

[Inquiry in progress at start of recording.]

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: – to day three of this week’s formal hearing sessions.

Kevin is on the way down here, our interpreter. He’ll be here before too long, but we can begin with the interpreter for Sheshatshiu.

And we’ll begin our day with Elder Tshaukuesh Penashue saying a prayer for our use.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Ruth, can you turn down the –?

R. STEELE: Oh yes.

ELDER PENASHUE: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE:
Tshinashkumitin, Tshaukuesh.

We appreciate your attendance at the Inquiry, your care for the Innu people and your love for your people. Thank you for always supporting us.

P. RALPH: Yes, good morning, Commissioners.

The next witness is Lyla Andrew, and she will be testifying for the rest of the week.

Before I start asking her questions, I’m going to ask the Commissioners to qualify her as an expert. Counsel for the Innu Nation, Canada and the province have no objection to Ms. Andrew being qualified as an expert.

Commission counsel asks that the Commissioners qualify Ms. Lyla Andrew as an expert in social work practice, particularly in relation to the Innu of Sheshatshiu and Mushuau.

The opinions that Commission counsel has asked Ms. Andrew to provide address the following matters: General impact of colonial policies on the Innu; the impact of the loss of connection to Nutshimit on the Innu parents, families, children and communities; differences between parenting amongst Innu and non-Innu cultures; changes in child protection legislation and the impact that that has had on Innu parents, families, children and communities; the development of self-government in relation to child and family services and the role that plays in healing.

I again want to point out that their consent to the qualification of Ms. Andrew as an expert does not mean they’re agreeing with every opinion that Ms. Andrew provides. They may question her during cross-examination, or they may comment on some of the opinions she provides in closing submissions.

Do counsel for Canada, Innu Nation or the province have any comments about Ms. Andrew’s qualification as an expert?

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: The record will show that they’re not objecting at this stage; and also, with reference to the caveat that the counsel has made, for opportunity to cross-examine or comment.

Are you swearing in the witness or affirming?

P. RALPH: Oh, yes. I’m sorry, swear in – oh, affirm?

Okay.

CLERK (Battcock): Do you solemnly affirm that the evidence you shall give to this Inquiry shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

L. ANDREW: I will affirm.

CLERK: Please state your name for the record.

L. ANDREW: Lyla Andrew.

CLERK: Thank you.

P. RALPH: Ms. Andrew, I think we've had over – people participate in the Inquiry so far and I think you are the first non-Innu who's testifying.

L. ANDREW: Yes. And I have been thinking about that because my employer gave me the opportunity to attend all of the formal hearings that have happened so far. So I have listened to each of the Innu who have come before me to testify. And I feel that although the opinions that I'm going to give are mine and mine alone, I have been very influenced by both Sheshatshiu and Mushuau Innu over many decades, but also by the history, the very personal histories that I heard from the Innu who have given formal testimony.

P. RALPH: Right.

L. ANDREW: (Inaudible) Mary Pia Benuen who finished yesterday afternoon.

P. RALPH: Yes.

And I think many people listening or watching the Inquiry may not appreciate that there is considerable input from Innu Nation, IRT and in particular the Pathways committee in terms of the conduct of this Inquiry.

Sorry, we –

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

P. RALPH: So the decision to call certain witnesses is done in consultation with the Innu, I think, partly through Pathways. Are you in that committee?

L. ANDREW: Yes, I am.

P. RALPH: And there's consideration on that committee in terms of who they think the inquiry should hear from?

L. ANDREW: I think it's important to say just a little bit about the Pathways

committee, which is probably not known to most people.

It's a committee made up of the program leadership of both the Mushuau Innu and the Sheshatshiu Innu First Nations, and so it's an all-Innu committee, which is coming together to give guidance and direction to the development of an Innu child and family services agency, which will take over the full jurisdiction of Innu child and family services from the provincial government, hopefully, within the next few years. And so this group has been meeting monthly.

Another element of the group is to give guidance and direction to the development of an Innu law which will govern the delivery of Child, Youth and Family Services in the Innu community. So in the process of this group meeting and talking about all the interconnected elements of Innu children's well-being, I know I'm the oldest member of that group and I've been working in this field for the longest time, and much about what we] talk is there are many things that people don't like about the way child and family services have been and are being delivered.

P. RALPH: We better let Anne –

L. ANDREW: Yeah. Okay.

P. RALPH: Try and keep your train of thought there, now.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

L. ANDREW: I just would add that the work of the committee goes beyond identifying the elements of the formal child protection system that the Innu readily are able to say do not work for them –

P. RALPH: Yes.

L. ANDREW: – to trying to figure out what will be meaningful. What is meaningful about Innu ways of knowing, of being together, of supporting, of caring? It's exploring how did Innu raise healthy, competent children and how did Innu raise children in a good way to become

competent Innu adults before there was any child and family services? How did they do that? Because there's evidence that they did that for thousands of years.

P. RALPH: Ms. Andrew, I think it's important to recognize, of course, and you will do yourself, that you're not Innu, but you've identified by the Innu Nation as someone that can speak over a long period of time about a lot of issues that are essential to this Inquiry.

But I, just for a moment, would like you to talk about some of the Innu leaders, Elders, who aren't here today, who, if they were here, would have made an also big contribution to what the Inquiry is trying to accomplish. Can you do that?

L. ANDREW: I think what you're asking me speaks to the fact that it's a privilege for me to be here today, but attached to that privilege is a huge responsibility because many of the people that you are referring to as leaders and Elders, who aren't here today because they have died, were my teachers.

They were my teachers, and I hope that the things that I have learned from them, I have been able to use in the work that I've done. Some of those individuals have – okay, I'll stop there and then – my sentences tend to run on.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

L. ANDREW: Some of the names of these people have already come up in this hearing, and the thing about naming names is that if I forget someone, I will feel terrible. But I am going to be talking for a few days and I think names will come up over that time as well.

But yesterday, I know that I had, I would say, three very clear working mentors: Apenam Pone, Mary May Osmond and Rose Gregoire. And those three individuals had profound influence on my life because when I was working with them, I wasn't their boss, I wasn't their supervisor, I was a

community worker, and they were helping me to understand things that I didn't understand.

P. RALPH: I think what we're going to have to try and do – I think it works best, Ms. Andrew, if we do pretty small segments.

L. ANDREW: Mm-hmm.

P. RALPH: And I'll try. You know, I'm not great at this, but we'll try and keep our questions and answers short so that they can translate as we go.

L. ANDREW: Okay.

I think for my answer to make a bit more sense, I would like to go back to sort of the beginning.

P. RALPH: I was just about to go there.

L. ANDREW: Okay.

P. RALPH: Okay.

Yes, Ms. Andrew, we have a lot of ground to cover.

And the first part I'm going to ask you to cover is where you're from and what led you to come to Sheshatshiu. But, again, try and be as precise as possible about all of that.

Thank you.

L. ANDREW: In May of 1977, I came to Sheshatshiu to work for the then Band Council. The Chief was Bart Jack, the late Bart Jack Sr.

I grew up in Toronto. I did an honours degree in sociology at the University of Toronto. Then I spent a year travelling with a girlfriend around Europe, Britain, North Africa, and then I did a two-year master's degree of social work at the University of Toronto.

And during that spring, just before I graduated, a fellow student showed me a little ad in the *Globe and Mail*. And in those days, there would be jobs posted in the

Globe and Mail. Now some of those jobs would take up half a page, but this job was a tiny little advertisement for an organization called Frontier College that was looking for someone to come to Labrador to work in a small community. And I answered that ad.

