

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Good morning.

Welcome back again today, day four.

We'll begin our session today, as we always do, with a prayer from Elder Tshaukuesh Penashue, who's going to say a prayer for us.

Please stand.

ELDER PENASHUE: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Thank you once again.

Just continue to remind people, in particular our expert witness and legal counsel, that Kevin is asking that for the Mushuau Innu dialect, he does not have Anne's skills of being able to remember long phrases. He does not use a pen to write down what people are saying.

His pace, if you want to respect Mushuau Innu and their ability to hear everything that is being said, means that you have to speak in sentences that he can hear, remember and then translate from English into Mushuau Innu dialect.

So it's a difficult process, so please respect that.

Thanks again.

I will ask senior counsel, Peter Ralph, if he can give us an outline of what the Inquiry will be hearing today.

P. RALPH: Commissioners, Ms. Andrew will continue her testimony, and yesterday we finished in 1979 and I believe that year she went to work for – it might have been Social Services at the time.

So she'll describe her experiences; I believe she did that from '79 to '84. And part of that, of course, will be, I guess, her evolution or growth as a person living in Sheshatshiu and raising a family. I think that might take a big part of the day.

And then the next area will be work that she did from 1984 to 2004 with Innu Nation and related organizations, Band Council. 2004 to 2015, she then was a director of Innu Zone – Child, Youth and Family Services, I think, it was called at the time. And then 2015 to the present, she's been involved with Innu Round Table prevention services and, as she mentioned yesterday, Pathways committee.

It's difficult to predict exactly how far we'll get but, obviously, we're not going to finish with Ms. Andrew this week.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: We're all good. Thank you very much.

P. RALPH: Ms. Andrew, I think we finished yesterday and you were talking about, as a result of your relationship with Ben, you, I guess, became part of the family. And I guess it was that year as well that you became a social worker with the province?

L. ANDREW: Okay.

I was telling stories yesterday about how I ended up in a relationship with an Innu man in the community of Sheshatshiu. And the fact is that my experiences, as a result of becoming part of an extended Innu family, absolutely are interwoven, directly connected to the paid work that I've been doing ever since.

P. RALPH: Kevin, was that a good length?

INTERPRETER PASTIWET: (Inaudible.)

L. ANDREW: Sometime in '79, I can't remember, but I know the funding of the daycare through the Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation had – or the Band Council; it wasn't called a First Nation then – that it had come to an end.

Up to that point, those first couple of years here, it was fun. I wasn't doing anything that was causing people to – I was not aware of doing anything that was causing people to be upset with me, angry with me. I was just playing with children and working with Innu

women who were teaching me about what it was like for them to be here, live here.

I would and have described those years as being a gentle way to come into a community that was incredibly different from the community that I had grown up in. But I was always very aware that I was somehow – I don't know if it was straddling on a dividing line between us, which was the dominant culture in which I'd grown up. I was a young adult. I was 26, 27 at this point, so between what I knew and how I'd grown up and the Innu, it's like there was the us and them.

INTERPRETER PASTIWET: I'm just going to say that I'm only going to interpret what I can pick up because, like I said, these very important Inquiry. And people got to remember, everything has to be interpreted from my language to Sheshatshiu dialect as well. And if we – if the...

It's very hard for me. I'll put it that way. It's very, very hard to remember everything. And to write it down, you know, English is not my first language and I'm just going to interpret what I can pick up. And sitting here, it's frustrating me.

P. RALPH: So I think, if we can, we're going to have to try to break down our thoughts to smaller pieces.

L. ANDREW: Okay.

P. RALPH: And just try and do very short sentences, short phrases.

L. ANDREW: Mm-hmm.

P. RALPH: Let's try that again, that last one.

L. ANDREW: Mm-hmm.

I feel like the way that I came into the community of Sheshatshiu, and those first couple of years of living here and meeting my partner, that it was a very easy way to come into the community.

P. RALPH: Okay, good.

L. ANDREW: And I had a lot of fun playing with children.

P. RALPH: Okay, I think even that one might be a bit long. I think you need to even break that one in half.

L. ANDREW: Even though it was a very nice gentle way to meet people, come into the community, I think I was always aware that there were significant differences – big differences – between how I had grown up, the culture that I came out of. And that was us: the group that I associated with; and them: the Innu and the Innu family that I was trying to become a part of.

P. RALPH: Too long, Kevin?

INTERPRETER PASTIWET: No, I'll just keep –

P. RALPH: Sorry, what's that?

INTERPRETER PASTIWET: I'll just keep going.

P. RALPH: Do you want to take a break?

INTERPRETER PASTIWET: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

P. RALPH: Commissioners, can we take a 10-minute break and see if we can figure something out?

Okay?

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Good idea.

Thank you. No problem at all.

Recess

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: The Commissioners are very grateful, thankful, for the constructive problem-solving approach being made by everyone – I mean everyone – who assist in this Inquiry. So we're thankful for that.

I want to welcome three guests, three visitors from the Labrador Friendship Centre. We have – I marked them down.

P. RALPH: Short sentences, short sentences.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: I know, almost done.

On the end, what's your name?

J. WILLIAMS: Jason.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Jason, Rebecca –?

C. TYNER: Carolyn.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Carolyn.

INTERPRETER NUNA: That last name – after Rebecca?

C. TYNER: Carolyn.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Carolyn.

INTERPRETER NUNA: Carolyn.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Yeah.

INTERPRETER NUNA: Okay, thank you.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: The Labrador Friendship Centre, in memory of Robert Lyall, have Innu people as their clients, so it's very welcoming to have these visitors sitting in on the Inquiry.

Second point: Lyla has pointed out that there is an archeological dig on the other side of the river. She's going to find out where it is. And she has a very good idea: that if any of the Inquiry team members would like to go visit, she'll let us know where it is later on today.

