't want to let him leave but my mom says, it's time; he's done his work. And I try to focus myself to deal with it, I guess, to understand that he's leaving us. That's the time I didn't want worry about

anything. That's the time I let go, when my uncle-grandpa passed away.

And then after that, there is misunderstanding. Then that's when I started having grief, I guess. And I'm always trying to find something to do in life. I walk here – from the town to here. It took me 35 minutes. It was really enjoyful.

When I first went in care, I wasn't allowed to speak my language, I wasn't allowed to tell stories in my language but I didn't listen. They say no, don't speak Innu – they say don't speak Innu. And then I didn't want to listen. The only time I speak Innu is when I called my mother for 20 minutes, but that's the only time they allowed me to speak. But I didn't want to listen to them, I really like my language because it's really enjoyful to speak it.

[Inquiry ended for the day due to power outage.]