Frontier College was an organization that operated on a model of labourer-teachers responding to communities – mostly remote communities in Northern Canada at that time – and they were looking for someone who was willing to come to this place. I think they may have called it North West River south side, although it was Sheshatshiu. The Band Council wanted someone who would be willing to work with local women to set up a daycare centre in the garage in the local school.

At that point I knew I didn't want to go into a typical – what I considered a typical social work position in the city. I was looking for something that was different, might be a bit of a challenge, an adventure and, to be honest with you, when they talked about this as an Indian community – and that is how it was talked about – I don't think I'd ever actually met an Indian. However, maybe the ignorance on my part was a good thing.

P. RALPH: Ms. Andrew, it's interesting to note that we heard reports during Ms. Mary Pia Benuen's evidence, and they were written in 1977, the same year that you arrived.

L. ANDREW: Mm-hmm.

P. RALPH: Can you remember what time of year you came? You arrived in?

L. ANDREW: Absolutely. It was in May.

P. RALPH: And –

L. ANDREW: It was in – sorry.

P. RALPH: And just describe that experience.

L. ANDREW: Before I left Toronto, Frontier College took a number of what they called,

labourer-teachers, field workers – myself included – to the Cape Croker Indian Reserve for an orientation to our work. And at that orientation, we were told you are going to communities, to places that you know absolutely nothing about and you're going with a specific job in mind, to work with people you don't know, and who in some instances may not speak English and you may not speak their language, and you need to keep this in mind. That was one of the things they told us.

We were mostly young people, mid-20s, late 20s. I think almost all of us were single individuals. And they told us: Don't enter into any intimate relationships in the community. Participate in community life, listen to people, observe people, but remember you're there to work for the community.

Because the request had come from the Band Council, I wanted to know a little bit about, well, what did the Band Council want? I mean, I didn't know anything about daycares, so I was put in touch with Lynne Gregory, who was living in Windsor, Ontario. And Lynne had just moved back to Windsor, Ontario with her partner, Apenam Pone, and they had left Sheshatshiu.

She'd been working as a Frontier College field worker here, doing English as a Second Language – holding classes in English for Innu adult students. And Frontier suggested I could reach out to her, maybe she could give me more information. So I did and we met halfway between Windsor and Toronto at a gas station, one of those Big Stop places.

And I met this woman. She was a mom. She had two small kids. She was in a relationship with an Innu man and she described a community where the people were wonderful. People were generous. They were open. They were caring.

And I think I might not have accepted the position if I had not heard from this woman who shared a lot of my, kind of, background. She was a middle-class white woman and

she described a people that made me feel like yeah, I can do that.

Now if I had read that report that was written in April 1977 about the community of Sheshatshiu, North West River south side, maybe I wouldn't have come. But I didn't read that report; I didn't know about its existence until yesterday. And Lynne made me feel that I would be okay.

P. RALPH: So, Ms. Andrew, it's striking, the sort of different reports: the report that we heard yesterday from 1977 and the report that you heard from Lynne Gregory about this community. Can you reconcile those two perspectives on the community?

L. ANDREW: I think I can.

Sorry –

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER PASTIWET: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

L. ANDREW: Reconcile.

P. RALPH: Reconcile. How do you –

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

INTERPRETER PASTIWET: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

P. RALPH: Can you – and how do you have these two pictures when you hold these two pictures at the same time of this community.

L. ANDREW: I think I have to tell a few more stories before I can explain how those things fit; how I would understand those things as being seemingly the exact opposite.

Can I keep –?

P. RALPH: Okay, so now let them interpret that.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER PASTIWET: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

L. ANDREW: The day that I arrived in Sheshatshiu, in May of '77, the airline then was Eastern Provincial Airways, and we flew direct from Montreal to Goose Bay. It was a very large plane. And on that flight was a woman who worked with the IGA in North West River – she lived in North West River – and she had some dealings with the Indian alcohol program. She was an occupational therapist by training, and she was doing some craftwork with – trying to start up some craftwork; and actually, that was referred to in the report yesterday.

And she was on the flight, and she had a little car when we got to Goose Bay and she approached a woman when we arrived in Goose Bay, and I can't say that I really noticed this woman. She was dark-skinned and had long black hair. I didn't know her, and I don't remember being introduced to her.

We got in the Volkswagen bug, that was the vehicle, and we took the journey to North West River, to the cable car. The road wasn't paved then, and it was quite a journey, and I don't remember much of the conversation. It was at night, and I think I was – anyway that's ...

And –

P. RALPH: Stop right there.

L. ANDREW: Okay.

INTERPRETER PASTIWET: Commissioners, we kind ask that – it's too long for me to interpret what Lyla is saying. I can't catch everything.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: So shorter –

INTERPRETER PASTIWET: Yes, please.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: – yeah. We'll do the work on that.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER PASTIWET: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Okay, let's try and use a length of sentence that the interpreters can comfortably work with.

P. RALPH: Ms. Andrew, if you could watch me too and I will put my finger up when you need to stop.

L. ANDREW: I want to apologize to Kevin and Anne because they have skills I don't have. Much to my shame, I have never learned to be able to speak in Innu-aimun. I only think in English and I acknowledge they have skills I do not have.

When we arrived at the end of the road that night, the woman that I didn't know got out of the vehicle and went somewhere and the woman that I was with and I got on the cable car and went across the river and went to her home, where I was given a bed and a place to stay.

However, I was curious about who this other woman was, because I was aware that she went somewhere into North West River south side, and so I asked the next day, the woman who drove me to North West River and whose house I was staying in. And she told me this was an Indian woman who had broken windows at Sister Coffey's house and was returning from the Kingston Penitentiary for Women.

I didn't know what people who grew up here knew about Kingston Penitentiary, but I knew that this was the home of the most notorious murderers in Canada, and here was this woman who broke windows. And that was probably the first and most jarring example of hearing something that made no sense. I could not figure how could this be.

When I went to work – because work started in May, the school was still in session – I met my coworkers. They were three more Indian women and their names

were Louisa Penashue, Mary Jane Nuna, and Juliana Antuan. And Juliana was married to Penote Antuan, whom everyone has met. He was the vice-principal at the school at that point in time.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Okay, that's good.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER PASTIWET: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

L. ANDREW: Louisa was a single mom, and I found out that that was very unusual for a woman to have a child and not be in a marriage. And both Juliana and Mary Jane had several children and were married. And Penote and Juliana became like my parents. Obviously, there are lots of stories there, because I'm the same age as Juliana. Juliana sadly passed away.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE:
(Inaudible.)

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

L. ANDREW: So I got to observe –

P. RALPH: Sorry.

L. ANDREW: Oh, I'm – again.

Sorry, Kevin.

INTERPRETER PASTIWET: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

L. ANDREW: We should talk a little bit about the work before I talk about the Antuans becoming like my parents.

P. RALPH: Yes, I want to get back to the question, which was reconciling the sort of, reports that you heard yesterday.

L. ANDREW: Well, there were two questions that I haven't answered. One was about all the leaders and their work –

P. RALPH: Okay.

L. ANDREW: – and then there is that question.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Okay. Hold on to that thought. This is a good time for a 10-minute break.

Thank you.

Recess

P. RALPH: I guess we're ready to start again.

Do you remember where you were, Lyla?

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Thank you.

Ladies and gentlemen, we're starting again now.

P. RALPH: Ms. Andrew, can you recall where we left off?

L. ANDREW: I think I was going to talk a little bit about the work that I came here to do, because –

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

P. RALPH: Yes. Okay.

L. ANDREW: I think it's important for people to understand that when I walked into Peenamin McKenzie School, into the garage to meet with the three women – Mary Jane, Louisa, and Manishuni – that I was going to work with, other than being women of a similar age, we had almost nothing in common.