Commissioner Qupee reminds us to consider the circumstances that Kevin is working under. What he is talking about is very triggering for him.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER PASTIWET: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

I don't think I can continue the Inquiry.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: No, that's quite all right. We all want to be respectful of what is happening here for all people.

A five-minute break, please.

Recess

P. RALPH: Commissioners, I was speaking to Kevin outside and he is hoping to come back this afternoon. But he's not able to proceed this morning.

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: Okay, thank you.

I just want to make a few comments regarding what just happened here and as you know and we've mentioned before, we do have a healing services team. And so what happens, we are focused upon doing no further harm. So that is why we've –

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Good.

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: Oh – got such focus on that.

Sorry, Anne.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: And so for people who have experienced trauma, sometimes when people talk of some things that might be related, it triggers kind of a flashback or memories that can be upsetting for them.

This is what was happening with Kevin this morning, and as you may or may not have noticed, our two team members here Sean Allen, as the counsellor and Edward Nuna both went out and spoke with him and so he

had that kind of support and check-in in terms of him being okay.

And those services are available at any and each and all of the hearings that we have. So just to remind people of that. That's for anybody here.

Thank you.

J. TARLTON: Yes, good morning, Commissioners. I just would like to make two brief comments.

First, to reiterate the comments from Commissioners Qupee and Devine, the Attorney General of Canada is extremely grateful for the tremendous work that has been done by the interpreters to date. And we will be very happy to co-operate in any way to ensure that they receive the support that they need to continue their very important work.

My second comment relates to Ms. Andrew's testimony. We have noticed that Ms. Andrew, in giving her testimony, both brings a book of notes and takes notes while doing so. While we understand that, I wish to put on the record that we reserve the right to ask for copies of those notes upon completion of her testimony, her entire testimony, and prior to any cross-examination that we may or may not choose to do.

I have already spoken to my learned friend, Mr. Ryan, about this –

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Peter Ralph?

J. TARLTON: Or Sorry, Mr. Ralph. Sorry. Excuse me. My mistake.

And I believe he has no concerns in that regard.

My apologies for misspeaking on his last name and thank you very much.

P. RALPH: Ms. Andrew, can you describe the notes that you have?

L. ANDREW: This was essentially a blank notebook and I am writing down, when I can, the questions. And as the interpretation is taking place, I'm thinking about and writing down some points that I want to make next.

But I have no issues with people, obviously, having my notes. You'll need an interpreter, sorry.

P. RALPH: So you have no objection if we get a copy of your notes and distribute them to counsel?

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Thank you.

The Commissioners acknowledge that this is a standard protocol for hearings and we'll allow the counsel to follow through on that.

Thank you very much.

P. RALPH: Yeah, so I'd ask Ms. Battcock to get Ms. Andrew's notebook on Friday when she finishes and photocopy it.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: It may be a bit more relaxed in not slowing down the proceedings. Anne can let us know when we have gone too long. She's quite comfortable with longer phrases.

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

L. ANDREW: Yes.

I wanted to give an example of the position that I felt I was in, particularly as I was starting this new position in the community with Social Services.

In spite of the fact that I was starting to become a part of a large Innu family, this feeling of us and them was probably always present, but there were certain times when I would feel it more than others. And if we were at a family gathering and people were talking, I wouldn't be able to keep up with all of the conversation, and there were times when I would feel they must be talking about me.

And I felt a level of discomfort such that there were times that I would go to my spouse, maybe afterwards, and say: Well, what did they say? I heard that word or I heard my name. What were they saying? What were they saying about me? And he wasn't prepared to go back over conversations and told me that that was just something I needed to deal with. They weren't going to speak English because I was in the room.

My mother-in-law didn't speak any English but some of my partner's older brothers and sisters did. And so it wasn't as if this was a situation that caused me terrible distress, but I want to note the discomfort because it was real, I felt it and in some ways, I suspect, it was pretty petty. I'm sure people had a lot more things to talk about than me.

When I started work with the Department of Social Services in '79, I was approached by a Newfoundland man. His name was Peter (inaudible). He was a social worker and he was setting up the first office here in the community.

I don't remember being interviewed by people but I do know that there was a regional Social Services office in Goose Bay at that time. But Peter was setting up an office here and knew I was a social worker, asked if I would be interested in working there and I said I would.

And the reason that I make the point about my discomfort was that office was set up with coverage for both Davis Inlet and Sheshatshiu – the mandate of Social Services of the day – and we were two English-speaking-only social workers.

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

So the office did not deal with Social Services matters across the river in North West River? Was it just Sheshatshiu and Davis?

L. ANDREW: That's giving me pause to think for a minute. I don't think we had dealings with any folks from across the river

that I can recall. That's the best and honest answer I can give.

I was going to add that I don't recall any kind of orientation or training that I was offered. I don't remember the legislation that we were working under. What I recall is that we spent most of our time sorting out following the rules around Social Assistance.

P. RALPH: Where was the office?

L. ANDREW: The office was a trailer which is also where Peter (inaudible) lived, and it was down at the bottom of the hill near where Betty Dyke's house is now – Betty Sillitt's house is.

I have no idea how that trailer ended up there as an office and I can't recall how long Peter had been working there before he came to me. And it seems funny but for some reason, none of those details stand out about being interviewed or anything in that regard. But there we were with our policy manual around social assistance. There were charts that showed family size and depending on – well, I should stop there.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

L. ANDREW: I mentioned yesterday that prior to starting work with Social Services, I have no knowledge of any kind of child welfare, child protection activities that may have been happening with regard to Innu families. And as I look back over the few years that I worked for Social Services, I would honestly say that child protection, child welfare issues took a back seat to the social assistance program; and there's a reason for that, I think.

P. RALPH: Before you get to that –

L. ANDREW: Mm-hmm.

P. RALPH: – so you were responsible for Sheshatshiu and for Davis. Both of you were sharing that responsibility for Davis Inlet as well?