I think the idea for a daycare centre had actually come up through the work the time that Lynne Gregory had spent in the community. She and Apenam moved away for about 10 years, but when she had been here she did have two small children and child care, I think, was an issue, particularly, because there were so many Innu women working in the school.

I don't have the actual data in front of me, I suppose somebody could find it, but I think the school was probably the major employer of Innu people.

It's almost like, I wish I could take people back, sort of in a time capsule, so that they could see how different it was in '77.

The Band Council – I don't even remember a Band Council office in '77 and it might have had three or four employees. I remember there was a dog catcher. That I do remember. The NMIA worked out of a trailer and it had a handful of employees.

The store – there was a government rural and northern development store down by the beach. And I don't know if it even had Innu employees. It might have had a clerk, maybe, who was an Innu employee, but the majority of wage earners would have been – and we're not talking about dozens and dozens of people, but there probably at one point were upwards of 15 to 20 Innu women working in Peenamin McKenzie School.

Physically, the community was so different. It was so small compared to today. There were these small houses and they were in this part of the community. Like, when I say this part, I mean up the top of the hill here but not further on, the way the community is now.

The school was up here in the area where that big building is being torn down right now, that you see as you drive in here. The school was in that area and teachers occupied a few houses along the top road here. And, as Mary Pia said yesterday, the teacher housing had running water and sewerage.

The priest's house was at the bottom of the hill, down beside the church. It had running water and sewerage and where the school principal, Sister Coffey, lived was – the house is still there; it's across from the graveyard. And it had running water and sewerage.

But the houses right next to that, you know, the few other houses along the top road

here and the middle – none of them – the Innu homes had no running water or sewerage. And there were lots of tents put up around the community.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE:
(Inaudible.)

L. ANDREW: Sorry.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: No, no it's okay.

L. ANDREW: Ah, yes.

Almost no Innu had vehicles. You rarely saw a car or a truck unless it was a teacher had a vehicle. Sister Coffey had a – well, it was the way the cars were then, those great big, huge cars. They were long and wide. And the priest had a vehicle. But almost no Innu had vehicles.

You would see people outside all the time. People were walking because that was the only way to get around. Trips to Goose Bay were very rare. There was a settler family that lived here – they still live here, some of that family – and they would run like, a van, a taxi.

Other than the teachers and the priest, I think a family that was an Inuit family, actually, that was involved with the rural and northern development store and whatever other services that department was offering – and I don't know what they were – there were almost no non-Innu really came into the village on a day-to-day basis.

I don't remember ever seeing police in the village in those early years. I'm sure they could drive down from Goose Bay, but I don't remember seeing police cars. There was no police presence here. There were no services here, as Mary Pia said yesterday, and as what is that report. There was no clinic. There was this little government store.

But if you really wanted any service – the post office, the Hudson's Bay store, the hospital, the clinic – they were all across the river. You had to get on the cable car.

I am trying not to, sort of, romanticize what I remember about the community at that time. Yes, there was garbage around. Yes, there was probably sewage out behind most homes. However, in spite of these negative things or things that were ugly and messy that I could see, I also saw so many healthy-looking people, in particular children.

But adults outside, as I said, walking around, children playing. And I saw, you know, women that were my age and I thought they were beautiful looking, with lovely skin and beautiful long hair. And the men seemed healthy and strong, and that certainly was in contrast to this visual picture of, you know, garbage.

So in those very first early months of spring and the daycare was open, I was learning from Louisa and Juliana and Mary Jane what you do with little kids. I didn't have experience in that regard. I had this social work degree, but I really had never looked after or had anything to do with small children.

And they showed me you play with them, and you let them play and you give them experiences, you take them outdoors. And we were fortunate, it was the spring. And then even in the summer you would be outside. You'd let the kids play. If you wanted them to calm down and be quiet, they sewed a tent and put it up in the corner of the garage and put some pillows inside.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE:
(Inaudible.)

L. ANDREW: Sorry, yeah.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: It's okay.

L. ANDREW: It seemed to me even then that they had this knowledge of how to be around children, Innu children. They were speaking to the children in Innu-aimun. The activities were mostly outdoor activities, physical activities. I'm sure at some point we had a sand pit in the daycare – lots of sand here.

I don't think at that point I was thinking a lot about where does their knowledge come from, you know, what is it connected to. I don't think I was thinking about understanding that. I think I was just very caught up in, oh, this is really different from my experience, my understanding.

I think some of the important differences that I was noting were that kids played really freely. There was minimal supervision, but there was also not a lot of instruction, like formal instruction. And I didn't see any discipline at all. I never saw Innu – I just didn't see people disciplining children, Innu people.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER PASTIWET: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

L. ANDREW: I can't remember what I said a minute ago. It's been said three times now.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: The discipline.

P. RALPH: The discipline. The difference between the –

L. ANDREW: And contrast to discipline, there seemed to be so much laughter and I realized that I would even watch adults kind of laugh when children would fall down. They would laugh when adults would fall down. But laughter seemed to be the way to kind of deal with things that in my experience a parent would scoop up a child – oh poor little, you know – and try to comfort that child. And I watched children be laughed at and then things would move on. Like, I'd see that.

At that time, I don't think I really understood very much about the importance of laughter and humour and how it was helpful, as opposed to, if people were going to laugh at me, that was something that I saw as about embarrassment. And I didn't really want people laughing at me. And it made me feel self-conscious.

Because the daycare was right there in the school, there was lots of opportunity, over time, for me to observe what was going on in the school. And I felt like the relationships that I was starting to have with the Innu women with whom I was working, contrasted greatly with the relationships that I would see in the school, which was obviously a much bigger – there were far more children.

But the school ran, it seemed like, a very tight ship. This alarm bell used to go off all the time and I guess it was to signify the end of classes. It felt like the school was very regimented. Sort of like, there were lots of rules and the rules were maintained and kept in place by the non-Innu teachers.

Primarily they were white people, and I didn't necessarily see that as a bad thing 'cause, I guess, it was more like my own experience going to school. Like it was pretty – but there's a but, okay.

I said I didn't necessarily see this as a bad thing that the school was very regimented; however, it felt like the kids, these Innu kids, were in school all day. And there was a significant number of Innu women that were working in the school, but it felt like many of the Innu working in the school were there to serve the white teachers.

As the report said yesterday, there was no Innu representation on the Roman Catholic school board. There was no parent-teacher connection; kids went to school and then they weren't in school.

P. RALPH: Ms. Andrew, can I just ask a question?

That thought you're expressing right now, that there was sort of an alien culture and ideas – culturally alien – being imposed in the schools, did that idea occur to you then or is that something that you've realized over the last, almost, 40 years?

L. ANDREW: I won't say that it occurred to me – oh, sorry!

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER PASTIWET: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

L. ANDREW: I think I figured that out fairly quickly. Not in the first month and a half, but fairly quickly.

Both my parents and one of my older brothers and sister-in-law were teachers and I had grown up understanding that the school and what was being taught in school and who was teaching in school – those people, that information – reflected me and my family. In spite of the fact that I was starting to think about that because something wasn't right, I think for the most part I just went about my business in the way that Frontier College had suggested that we do as their representatives.

And so when I wasn't working, I was making some connections, as I said, with Juliana and Penote Antuan, because I had been working with Juliana, and Penote was in the school too.