L. ANDREW: As far as I remember we both had responsibility. When I would travel to Davis Inlet, I don't recall Peter travelling at the same time, but I can't say that he also didn't go. But yes, there were the two of us responsible for Davis and Sheshatshiu.

P. RALPH: Can you recall the first time you would have been in Davis Inlet?

L. ANDREW: I don't recall in a lot of detail, no. And I think the reason for that is, I was going to another Innu community, and I knew there were people in Utshimassits – Davis Inlet – who were relatives of the family that I was associated with here in Sheshatshiu. So I had some level of comfort about going there.

P. RALPH: So at that time, when you started to become more familiar with Davis Inlet – Utshimassits – did you note any sort of differences between the communities?

L. ANDREW: I think the significant difference is that Davis Inlet was a community on an island, and it didn't have any road link to anywhere. It was about half the size of Sheshatshiu.

I was probably more aware of similarities in that the only people that had running water and sewerage were the priest's house and the teachers' residences. And there weren't very many of those; obviously, it was a much smaller community, but I would imagine the store must have had some running water. But there were almost no resources there.

I don't remember where Peter might have stayed when he went to Davis Inlet. Because there was no hotel, I suspect Peter might have stayed in a room in the priest's house. I stayed with extended family at that time; Bob and Justine Piwas was the family that I stayed with. They lived on the top of a huge hill. The view was beautiful; the sight of the whole community was absolutely beautiful. It looked out on the water, looked down on the village.

There was no such thing as taxis. So if Sheshatshiu had few resources, few cars – I

don't remember how people got around. We had to walk. You walked from where the plane landed into the village and then you walked everywhere. And water had to be carried by the Innu everywhere, and I remember that hill when David and Bernadette Nui lived next door, that was an enormous hill to carry water up, regardless of what time of year it was. And besides the school, I don't remember a lot of other facilities at that time.

P. RALPH: So aside from the physical structures, were there any differences, sort of socially or in terms of the community, that you noticed between Sheshatshiu and Davis Inlet?

L. ANDREW: To my ear, the dialect was different. The Mushuau Innu spoke very quickly. And I knew it was Innu-aimun but it was a challenge for me to understand at all some of the things, the words.

Again, lots of similarities with lots of kids playing outside. There was a very large dock, and I can remember – I didn't see this here, I don't remember seeing this here, but I definitely remember observing it there – kids would take a Pepsi can or a Coke can and wrap fishing line around the Coke can and they would throw it, like the hook, out into the water and they would bring up Arctic char off the dock.

I can remember watching these little kids just pulling Arctic char up out of the water. And presumably people were eating Arctic char. And I don't remember so much anybody fishing off the dock here, although that might've happened, but that was just an activity that seemed to be happening, certainly, during weather when the water was open.

I can't tell you the date, I don't recall. It might've been 1980; it might even have been at some point in '79. But I think '79-'80, it was obvious that there was more than enough work, even when it came to social assistance and certainly with regard to child well-being. I don't know how this was arranged, but a Mennonite worker by the name of Dorothy Mills came from California.

And when Dorothy came, she was probably the age I am now. And she lived in a small trailer – again, I don't know where the trailer came from – but she was there to help with Social Services in the sense of helping families, as opposed to writing welfare cheques because she was unwilling. That was not part of her arrangement. As a Mennonite, she would not write the welfare cheques.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Okay.

Hold that thought please, Ms. Andrew. We'll give a chance for Anne's brain to relax for a few minutes. We'll be back in 10 minutes.

Thank you.

Recess

[Inquiry in progress at start of recording.]

L. ANDREW: A couple of things stand out to me, certainly, thinking about that office growing a little bit and one of the most obvious things was that the workers, the social workers, we didn't speak Innu-aimun. And just a little bit earlier I talked about how uncomfortable I was in settings where I didn't understand the language that was being spoken to me, but here we were working for a department of the government, and we couldn't speak to the people that we were supposed to be serving.

We would try to adapt. If there were adults that we thought spoke English – and I can't even remember where the office was in Utshimassits; I know that we had a room in this trailer. If there were adults that came in with younger children, school-age children, there are times I remember asking children if they would tell their parents such and such.

Now, I absolutely know that that's not the way that you should be communicating information to an adult coming for a service, but that's what I did. I'll acknowledge that.

P. RALPH: So, Ms. Andrew, can you remember exactly what you were doing at that time?

L. ANDREW: I was filling in a lot of triplicate forms, which was the way that welfare would be given out. You'd fill in a form and you'd maintain a copy and the individual would get a copy and I'm not even sure where the other copy went, I can't recall.

Most of the time it seemed we were dealing with the fact that people had no income, many people had nowhere to live and their basic needs were not being met. That seems to have been what was coming to our door. The people that we were seeing were not just two or three families out of 50 or 60, we were seeing almost everybody.

Other than the people who were working at the school or, you know, people at the NMIA or any of the folks that worked across at the clinic – and there were a few of those people at the hospital – there was very, very little employment.

And quite often what it was – in the day it was called make-work, I guess, and people might be taken on to do something. It could be brush cutting or firefighting. And so they would have income for a while but it wasn't steady, long-term employment.

P. RALPH: Ms. Andrew, is it fair to say that there were more jobs in Sheshatshiu than Davis Inlet?

L. ANDREW: Oh yes, I think that's fair to say.

Although the jobs in Davis Inlet, again, were probably in those same areas – the school; I don't remember the NMIA having an office in Utshimassits, but there probably was – I just don't remember how many people might have been sort of employed by the Band at that point. I don't think very many people.