P. RALPH: I just wanted to raise the question – and maybe it isn't an appropriate time to answer this; maybe later – but in terms of the impact that that has on, you know, that sort of imposition of a different culture and a different way of educating, well, I mean, I guess you saw that impact happening over those years.

L. ANDREW: Mm-hmm.

P. RALPH: I don't know if it's a good time now or do you want to raise that later?

L. ANDREW: The short answer – there is a short answer but it's like two parts – is that I was very aware there was something going on, but I wasn't able to name it. And when I think about that, it's – like I didn't think colonialism. I didn't think that. And yet in my social work degree and books that I brought with me when I came here, I had been exposed to Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, Paulo Freire talking about banking education.

This is where the importance of lived experiences comes in, because at that time I didn't have enough lived experience here to be able to understand the impacts, what those concepts were – say, the idea of colonialism. But I know a few years later, when my spouse read *The Wretched of the Earth*, he said: Well, of course. That makes sense.

I think it's important that I explain a little bit about how I ended up moving from North West River to living in Sheshatshiu.

P. RALPH: Yeah.

L. ANDREW: And I'm cognizant of the time.

P. RALPH: I think right now is good time to break for lunch, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Yes, thank you.

We agree; it is a good time to break for lunch. Your memory and your experiences are very fascinating to us, so we have to continue this question.

1:30 p.m., please.

Recess

P. RALPH: Commissioners, are we ready to continue?

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Thank you very much.

Welcome back. We're going to begin our afternoon session.

Thank you very much for coming back in.

P. RALPH: Can you recall where we left off, Ms. Andrew?

L. ANDREW: I think so.

P. RALPH: Okay.

L. ANDREW: It's one of the nice things about not having to respond to a direct question.

P. RALPH: Let them interpret that now.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Yeah, Ben was teaching about colonialism.

INTERPRETER PASTIWET: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

L. ANDREW: Okay.

Very early on, within the first couple of months of coming to North West River south side, I realized that I could work here in the day and even when work was over, I wanted to spend time here because I wanted to get to know people. But it was not easy for a single white woman to figure out: Where do you go to get to know Innu people?

I'd been asked to come here to work with the people that lived here. So when I wasn't working, it was clear that I really didn't fit in anywhere. I didn't fit with the teachers who were the other non-Innu people that were living here, and I didn't really fit in with the people whose house I was sharing across the river.

In North West River, I was sharing a small house in what was called Eskimo village. And it was just a dirt road off the main North West River Road but, I think it was called Eskimo village because there was an Inuit family who lived next door and that housing was rundown and the house we were in was also fairly rundown. I mean, it didn't compare with a lot of the other homes in North West River.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

L. ANDREW: There were –

P. RALPH: Hold on.

L. ANDREW: Sorry.

INTERPRETER PASTIWET: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

L. ANDREW: The three women I lived with were employees of the International Grenfell Association. One worked in the children's home, which I knew nothing about, didn't visit, had nothing to do with. And the other two women were also medical professionals who worked out of the hospital.

They were building relationships with people in the community of North West River, so the socializing that they were doing was almost entirely in the community of North West River. And there was something about that, because I was working here, there was a bit of a – I guess I would just simply say it didn't feel quite right. I wanted to have more relationships with people in Sheshatshiu.

Because I'd made a commitment to stay here for a couple of years, I wanted to try and find a place to live, which just made more sense with the work that I was trying to do. And so I can't exactly remember, but I must have said something to Juliana and Penote Antuan about the fact that I would like to live here on the south side. And I don't really know what they thought about that because other than teachers, I don't think there were any other non-Innu women living on their own here in the community.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

L. ANDREW: And so this is where – oops.

INTERPRETER PASTIWET: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

L. ANDREW: This is where some of the Innu who I think stand tall in the history as Innu helpers, started to have direct influence on some of the decisions I was making and some of the work I was doing. And the first one of those was Rose Gregoire because I believe that Penote and Juliana spoke to Rose to see if Rose could use her influence to get me a place to live here in Sheshatshiu. And Rose was a very assertive young woman, competent. So I'm sure they spoke to her.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

P. RALPH: Kevin, the microphone's not on.

INTERPRETER PASTIWET: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

L. ANDREW: Juliana's sister, Philomena Penashue, was married to Antuan Penashue who, as we saw yesterday, was in the leadership of the Naskapi Montagnais Innu Association, and, at that point in time, in the spring/summer of 1997–

P. RALPH: 1977?

L. ANDREW: 1977. Just off by a little there.

Philomena and Antuan were living in the priest's house because he was in Nutshimit with, I believe, the Penashue family. So Rose was the one who told me that she had arranged for me to live with Philomena and Antuan Penashue in the priest's house, which was right across the road from the then building that was an old warehouse, small warehouse, which was the Indian alcohol program, which is where Rose, I think, was working at the time.

And I believe that the reason Rose told me that was because Juliana and Penote probably weren't sure how this arrangement would work out. So I suspect that they saw Rose as someone with a lot of confidence and she asked and they said yes, and it was probably easier for her to ask, maybe, than them. I don't know.

Antuan and Philomena had several young children at that point in time and the arrangement we had was room and board. So I would pay them so much money every couple of weeks and they would purchase groceries. And I shared a bedroom – small room. This was a small house but it did have running water and I suppose it had heat. But it did have running water and their two little girls were in one cot and I was in the other cot.

So there was probably three feet between the cots, and I lived there for several months. And the learnings that I had while living with that family – again, I didn't know

at the time, but for me I think, they were profound learnings.

I remember that when money came into their household, whether it was from me paying for my room and board or Antuan had some income from his job, I don't know where they would go shopping, it might've been the Hudson Bay Store, but they would come back and fill the cupboards with groceries and treats. There'd be ice cream. Food would be overflowing it seemed like.

And although I didn't necessarily see everything that was going on, I realized that over the course of a week or two at the most, people would come to the house with some regularity asking for sugar and tea bags and bits of groceries. And I don't ever remember anybody being told: Go away.

Now, admittedly, all the conversation in the household was in Innu-aimun and some of these people I didn't even know who they were, but they were clearly coming and asking for food and being given food. And so at the end, sometimes of a week or so, we wouldn't have very much food.

Then it became obvious that as we started to run out of, especially, the basics – tea bags, sugar, et cetera – that the kids, Antuan and Philomena's little ones, were sent off to somebody else's place and they would come back with sugar or tea bags. I don't think they were coming back with ice cream and like, all that stuff, but they were coming back with the basics so that we had food.

P. RALPH: Ms. Andrew, can you remember being hungry during that period of time?

L. ANDREW: I think, what I remember –

P. RALPH: Let them translate.

L. ANDREW: Oh, sorry.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER PASTIWET: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

L. ANDREW: I don't remember ever getting to the point where I thought I was going to starve or be malnourished. But I had never experienced being a part of a family or living in a family where there wasn't always something in the fridge, food in the cupboards. And I'd never seen anyone come to our house where I lived and I grew up, to borrow food or ask for anything. That was just so far outside my experience that that's what really struck me: What's going on here?

P. RALPH: Ms. Andrew, so you indicated that there were some people that were working and I guess there is a large number that weren't working.

L. ANDREW: The majority of people in the community were not employed.

P. RALPH: Any sense of where their source of income, if any, would have come from?

L. ANDREW: The people that were not employed?

P. RALPH: Yes. Let them interpret.

L. ANDREW: Okay.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER PASTIWET: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

L. ANDREW: There's sort of a roundabout answer to this, I'm sorry.

One night I was babysitting in the house and someone came to the door. I could see this person and I looked through the window. It was dark. I think there was a light and all I could see was blood on someone's shoulder. And my first thought was, oh my God, somebody's been shot and they're at the door.