I think it's important to emphasize something that is really basic about this work, which was just getting information from people. And the fact is, because we

didn't speak Innu-aimun, we were dealing with individuals who simply didn't speak English. The people that were in their 40s and 50s when I came here didn't speak English. Mary Pia talked about a number of women, in particular, that went out and did some training, but the majority of the population did not speak English, even as a first language. And it's obvious to us now, but at that time, I found even getting basic information from people was challenging.

And when it came to concerns being brought to us about a child or a child and their family – and those concerns usually came from the school – that would be even harder because we weren't talking anymore about how many people are in your house, how many people live in your house. Then we were talking about personal issues. We were talking about issues of: was a child safe? Much harder to be doing that when you couldn't speak English. And so we advocated for the department to hire people from the community as community service workers, they were called.

When I say we advocated with the department, it was very clear that if anybody had come in and been able to do a review of what we were doing, they would've said: You're barely scratching the surface here in terms of understanding what's going on. You're really not doing the jobs you're paid to do. And I think that was about us not being able to talk to people.

And I remember going into family homes to try and respond to a concern about a child. And sometimes I would be asking that child to be my interpreter, to tell his parents that what they were doing was putting him or her at risk – please tell your mom or your dad this.

And I mean, it's almost shocking to reflect back on that because that was so wrong, but it's what we did. And I recall on occasion asking my spouse: Please, come with me to so-and-so's home and he refused. He said: No, not going with you to interpret.

So when we went to the department, I think we felt very strongly that they had to understand what we were experiencing.

P. RALPH: Just one moment. I take it your experience in both communities would've been very similar.

L. ANDREW: Absolutely. Absolutely.

I think it's important to remember this was the early 1980s. And what I just said, the impetus to go to the department, was because we couldn't do our jobs well, we could see that.

But I don't remember giving a lot of thought to how it must have felt for a 50-year-old grandfather to come in, someone who'd lived almost his entire life in the country. Because remember if you were in your 50s and 60s, you were born in Nutshimit, you grew up in Nutshimit, and here you were coming into an office to ask one of two young white people for money for food.

And I honestly don't remember thinking about what the impact of that would have been on those Innu men and women who were coming into the office. Now, I think I have a much better understanding, but at the time I didn't.

P. RALPH: Any sense of how this –

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

P. RALPH: I think you probably answered this yesterday but you're not sure how this would have been done before Peter (inaudible), I guess, and yourself became social workers with Social Services, in terms of welfare.

L. ANDREW: I'm pretty sure there was probably a voucher system. That's what I think.

P. RALPH: The government stores.

L. ANDREW: Most likely through the government store that was here in the

community, but I wouldn't have been aware of those transactions.
Even now I try to think –

P. RALPH: I was just thinking, I bet Elizabeth can answer this question. But no, perhaps, I'll ask Elizabeth during the break about how this worked before 1979.

L. ANDREW: Okay. She knows.

P. RALPH: She knows.

L. ANDREW: Yeah.

Even now, I try to imagine another community, a community on the Island of Newfoundland – let's pick Gambo; I don't know what the population of Gambo is – but tomorrow the rules around welfare and child welfare, social assistance and child welfare have now been written by the Chinese. And it's Chinese social workers who you have to go and speak to, to ask for money because you don't have money. You can't feed your children. You're probably already getting your own wood – walking out and cutting trees down. I just try to imagine.

Obviously, that wouldn't have happened. That didn't happen, but it happened here. And I still have a hard time getting my head around how that could happen here and how it could take a couple of years, you know, for us as workers even, to get to the point where we said: No, you have to hire people locally. We have to have them work here.

P. RALPH: So I'm just going to go back – oh.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

P. RALPH: You had earlier said that as a result of this language, cultural difference, you weren't able to do your job. And I guess there's two parts to that: there is this income assistance and there's the child welfare.

Can you describe with more precision exactly what you weren't doing that was your job?

L. ANDREW: That's a tricky question because anybody with any sense would understand what was in that 1977 document, where they talked about the conditions in the community, the widespread misuse of alcohol.

Anybody would've said – anybody should've said with any common sense – what is this impact on the children? Because children don't control any of those things. Children weren't mentioned in that report. There was nothing about children and children's well-being.

But so – I'm sorry, Anne, I'm not saying this very well. I said it was a tricky question.

Like we didn't know what really to be concerned about. I know the school was concerned about head lice and the school was concerned about children not coming to the school. What was going on in terms of relationships between children and parents as a result of alcohol misuse, or the other kinds of neglect and abuse that Mary Pia talked about, including sexual abuse, we were only seeing the tip of an iceberg.

So in answer to your question, what weren't we doing, I don't think we really had a clear picture of what help was needed because I don't think we had a clear understanding of the amount of trauma that the Innu adults were already living with.

We were seeing the symptoms. All the symptoms of cultural collapse were so obvious to see right there in front of us – the collapse of Innu society. This culture that had thousands of years here – right here. And if you don't know what the challenges are, what the problems are, you're not going to address them very well. You're not going to be able to address them.

P. RALPH: Ms. Andrew, you described it as a collapse of, I guess, Innu society. I'm not sure if that's your exact words but I mean, did you understand it as such in 1979 or '80? Those first few years that you were working as a social worker, did you understand what you were seeing?

L. ANDREW: No, I didn't understand that to the degree that I do today.

And the reason that I say that is because I had this little voice in my head that used to say to me all the time: If only they'd be more like me, if only they would drink less, if only they would stay home and look after their kids more, there wouldn't be all these problems.

And I couldn't acknowledge that for a very long time, because how could they possibly be more like me? They were Innu people. I was a white woman who grew up Anglo-Saxon Protestant. We couldn't have been more different.

But I was trying to use what I thought I understood about a healthy way to live, without knowing very much about how the Innu had lived in healthy ways for centuries before I came along and before this collapse that I saw.

P. RALPH: I'm going to come back to this but I'm going to jump forward a little bit and ask you about the first time you were in Nutshimit and what that experience was like.