I then realized it was Mrs. Mary Adele, Sylvester Andrew's wife. She was a small woman, an older woman and she had a great big caribou leg and the – what's that – the hip on her shoulder. It wasn't in any

wrapping. It was just right there laid on her shoulder, the leg going down her arm. She was bringing it to give to the family.

I don't know how non-Innu would value that leg of caribou. As far as I know, it was a gift. And subsequently, I would learn that caribou meat would be shared; it would not be bought. But I think it probably even then would have been hundreds of dollars worth of meat.

A very large caribou leg would be really nutritious protein and could be cooked and used in any number of ways. So there was huge value on that. I even had some understanding of that. But I think it was one way that people who didn't necessarily have income or steady income – maybe people were on welfare, I never saw anyone who was a welfare officer.

Up until 1979 when I started to write welfare cheques for Social Services, I have no idea where welfare came from. I don't know if somebody came to the community, if people went to the store to get – I have no idea. But I saw this sharing process so that when our family had a lot to eat, they would readily share it, and when we didn't have so much, somebody else readily shared what they had.

We didn't spend a whole lot of time in the house. It was a very small house. I don't remember there being any television. I don't remember the kids having toys or books. But I do remember when people were outside it seemed like – and children – that there were always activities going on.

Kids were always playing. They were playing in the sand. The priest's house was not very far from the water and there was a dock there at the time. And kids were everywhere outside. They were very imaginative. They didn't have bikes or toy trucks. I don't remember that. I remember kids playing with sticks and blocks and being imaginative.

P. RALPH: Ms. Andrew, so there was, I guess, there was no one sort of, issuing

cheques. Was there a presence in terms of child welfare, in the community?

L. ANDREW: Not that I – oops.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER PASTIWET: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

L. ANDREW: I was not aware of any child welfare presence at all in the community, and I honestly don't know how people received welfare. Whether there were arrangements made; maybe people would go to the government store or the Hudson Bay and they would draw down on – I don't remember seeing people with a lot of cash, to be perfectly honest with you. Nobody had vehicles at the time. I honestly don't remember.

Subsequently, I learned that there had been children adopted, that there had been children removed from the community. And in my own mind at the time, the only way that I could explain any kind of those sorts of things happening was that between the hospital people and the priest and the school people, they must have worked with some sort of authority, because I know that in 1979 there was a Social Services office in Goose Bay.

P. RALPH: Ms. Andrew, so you were at that time –

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE:
(Inaudible.)

L. ANDREW: Yeah.

P. RALPH: Okay, do you want to take a break?

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE:
(Inaudible.)

Keep going.

P. RALPH: So at that point, in 1977-78, before you actually became a welfare officer

yourself, were you aware of children who'd been taken out of the community?

L. ANDREW: Not only was I not aware of any children that might have been taken out of the community, I was very unaware even of people's earlier experiences before I ever came to the community. I became really good friends with Penote and Juliana, but I didn't know in those early years about Penote's early experiences being sent to Mount Cashel.

There wasn't any process for a non-Innu person who was not a part of sort of the school establishment to really be socializing with Innu people. You think of, how do you meet people in a social setting. In these days – well, you can't even talk about these days – but even then, there might be groups that would get together in non-Innu communities. So maybe a women's sewing group or a restaurant where you could go for a meal or a movie theatre.

There wasn't anything like that. Life was very confined, as far as I knew, to families being with families doing activities outdoors, maintaining their lives.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: You can go on to the next part.

L. ANDREW: I knew that there was drinking going on in the community of Sheshatshiu and that that would be an activity that might be taking place outdoors by people's homes when the weather was nice. Obviously, if it was taking place in people's homes, I wasn't going into people's homes to see when there was drinking going on. But I knew that the misuse of alcohol or homebrew was something that was happening. I was aware of that.

Sometimes I would see people passed out outside. That was just something that was – also I was observing.

P. RALPH: Ms. Andrew, I just wonder, at that point when you first began living here in those first couple of years, how much time were families spending in Nutshimit?

L. ANDREW: There was a large dock that I referred to, down at the bottom of the hill just down below the church. And I remember that first fall, float planes flying into that dock. And people, various families – I didn't necessarily know who everybody was – were getting on that float plane, and they were going into the country.

And I didn't necessarily, again, know what all that was. I knew there was a program called Kakuspinanut which was a Band Council program to try and support people to go into the country. I knew that, but that was the most obvious way.

If people went some other way – but I also know other travel routes, like going up Grand Lake. The Churchill Falls power project I was told ended that. It ended people being able to canoe further in to the interior. So they were flying families in.

I was spending most of my time with other people in the community who were working for wage employment, and certainly, that was the case with Penote and Juliana. And I started to go down to the Indian alcohol program because I knew there were Innu adults there who were trying to provide a community service, and I felt like that's where I could start to get to know people.

So I guess the point of saying that is that if the people that I was spending time with, who were working in the community, I don't see how they would have been able to go into Nutshimit because I don't know how they would've had money for food or anything if they just left their employment. There were so few people employed that if you were to leave your job, someone would want your job. Someone would take your job. So I think it was very difficult for people, once they started to have wage employment, to leave their work.

P. RALPH: I'm just going to (inaudible).

INTERPRETER PASTIWET:

Commissioner, I have to be excused for the rest of the day 'cause I have to deal with things with my kids that are in care.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: We really appreciate you being here and the effort you made. We appreciate your work; of course we will excuse you.

And now is a good time I think, to take a break for about 10 minutes.

Thank you very much.

Recess

[Inquiry in progress at start of recording.]

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: – about 45 minutes maybe, have another break and then go until after 4:30, quarter to 5. That good with you, Sir?

P. RALPH: Yes.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Okay. Let's try that.

P. RALPH: Ms. Andrew, do you remember what you were addressing before the break?

L. ANDREW: I think you started asking about people going to – oh shoot.

P. RALPH: You've turned it on again, sorry.

L. ANDREW: Sorry.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

L. ANDREW: I guess what I would say is, I did not understand the importance of Innu people going into the country, at that time. I was just aware that people were leaving on these float planes and going somewhere away from the village.

However, the people that I was spending most of my time with, whether those were Penote and Juliana, as I was getting to know some of the people down at the alcohol program, I became friends with the late Charlie Andrew and I listened yesterday to Mary Pia. She was a young teenager and Charlie was my age and she was – and I was thinking about the fact that when

Charlie made a decision to stop drinking and to begin work in the alcohol program, he couldn't live in Sheshatshiu.

And I'm saying that because I feel like his decision was one that, at the time, there must have been a huge personal cost for him, because I'm aware that he was probably at that time the lone person of his generation who wasn't drinking abusively. And that involved his siblings, most of whom were younger, but they were young adults. And I believe he lived, as Mary Pia said, in the hospital because the young people in North West River were also misusing alcohol. That was the after-hours pastime.

P. RALPH: Ms. Andrew, so at that time when you first arrive here, what was your sense the active alcohol was having on families in the community?

L. ANDREW: My understanding of the impact of alcohol misuse didn't come until a bit later because I was still not involved enough with enough people to really have a sense of what the impact was.

I knew that in North West River, you know, young people my age would go up to their cabins. They'd get in boats and they'd go to their cabins, and they'd drink all weekend and then they'd come home. And that was considered socializing. I knew here, I don't think I've ever heard of anybody who was Innu drinking alone, trying to hide their drinking.