L. ANDREW: It was a transformative experience for me.

It was 1983 and our daughter was a year old. We left here on the 1st of October. I believe we went to Kaishikashkau. It could've been Kaishikashkasht, I'll have to consult with my spouse – or I could consult with Anastasia, perhaps, if I have the lake right – the name of the place right.

In short, what I saw – and at that camp where there were several families from here, including my husband's family, we stayed there until the 13th of December. And we went in on float plane; came out on skis on the same plane. There were no Ski-Doos. All of the men's travel was on snowshoe. I saw...

Maybe I should stop there. There's so much more that I could say. I will say more but I want to give Anne a chance.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

L. ANDREW: My husband's grandparents were there; his mother, who was a widow, with several of her younger children.

I remember the day we went in it was snowing – October 1st – and my younger brother-in-law – Ben and I weren't married then – but my younger brother-in-law, Patrick, was with us and Ms. Mary Ann Selma and the child that she was raising up, Draper Penunsi. He was probably about five or six, our daughter was one. I think if Mrs. Selma hadn't come, we might've starved to death or died or something, because I wasn't prepared to, on my own, be able to feed and cook and do all the work that I thought I should be doing.

I remember the first day my – Patrick killed a small caribou. And Mrs. Selma, we were sharing a small tent. The rest of the family didn't come in right away. And I had no idea why. One of my sisters-in-law actually was getting married, but it wasn't until the 9th of October. So I had expected more people to come in. I couldn't speak to Mrs. Selma. I didn't speak the language. And Ben just expected me to carry on. So it was kind of like an immersion, like a real immersion into life in the country.

P. RALPH: Yes. Now I think we're going to break for lunch. So this will be the last bit but write down now where we are.

L. ANDREW: Okay.

P. RALPH: To remind yourself after lunch.

CLERK (Battcock): The hearing will now break until 1:30 this afternoon.

Recess

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Thank you and welcome back for the afternoon sessions; very happy to see you all.

P. RALPH: Thank you, Commissioners.

Lyla you were speaking about Nutshimit when we left for lunch.

L. ANDREW: This was my first time going into Nutshimit. And it was to Kaishikashkau. And the reason that we went to that place was because that's where Enum Abraham, who was an Elder in the community at that time – he would have probably been in his 50s so it was not really an Elder, but you know what I mean; he was an older man. He and his wife and their children, their adult children and grandchildren were going into that camp.

P. RALPH: Okay. I think that's too long.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER PASTIWET: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

L. ANDREW: My husband's father had died in the summer of 1977 and I believe it was older men, hunters, experienced people – Innu who were experienced in the country – that made the decision about where people would go.

We also went with Dominic and Tashtu Pokue as they were family, related to my husband's mother. And as I said earlier, his mother and several of her children also came to the camp.

And I don't want to forget. I don't know if I said it this morning: There were four generations there. So my mother-in-law's parents were also at that camp, Shimun and Mani Gregoire.

I know the people aren't known to most of the people here, but it's important to acknowledge them because of what I learned by watching those people in the country that first time I went to the country.

All of those adults, with the exception of my mother-in-law, would have been known to misuse alcohol in the community. But for the more than two months that we were there, I never saw any alcohol use or misuse at all.

But it wasn't just the absence of alcohol and all of the things that would be associated with that. Ben and the men in the camp, at least five or six of them including Dominic Pokue, went off on snowshoe to hunt. And they were gone for 11 days.

When Apatet came back, his two toenails were missing from all the rubbing on the snowshoes. But he said that as they were walking, Dominic would say things like: We'll go up over that hill. And then we'll go around towards the right and there'll be a little river. And near that is another marsh.

And it was as if Dominic had a GPS – there were no GPSs back in '83 – but it was if he had a map in his head.

I remember one time – and this was also Dominic. He was not a tall man; he was a small man in stature. But he came back one day with two beavers that he had hunted. And he held those beavers up and they were as tall from the tip of their tail to the ground as Dominic was. They were beautiful beavers which would provide food and fur that had much value.

And the women who remained at the camp and the teenagers, they had to work too, because there was still the need to collect wood. We had to get water. We had to eat. So this was the one time in my life that I was a bit hungry, because I can remember eating oatmeal for a couple of days in a row and I was getting kind of tired of eating oatmeal and hoping for some fresh meat.

During the day there would be lots of visiting back and forth between the four or five tents at the camp. And small games would be played. The kind of games you could play in a very confined space. And stories would be told. and you knew that you could hear lots of laughter. And it was an experience that I had never had before in my life.

I could see all these things, but I kept asking myself, again, these silent questions that I had; like, what is going on here? And the reason I was asking what is going on here is because these people were not acting in

any way, shape or form like I had seen them in the village.

In the village most of those people would have been described in English as drunks. But in that setting, they were strong, busy, active, helpful to one another, full of humour and I, once again, didn't understand what was going on. Why was I seeing this huge difference between the way they were in Nutshimit and the way they were in Sheshatshiu?

So before that first experience in Nutshimit, I had certainly been camping. Penote and Juliana would take me camping. Our family would go camping up Grand Lake Road or over the Esker Road. But that was an experience that opened my mind to the fact that there was something else going on here that I didn't understand and I didn't know about.

P. RALPH: So Ms. Andrew, you, I guess, recognized that there was something going on that you didn't quite understand at that point, is that fair to say? Is it something that you subsequently understood or came to understand as time went on?

L. ANDREW: I think I said yesterday, in response to I don't know if it was a similar question or not. But in order to really understand I needed to have more experiences. I needed to live more experiences because I was living in this village, so I would see what was going on here every day. But that was the first time that I'd really had a Nutshimit experience.

Between then and now, so that's almost 40 years, I've had the opportunity to go into Nutshimit – the privilege to go into Nutshimit – many times to many different camps in the country with many different Sheshatshiu Innu families. There would always be some connection, but the experience has always been the same.