Ironically, as a master's social work student, one of my field placements was in Toronto at the Addiction Research Foundation. And the individuals that came to that highly regarded centre for help with their alcohol misuse were almost entirely non-Innu people. They were akaneshau, white people. They were doctors. They were lawyers. They were people who hid, for the most part, the fact that they were misusing alcohol, until it got out of hand and impacted, probably, their work.

And what I saw here was that most of the people that were drinking – all of the people that were drinking, any people that were

drinking, practically everybody – had nothing because, again, there were very few people that were employed.

So people didn't have much to lose. And they didn't seem to ever want to be alone when they were drinking. They wanted to be with other people. They would invite people to come drinking with them. People would drink on the beach or down in the woods further down in the beach, or outside homes, or inside homes.

I just knew it was a behaviour that seemed to be out of proportion to what I had come to understand the impact of alcohol abuse was when I was training as a social worker. I'd never been exposed to the idea that an entire community of people could be struggling with substance misuse.

P. RALPH: I don't want to get ahead of you here, but was alcohol part of life in Nutshimit?

L. ANDREW: My experience since 1983, which is the first time I spent 2½ months in the country, I've never seen alcohol being used, misused in Nutshimit – never. And I believe Mary Pia said the same thing. And I don't know how you would manage if you were drinking in the country. Everything relies on everybody doing something to keep the group going.

It's also true, and I need to say it, that even though I know alcohol wasn't being used in the country, I didn't understand why alcohol wasn't being used and misused in Nutshimit. I guess it goes back to I didn't know how much I didn't know. I needed more experience to be in Nutshimit to understand: Why are the people who are in this camp, who I have seen passed out on the road, who I know have not looked after their kids – they couldn't be looking after their kids.

It wasn't that I was taking their kids into care, but I knew kids were, obviously, probably, being neglected. How is it that they could be in Nutshimit and not be misusing alcohol, because my training had said that alcohol misuse was in the person

and it went where they went. You know, you could move from Toronto to Montreal, but if you were an alcoholic it was going with you. That wasn't true for Innu.

I think most people as they live through the decades and through experiences, they learn things that they didn't know at a younger point. And when it comes to the place of alcohol misuse, I think I didn't realize how it was connected to some of the things that I've already spoken very briefly about, but that there were connections.

I didn't see how people not going to Nutshimit was connected necessarily to the amount of drinking that was going on. I didn't see how – the way, necessarily, that people were being treated by non-Innu people in their day-to-day lives, how that was impacting people.

P. RALPH: So it seems to me what you're describing is that alcohol plays a different role in the life of an Innu than it perhaps does for a white person living in Toronto, because of the experience they've had moving into the community and, I guess, that loss of control over many aspects of their life.

L. ANDREW: I think most of us, as non-Innu people who have had reasonably stable upbringings in reasonably stable communities, have absolutely almost no experience with what it must be like to live in a place where nobody has control. Where everything is out of control. And I certainly wasn't aware of how much was out of control of Innu in my early years here, but there's so many examples of that and I gave a couple this morning and –

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: I'm not going to try and presuppose what counsel may have in response to this line of questioning, but do you think it's observation or expert opinion we're getting into now?

That's too deep.

P. RALPH: Yeah. No, I appreciate that, and I'm not sure if I have a ready answer for you.

I think I'd like to give that some thought but, perhaps – I mean, Ms. Andrew is raising her hand here.

L. ANDREW: I'm very aware that I'm a non-Innu person trying to talk about the experiences of non-Innu people. And I think the main point that I would want to make – and it's about what I now know that I didn't know then – was how so many elements of life are interconnected. So the place of alcohol in the lives of the Innu is connected to everything else that the Innu have experienced.

P. RALPH: Commissioner, I think that it deals with opinions that she's been qualified as an expert. I think that it's fair to say that social work practice deals in part with an understanding of how human beings work and some psychology, and also the impact of trauma in terms of substance abuse and other issues.

Anne, do you want to –

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

P. RALPH: The –

L. ANDREW: I also would make the comment that there are many different paths that the Innu have explored – starting with Charlie – to try and address the impact that misuse of alcohol has had on children's lives, families' lives; on the collective of Innu as a whole.

P. RALPH: Yes.

L. ANDREW: And I have seen many Innu who have undertaken maybe what might be called more traditional paths to find their own way to address how alcohol was impacting their lives.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Let me just try and shorten this point. I'm only

raising it, because, as a Commissioner of course, I can't act as counsel.

I'm simply saying that it may come up by counsel for Canada or Newfoundland and Labrador, as time goes by and I just raise it for that point. It has nothing to do with believability or credibility or anything like that.

P. RALPH: Yeah, and the last point I would make, Commissioners, again, this is something we can talk about during closing submissions, but I think it's important to consider that expertise not only comes from training and education, but also from experience.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Thank you very much.

L. ANDREW: The last thing, because I know that at some point, probably, with other witnesses – certainly when Mary Pia talks about the Healing Strategy when she's called again, or if Helen Aster comes back – I would say I have seen many people in this community and among the Mushuau Innu, stop drinking and address the impacts of what the drinking was doing to make their lives so unhappy without the more formal processes.

And when I've seen that in people where I feel the loss for them was so profound and yet they manage to set alcohol aside, it just didn't have a place in their life anymore because other people – and they had an understanding that there was a better way for them to live and it was without alcohol.

I think it's important to share some detail about some of the other elements that I think were at play, even in those early years, that I didn't understand and that we would call racism. One day – you had to go on the cable car to get across the river or by boat – I went across the cable car and there could be several people on the cable car, but this time, I was by myself. And the drivers for the cable car were all from across the river. As far as I remember it wasn't a job that anybody in Sheshatshiu had.

There were some occasions when the cable car would actually, sort of, break down going across the river and they would fix it and you'd keep on going. But on this occasion, I just remember it was sort of a normal trip, which didn't take all that long. But I remember the cable car driver, who was one of the young men from North West River, probably my age, just saying: You're an Indian lover.

And I was thinking about that yesterday when Mary Pia was talking and at that point in time that was almost confusing to me because it was like, well are you insulting me? Are you trying to insult me? Are you trying to say something that you think is going to hurt me? It didn't. It was more confusing than anything else.

This person didn't know me at all, but obviously, he was aware that I was living in Sheshatshiu and coming across the river for mail or to go to the Hudson Bay Store or an appointment at the hospital, for example. But it was kind of like – I remember feeling as if I had somehow – he was pointing out my betrayal: You're an Indian lover.

And I think that was one of the first times that I began to really think about us and them. And then, in that instance, was the Indians, and I was associating with the Indians; hence, I was an Indian lover and that was looked down upon. Now I know this was only one individual but yesterday, with some of the comments that were made in that very brief report in 1977, I can understand how maybe that's kind of subtle.

On the one hand that's kind of subtle; it's one person saying that to me whether that would have been denied if I had said something to anybody. But you know, it made me think, how often were Innu insulted? How often were Innu told disparaging things?

P. RALPH: This young man didn't say this, but you interpreted what he was saying: that you were betraying your own race, in a sense.

L. ANDREW: I don't know what else he was trying to say other than: What's wrong with you? You shouldn't be, you know, spending all your time with the Innu and living there. Because nobody else was unless they were teachers.

At that time there were a number of, for the most part, Newfoundland men in marriages, in partnerships with Innu women. And I think most of those men had come to Labrador probably to work for the Labrador Linerboard, which was a forestry operation. Some of them, I know, came at the age of say 14, 15. They were seeking employment and they were in relationships with Innu women.

But with the exception of one non-Innu woman from North West River – she was a teenager at the time in a relationship, boyfriend was an Innu man – there were no other non-Innu women living in Sheshatshiu just sort of independently, I guess you could say.

So I'll never know if he would have said that to any of the non-Innu men. They would have had to get on the same cable car and go across the river, et cetera, et cetera. I guess my point is that I think I wasn't wounded by that because I was secure in my own identity as a competent woman.

But when I think about that kind of a remark being said to an Innu person – you know, “dirty Indian” – I feel like it's coming from the same place. I feel like it's coming from that place where you're lesser. You, the Indians, are lesser than us, the white people. And I can only imagine how damaging that is to the developing identity of a child to be hearing messages that they're dirty and that they are not as good as. And so those things were running through my mind when I was listening to Mary Pia talk about her lived experiences yesterday.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Okay.

You can clue that one up please, Anne, and then we promised you a break. So finish that last sentence.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Thank you.

Ten minutes, Commission time.

Recess

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: So, Mr. Ralph, if you can give counsel an idea of what's happening in the next two days so that people, if they need to, can decide what they're doing for travel and everything else.

P. RALPH: Yes.

So the plan originally was for me to finish my examination of Ms. Andrew tomorrow. I was planning to get Ms. Andrew to review a lot of documents created as far back as 1990, and documents up to the present.

I think based on the schedule right now, I'm unlikely to finish with Ms. Andrew by tomorrow afternoon and, perhaps, not even by Friday. A lot of the issues that she will address in terms of developments in child and family services in the last 12, 14 years, perhaps, can be addressed at another time.

So I'm going to evaluate that and perhaps speak to yourselves tonight and see. Maybe I'll try and finish my examination of Ms. Andrew tomorrow but address a much narrower subject matter than I had first intended. And maybe I'll take it as far as when she went to work with CSSD in 2004 and stop there, perhaps.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Thank you very much.

P. RALPH: Ms. Andrew, I think we spoke at the break, and you thought perhaps it was a good time to talk about meeting Ben Andrew and where that took you?

L. ANDREW: Yeah, I think that's pretty significant. And we need to move beyond 1978 but there was a lot happening just even in that first year.

And I remember being at the Indian alcohol program one day and there was a social worker who came to the alcohol program. She was the wife of the United Church minister. She lived across the river. And I remember her name. She was a year ahead of me, apparently at U of T, did her masters of social work. And she may have had some connections with some office of Social Services, she might've had some connection.

Her name was Heather Gregersen, and the Indian alcohol program was a place where young Innu were coming together. It was almost like sort of the only gathering place for people that wasn't an actual business office. So it wasn't the NMIA. It wasn't the store. It wasn't the school. So it was kind of like a centre for people to come together occasionally, even during work hours.

And Heather was there one day, and she said to me: Lyla, I just want you to be careful. You've got to watch out for some of the young men here. And she specifically mentioned two who were married and one who was unmarried, and his name was Ben. And she said: They can be real – I think she was implying they would drink a fair bit and she just wanted me to be cautious.

As it turned out that first summer, I did see this fellow called Ben Andrew on the beach. I have a visual of him – I don't know about other couples, I mean, after four decades together, but I can picture him on the beach. But I also had this warning in my head from my employer, Frontier College, don't enter into intimate kind of partner relationships because you don't know what you're getting into. So that was in my head, too, even though I got to admit I was interested in this fellow.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: You got to watch them Andrew boys.

L. ANDREW: That year, so Christmas of '77, I spent at Penote and Juliana Antuan's home. And I remember their aunt Mary? Mary was there and she was a very elderly woman. I don't remember seeing her around the community, but she was sitting

in the corner smoking her pipe. And I still was interested in this young man but didn't really have a way to get to know him.

That Christmas stands out because I remember being offered caribou eyes to eat as a delicacy and I didn't know what to do with that. I didn't know how to handle that, being offered something that was obviously special, but not being sure.

As I said, there really wasn't a way for single people – I mean, I was in my 20s and there were some other single people in their 20s, but there were also many, many people in their 20s who were already married with many children. So it was hard to kind of figure out how to actually get to meet somebody.

And I'm going to share a little story which is kind of family folklore now. It was much easier to get to meet other women of a similar age, and so I knew (inaudible) Andrew. There wasn't much to do but walk around, and I remember one night – oh, sorry. Okay.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

L. ANDREW: I was out walking with Manimat and I remember it was dark but I don't think it was that late. And I asked her if it would be possible to come in for a cup of tea. And Manimat said we don't have any tea. And so I said: Could I have a cup of coffee? And she said: We don't have any coffee. I said: Could I get a glass of water? And she said: We don't have any water. And it was becoming – I didn't get in the house that night. I don't even know if Ben was in the house, but I wanted to meet this man and I was struggling.

And when I think about, again, some of the comments that were made in that report yesterday about how the houses weren't fit for human habitation, I don't think I understood then that maybe Manimat was just trying to protect herself from what she might have presumed would be my judgment, a negative judgment, to be embarrassed about how many people were

in the house. And so I accepted that that wasn't going to happen that night, but – okay, I'll let you finish that.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

L. ANDREW: I didn't give up and I did eventually, you know, start to get to know Ben a little bit. There were dances in the hall.

But what really put the two of us together was that in the summer of '78, the Roman Catholic School Board organized a cross-cultural workshop for teachers, for board members and I got invited. Penote and his family were going out too.

I don't know if it was a month long, but it was in St. John's and I went out and unbeknownst to me, Penote – I think it was Penote – must have talked to Ben, because Ben had a job for the summer with Memorial University. And so he ended up in St. John's and I ended up in St. John's and we ended up staying together with Penote and Juliana and we've been together ever since.

What is significant about that, outside of my very personal life and the fact that we went on to have four children together, is that I believe he became and still is my teacher. Helping me to understand things that, because I haven't grown up with them, I haven't lived with them – helping me to understand.

He reads widely, and at one point I thought to myself: This guy could do anything. He could be a lawyer. He could be a doctor. He's a couple of years younger than me so I had this sort of image in my mind: We could move to Toronto and live with my family, and he can go to school. And I don't know if I ever told him that I was thinking that, but very early on in our relationship he said, if you think I'm ever leaving Sheshatshiu, it's not happening.

So he gave me the opportunity to make my own choice and I don't know that you could be – I mean, that was, in retrospect, a very generous thing for him to do. And it also

helped me to understand the meaning of this place and the people, to him.

So in late '78, early '79, Ben and I came back from St. John's and we moved into a little house on the mill road – it's not there anymore – which had been the home of Judy and Harvey Hill. And Judy was another one of the community health representatives, I believe, and Harvey was from St. Anthony.

And they moved to St. Anthony so that Judy could be an interpreter at the hospital, because that was considered the big hospital. That came out in that report yesterday. It was St. Anthony. It wasn't St. John's; people were sent to St. Anthony.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: I'm just going to take my executive privilege and ask: Also for TB?

L. ANDREW: You mean people being sent out for TB?

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: St. Anthony, too or St. John's?

L. ANDREW: I'm thinking yes, also for TB, only because I know of people who died and were buried in St. Anthony. And it was a long time before their family even knew that they had died and were buried out there. It's only recently that, through weird circumstances, they found that out.

So yes, but that was the big mission. The hospital at St. Anthony was the big centre for the International Grenfell Association.

Our little house was just like all the other houses in Sheshatshiu, relatively speaking. We had no water, no sewerage; two very small bedrooms, sort of a kitchen, living room and I guess a room that was considered a bathroom, although it just had a bucket. And the difference was that there we were this young couple with our own house, and I don't think there was another young couple – and housing was a huge issue in the community.

We were very lucky. Part of it was, I guess, we were able to pay a little bit of money for the house. But we were certainly living quite differently than most of the other young couples in the community.