I would say that I have come to understand that the connection to the land and all of the activities and time spent on the land when Innu are in Nutshimit, I feel as if it

transforms the people. And I know that sounds kind of airy fairy – it transforms people – but it's as if they're being beamed up onto a different planet when Innu are in Nutshimit. It changes who they are. So I can only understand that as it meaning there's meaning in Nutshimit for Innu that's not the same in the village.

P. RALPH: Do you want to continue or want me to ask your question?

L. ANDREW: I think you should ask me a question, 'cause I have a feeling I'm going to talk more about Nutshimit further on. It's inevitable, I think.

P. RALPH: Yes. No, absolutely.

Translate that.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER PASTIWET: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

P. RALPH: At that point in your life, in the early '80s, did you understand why there was a difference? Could you articulate that? Why the people, your family and others –

L. ANDREW: No, I couldn't articulate that. Sorry, you're going to ask the question...

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER PASTIWET: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

P. RALPH: So at that time could you articulate –?

L. ANDREW: No. No. I couldn't articulate; I could just be confused. And be curious, I suppose, but mostly just confused.

And I would sum it up by saying, I started to know how much I didn't know.

P. RALPH: So based on what you know now, how would you explain the difference?

L. ANDREW: Do you really want me to go there?

P. RALPH: Yeah.

L. ANDREW: Now, I can connect so many different pieces that I wasn't able to connect then. Pieces about health. Pieces about governments and how they work. Pieces about systems and how they operate, like health systems, education. And I think most importantly, I have learned a lot more about Innu history – real history. History that's not taught in textbooks. It just isn't written down, but I've heard it from so many Innu that I believe it's true.

I just had an image that came into my head, and it's an image of a teeter-totter – [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.] I think that's the right word. And on this side of the middle of the teeter-totter is all the history of Innu and all the lived experience on the land, which is thousands of years of experience. I don't really wrap my head around thousands of years – but thousands of years.

And if you look at that teeter-totter, we all know and maybe we've all experienced, when someone much heavier, something much heavier comes along on the other side. It bangs the teeter-totter down and you go flying up off the teeter-totter and you can fall off. And I feel like the middle of that teeter-totter was contact – was really Innu moving into the village, being told: This is where you will be.

And all of that weight of the years, even those few years leading up to the '70s that the Innu had only lived in houses for 10 years, it knocked the teeter-totter in such a way that Innu started – they were falling off.

I just want to add, because it resonated with me yesterday when Mary Pia said that her grandparents and her parents didn't know what to expect when they were moved into

a house. They had no lived experience at all, ever, with living in anything but a tent.

But she also said it happened so quickly. And I think it's the weight of that kananamatshikanunanut going down, all the akaneshau things, everything that the Innu had to do, all the change. That change came so quickly, in literally 10, 15 years. It just happened so fast that people were brought to their knees.

INTERPRETER PASTIWET: I would like to take a short break.

P. RALPH: Yes. Good idea.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Ten minutes.

Thank you.

Recess

P. RALPH: Thank you, Commissioners.

Ms. Andrew, I ask you now to speak about the challenges that you had in doing your work as a social worker and, I guess, your attempts to address that through community service workers, when that would have happened and how that came about.

L. ANDREW: I described this morning, sort of, the challenge – sorry, too much.

INTERPRETER NUNA:
Kananamatshikanunanut.

INTERPRETER PASTIWET: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

L. ANDREW: Social work is helping work, I think, at it's most basic. And in Sheshatshiu and Utshimassits, as a helper, I couldn't talk to the people I was supposed to be helping.

So the solution as we saw it – my co-worker and I at the time – was to hire an Innu person to work with us, who would be able to speak to the Innu people that we were trying to work with. And we hired Sebastian

Nuna, the late Sebastian Nuna, at Sheshatshiu as the first community service worker.

This was a completely new position. To the best of my knowledge at that time there wasn't a classification for a community service worker. And it was years later before there was any kind of community service worker position in any of the Inuit communities.

Sebastian was hired to work in Sheshatshiu only and if I'm recalling correctly, I continued to go to Utshimassits to do the welfare cheques because, as I said this morning, Dorothy Mills was trying to bring more support to families and wasn't willing to have anything to do with the financial assistance program.

Listening to Kevin interpret I picked up one thing: mitshim utshimau That was the name for a social worker and literally it means: the food boss. So that's what social workers were called. So that kind of should give you kind of a picture of how the community saw us. They didn't see us coming in to do work in child welfare. They saw us coming in as the bosses of their food.

I would ask Anne if she would give the translation. Mitshim utshimau is the word that I would hear in Utshimassit. The translation for social worker here was different –

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

L. ANDREW: And that translates, I understand, as: the one who grabs? How would that be interpreted since I'm not the interpreter?

INTERPRETER NUNA: I think it translates to mentioning the big boss. Like, that would be the government.

L. ANDREW: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER NUNA: Yeah.

L. ANDREW: Okay. Okay.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

L. ANDREW: Okay.

Well, we did know the big boss when it came to these things in Social Services. And Sebastian started working with us – oh, I just wanted to add that sort of on that note, that Dorothy Mills as a social worker in Utshimassits did build strong helping relationships with people.

In fact, Mary Jane Edmonds, who presented the Mushuau Innu timeline to the Commission, she and Dorothy Mills retained such a friendship and a relationship that before Dorothy passed away, as a quite elderly woman, Mary Jane went to California to visit her. So I think she held her in very high stead.

Working with Social Services' policies, I remember that we would have Sebastian very busy writing up cheques, talking with people. And I certainly know when we had any call to go out and visit with families that we would partner with Sebastian. We would want him to come with us. It was a comfort to have him come.

I mean, I suppose on the one hand you could say we used him because he was of the community and he spoke the language. And we used him because we'd hoped that would make it easier for us to do the job.