P. RALPH: Ms. Andrew, can you recall who you would've rented the house from?

L. ANDREW: I don't even know if we rented it. It was Judy and Harvey Hill.

P. RALPH: Right.

L. ANDREW: Judy Hill was Judy Pone, the older sister of Apenam Pone.

P. RALPH: You can't remember if you actually rented it or –?

L. ANDREW: I think we bought it, maybe, for the princely sum of a thousand dollars. I can't remember. I mean, I honestly can't remember. At the time, we probably were lucky to have that much money.

The important thing about – there's many important things, but one of the most important things about living in that house was we had families living on either side of us in their houses. But these were large families and, I think in both instances, multigenerational. There were at least two generations, like parents and probably adult children and their children.

So they would have been very crowded. The kind of housing arrangements that Mary Pia described simply because there were very few houses available for the growing population. Again, very few couples lived together who didn't have children. That was very unique.

Now, that would be different today, but in the Innu community at that time, young couples were marrying and having children and then they usually had to move in with their parents.

P. RALPH: Ms. Andrew, do you think you were some sort of special accommodation because you were non-Innu, because you were white? And, I guess, one other part of

that too is, was there any sort of scandal associated with living together?

L. ANDREW: Well, with my mother there was. My mother lived in Toronto so that was a relatively easy scandal to deal with, just kind of – she was far away.

That's a bit facetious, but –

INTERPRETER NUNA: Can you repeat your question?

L. ANDREW: Yeah, repeat the –

P. RALPH: The first part is: Did you receive some special accommodation or were you treated differently in terms of getting a house as a young couple because you were not Innu?

And I guess the other part was: Was there a sort of scandal associated about living together and not being married?

Let her ask.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

L. ANDREW: I think the difference was that we had no children at that point. So we had two – the incomes were obviously much smaller at that point. But we had no other people to be responsible for but ourselves.

And so I think it was strictly – I mean, again, I don't know what went on in the background because I don't speak Innu-aimun or understand it well enough to imagine, did somebody go to Rose, who was a really good friend of Judy Hill, and say, look, I know Ben and Lyla might like their own place, that sort of thing.

What I do remember was that there was a lot of connection and a lot of back and forth with Ben's family and their household which lived on the bottom road. And there was a couple of times – at one point, Ben's youngest sister, by the name of Nastash, might have lived with us for a little while.

I can remember coming home from school one day and she said the teacher has a TV for sale. And that was a big deal, having a TV. And for me, I don't think Ben could care less about the television, but I thought that was a big deal. And I think that little girl was kind of excited too. But she didn't stay with us for very long because I'm sure that the way we were living, as a single couple with no kids, it must have felt very weird. That's how I would imagine it felt.

What I do remember is that being in a partnership with Ben started to give me the opportunity to be involved in activities and be around other people, expanding beyond all of the time that I used to spend with Penote and Juliana, because the first time I ever went camping – all the times I ever went camping in that first year or so, it would have been with Penote and Juliana and their kids and I had a chance to see a family; a very intact happy, healthy family.

And when I was living with Ben, then we started to do activities as a couple, but it was with other families. And so I can remember going with Rose and her husband one time over the spring ice. And then it opened up all of the opportunities to get to know all of Ben's 15 siblings, who were all living in the community of Sheshatshiu at that time. And that was both an opportunity and a huge learning, to be around so many Innu people.

For the first time, I felt comfortable to go into a lot of different Innu homes. They were family mostly, but I got to go there. I wasn't going for work. I didn't have any purpose other than these many different homes were Ben's family. And I got to see just as like, a participant-observer, because I didn't speak the language. But I got to witness people coming and going. You know, you'd go to Ben's mother's house and there'd always be a pot of food on the stove.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Okay, sorry to interrupt.

This is fascinating. Hallmark romance movie TV show is going to be –

L. ANDREW: Gee.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: – coming here before too long, telling your story. Penote Antuan will be a movie star as a matchmaker, and Commissioner Nastash will be the tormenting little sister. I can see all that. Wonderful.

If you could just take some time now to wind it down.

L. ANDREW: Mm-hmm.

P. RALPH: Yeah, I think it's probably a good place to stop. What do you think?

L. ANDREW: Sure. Yeah.

See, I could go on and on, but –

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Really?

L. ANDREW: Yeah. You're shocked. I know you're shocked.

Yeah, I'm good with that 'cause it's beautiful out, and I'm going to head to the beach.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Thank you all for your patience.

We'll begin again tomorrow. We'll let Anne finish up.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

P. RALPH: Penote, would you like to say the prayer?

Penote?

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: We'll ask –

COMMISSIONER QUPEE: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

ELDER ANTUAN: (Inaudible.)

Okay, first of all I want to thank Lyla Andrew, which now I can call her, not MacEachern. Anyway, there is one thing I

missed at the beginning. I mentioned to Peter, I think –

P. RALPH: Yes.

ELDER ANTUAN: At the beginning I was going to say whoever write the report, especially in Labrador or Innu community, but the same person should read his own writing. Not to have someone read for him like Mary Pia did.

She was reading Dr. Peter Sarsfield's report. I don't know about you people, what you were thinking, the person who write his own book or information on the Innu community or Innu people should read his own writing, not to have another person read for him or for her. So that's one thing.

The other thing: I'd like to, you people in the front, ask you the report that went out – I was only a young man then, I was about 17, I think, or 16 when one of our community persons went to Ottawa to receive a recognition as a Chief. It wasn't a vote or there was no voting done, only at person was recognized by the Ottawa people.

So the reason why I said, I want to see the information, what it was all about – the only thing I can gather is that we were the Innu people in the community of Labrador, and Natuashish was the second Innu community, besides the Inuit. And that I can't find that report – not a report, but papers that I read. It was something, like some kind of newspaper, I think, or something like a paper.

And that was said there. The paper said this was recognized by the Government of Canada. It recognized the Innu people that were in Labrador, the two Innu people – it wasn't Natuashish at the time, it was Davis Inlet – and Labrador. And the other besides Indigenous people, were Inuit and there was no mention with the other Metis people – there were no mention.

So what I'm trying to get that information is that I wants to find out who made up, who wrote that kind of things that we've only heard today. I said today: yesterday, I heard

that. It was only yesterday I heard the Peter Sarsfield's paper.

P. RALPH: Was that Joseph Ashini?

ELDER ANTUAN: Yeah, that was the other thing I was told yesterday. Joseph Ashini was the person who was recognized in Ottawa as a Chief in Labrador. And that information – I don't know where they got the information or how did they knew he was recognized to the people in the community here that he was Chief.

And also, there was another person who also recognized as a Chief, too. It was – what's his name?

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Joe Riche?

ELDER ANTUAN: No. Joe, he was belong to Natuashish.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Yeah.

ELDER ANTUAN: And the other one was – there was another Elder in the community here.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Pien.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Pien Gregoire?

ELDER ANTUAN: Oh, Pien Gregoire.

Pien Gregoire, the old Elder who was married to –

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Elizabeth.

ELDER ANTUAN: Elizabeth Gregoire. And he was the second what the people were recognizing as a Chief.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: We will do some research for you.

ELDER ANTUAN: Ah?

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: We will do some research before (inaudible).

ELDER ANTUAN: Yeah. Oh.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Yup.

ELDER ANTUAN: So I'll go and say prayers.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Thank you.

ELDER ANTUAN: And I'm very thankful for Lyla. What she had done today and maybe tomorrow I can hear it again.

[Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

Thank you and have a good evening for you all people.

P. RALPH: Thank you for the prayer.