I recall that even when the work was not just writing welfare cheques, it was still often connected to people's inadequate incomes, and quite often that was connected to housing. So not only was housing inadequate but as the community continued to grow, there wasn't enough of it. So I'm not sure how it was done but I know we weren't breaking the law. We must have had some ability to access some funds and I can recall on a number of occasions that we arranged for families to be able to buy canvas so that they could sew a tent.

I remember with some pleasure thinking back about arranging for a young couple that was going to have a baby to have a tent

of their own, to get a tent made because we understood, probably with Sebastian's help, that her family home was not a safe place for a baby and his family home was not a safe place for a baby. So if they were to live together in a tent and it was felt they could manage that, the tent was at the bottom of the hill looking out on the water, that that would be a good solution to a concern about a newborn's safety.

P. RALPH: So, Ms. Andrew, would that have presented itself as a child welfare issue in that particular circumstance that you came up with the solution as living in the tent?

INTERPRETER NUNA: Can you say that – ?

P. RALPH: I'm sorry.

The situation you've just described with the young couple, so did that present itself as a child welfare issue to you?

L. ANDREW: I think it presented as a child welfare issue at that time because of the young age of this couple and the fact that they weren't married, and that on both sides of their respective families, it was seen that the families had no capacity financially or otherwise to really support either of these young people and their baby.

P. RALPH: Right.

Ms. Andrew, can you recall how many children would have been removed from homes in the community or in Utshimassits while you were working as a social worker? How many would've been taken out of the community?

L. ANDREW: Mm-hmm.

I suspect that in the not-too-distant future we may be able to have some records which will actually verify my memory.

My memory is that I don't recall removing any children from Utshimassits. But I vividly recall removing three siblings from a family

here and escorting them to a foster home on the Island.

This didn't mean that there weren't children moving between parents to grandparents to aunts to older siblings very frequently, but without our knowledge or even our intervention, unless – and this did happen quite frequently – grandparents would come forward, because they had made a decision to try and care for their grandchildren.

And there was a service within Social Services called the child welfare allowance. I think about the removal of those children and escorting them to a small community on the Island. I can't remember where that was now. I don't think I thought or understood what the impacts of that might be, especially on the children. And child welfare allowances were very different because the children were with family.

INTERPRETER PASTIWET: Excuse me, Commissioner.

I have to be excused for the rest of the evening because I have access with my kids this afternoon again. I just got the text.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: I'm very, very happy to have had you here, again. Thank you for coming back in the afternoon.

We won't be starting tomorrow until 10 in the morning, are you okay with that?

INTERPRETER PASTIWET: Yes, I'm okay with that.

And I'd just like to say before I leave, I want to thank everybody giving me a break this morning throughout the lunch hour. That has given me time to do what I feel like I was need to do. There was a lot of emotions going on, not only here, what I hear, but on the outside, personal problems as well.

And I'm really grateful that, you know, I have people come out after I had to leave the building. I want to thank the two Elders, my uncle that was here. I spoke to my mom

directly as well over the lunch hour and my mom, you know, my mom is my strong supporter. She's my core foundation in what I do. And every decision I have to make, even though I'm 44, I actually do have to include her. That's what I learned in when I went to Brentwood in Ontario.

And I want to thank my uncle that came out and supported me, as well, and everybody here and that's all.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Thank you, Sir, very much.

P. RALPH: Thanks, Kevin.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: No need to translate that, but Mr. Pastiwet is thanking everybody because everyone did support him, especially his family.

We're at break time so let's take 10 minutes now before we finish up with the day.

Thank you.

Recess

[Inquiry in progress at start of recording.]

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Does that work for you –?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah, it does.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: (Inaudible.)

L. ANDREW: That's her great grandson.

P. RALPH: Is it? Yeah.

L. ANDREW: It's her great grandson.

P. RALPH: Handsome man, isn't he?

L. ANDREW: He is. Beautiful boy.

P. RALPH: Now, Ms. Andrew, so between '79 and '84, your –

INTERPRETER NUNA: Excuse me.

The last comment she made there before the break, I didn't have time to translate.

P. RALPH: Okay.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Thank you very much, Anne.

P. RALPH: Thanks, Anne.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

L. ANDREW: I remember the circumstances of the removal of the children here very clearly, because they were very, very difficult circumstances for the mother, for the father and for the extended family, the grandparents, with whom they lived.

The removal had nothing to do with the children themselves; it had everything to do with the circumstances their parents were experiencing. And they were circumstances that the only resort seemed to be to remove the children from the community.

There was violence involved on the part of one of the parents, and other family members were afraid to take the children. And this was a time when I don't know if there was a police presence in the community then.

That was probably my first experience as a social worker with what we would now call intimate partner violence but then there was no description for that. Now we know how challenging intimate partner violence is to address, even if you have resources. And the community of Sheshatshiu at that time didn't have any resources to help a family deal with intimate partner violence.

P. RALPH: Ms. Andrew, that was an instance where you went to a home and took three children out of the home and took them to the province – to the Island?

L. ANDREW: Yes.

P. RALPH: And were there instances where you would go to homes in the community and take children out because they were at risk and place them in another home in the community?

L. ANDREW: I remember very few instances of that. I think things happened in a more, I don't know whether you might even say, collaborative way.

Once the office was here in Sheshatshiu, I know that there were grandparents who would come and they wanted help. Maybe the parents were drinking and the grandparents felt that they needed more help. They would look after the children, but they needed more help, quite often, financially. And that's where the child welfare allowance became something that was used on a very regular basis –

P. RALPH: Right.

L. ANDREW: – to assist families.

And sometimes these children were in the same home as their birth parents, because the birth parents were also living with extended family. But again, that was a function of the housing situation.

P. RALPH: Ms. Andrew, can you recall what year it was that those three children were taken to the Island?

L. ANDREW: Well it was –

P. RALPH: Before '84?

L. ANDREW: – before '84, yeah.

That's the only thing I can –

P. RALPH: Yeah.

L. ANDREW: But it –

P. RALPH: And had you heard of that happening before, that a social worker was taking children out of Utshimassits or Sheshatshiu?

L. ANDREW: I'd only begun to hear of the stories of some children being adopted or what has come to be known as the Sixties Scoop.

Children that were – arrangements were made and children left this community. And I can only imagine it didn't involve a Social Services office in the community of Sheshatshiu. I am suspicious that those were sometimes arrangements that were set into motion by medical authorities and the priest because they had a great deal of power in the community.

P. RALPH: Can you recall their ages – the ages of those children that were taken out? I believe that you actually –

L. ANDREW: I escorted them –

P. RALPH: – flew them out.

L. ANDREW: I physically escorted them. They weren't babies or infants. I'm guessing maybe three, four, five, somewhere in that range. Primary school-aged and a bit younger, perhaps preschool.

P. RALPH: And did they return to the community?

L. ANDREW: They did.

P. RALPH: Any idea how long they were gone?

L. ANDREW: I honestly don't know. It might have been a year or could have been longer. I'm not sure. I don't believe I was working for Social Services when they were returned to the community.

P. RALPH: Yes.

L. ANDREW: I mean, we can find that out. I can –

P. RALPH: Yes.

L. ANDREW: But I don't know the actual...

You know, however long it was, I'm sure it was very difficult for three young children to

be removed from the community. I'm sure it was extremely difficult.

I don't remember any services of Social Services, which would be the equivalent to foster homes. I don't remember there being any foster homes in Sheshatshiu. Maybe there was, but I certainly don't recall foster homes.

However, there were many instances when Innu themselves made arrangements to care for children, and they didn't go through Social Services. The practice of traditional adoptions – that's an English phrase I'm using – was something that I started to notice at that time.

I was going to say, by traditional adoptions, I mean the practice of grandparents or a sister, an aunt, taking responsibility for a small child, quite often a newborn. Taking responsibility to say I'll raise this child as my own. And that happened with quite a lot of frequency and it had nothing whatsoever to do with Social Services.

The province didn't and still doesn't recognize traditional adoptions. And I believe traditional adoptions were a practice within Innu culture when Innu still lived a nomadic life because Innu needed to take responsibility for children in the event that a mother became sick or any kind of life event that might happen. And so Innu had been finding ways to care for children in difficult circumstances for a very long time. And they continued to do that in the community of Sheshatshiu and Utshimassit.

But there would be an additional burden on a lot of families who would take, particularly, small children. Babies, if they weren't being nursed, would require – well, it wasn't formula. I think most babies at the time, if they weren't being breastfed, were given Carnation milk. I think was the – what went straight into bottles. And that might have been province-wide for all I know, but –

P. RALPH: Province-wide, yeah.

L. ANDREW: So even families who were traditionally adopting children, again I think

the economic situation of families was such that people didn't have enough, in some cases, for themselves really. And so taking on additional children, they would come to seek help. And that was possible through child welfare allowances.

P. RALPH: Ms. Andrew, so during that five years you were in that position, it doesn't sound like there were circumstances where you would get a referral and go to a home and say: This child can't stay here, they have to go to another home.

That was not the circumstances that you found yourself in?

L. ANDREW: No, that would've been very rare. For a number of reasons, there were very few homes that would've had phones. And I think if families were worried, for the most part, families –

P. RALPH: Sorry, Anne.

Do you want me to repeat that question?

L. ANDREW: Oh, I'm sorry.

P. RALPH: Do you want me to repeat the question?

I'm just trying to figure out how your work as a child welfare officer, if it was called that, or a welfare officer worked.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

P. RALPH: Would you learn of children that you thought might be at risk and intervene?

L. ANDREW: I do not remember a formalized referral process.

Part of me thinks that there probably was a way for authorities to contact us. I don't remember hearing from nurses or doctors about children.

P. RALPH: Teachers?

L. ANDREW: The school would have concerns, but their concerns were often

about truancy: children not coming to school.

I remember that we didn't want to deal with situations of truancy, and I think at some point, the school, it was probably communicated to them – whether that was from the Social Services Department or not, I can't say – but that their own staff, school personnel should be dealing with children that weren't coming to school, as opposed to assuming that it was a child welfare issue requiring the involvement of child welfare.

As I said, the removal that I remember so clearly, that didn't come from the school. That was just something everybody in the community understood what was going on. I mean, people knew. It's a very small community. Physically it was still, you know – people knew what was going on.

And as an agency, it certainly was within the mandate of Social Services at that time to try and assist the families that were impacted by that situation, the families and the three little children. I feel as if most of the approaches to – oh, I should've given Anne an opportunity.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

L. ANDREW: I feel as if Innu were doing their utmost to try and address the issues that were going on within their own families and extended families, and that when they came to Social Services, they had run out of options.

Like, they felt they just – I don't think that was a first choice, to come to Social Services. And I think there was a great deal of support for Innu children in very difficult circumstances that was provided by Innu community members. And it didn't get recorded, it didn't get acknowledged in any kind of formal way, because it was what Innu had done before they moved into the community.

P. RALPH: Ms. Andrew, we've talked about the description of the homes that we heard from reports from 1977. And during your

work, had the homes improved much between, sort of, 1977 and 1984?

L. ANDREW: No. I would say if anything they deteriorated.

There was, what is to my mind still called, new housing. There was new housing built. You left the village and you went further along this top road, which was a dirt road, and then there were eight new houses built.

And I'm not sure what year that might have been. It might have been '78 or '79. And that was, as far as I know, under the auspice of the Band Council of the day. But it was the first new housing that I remember being built. So people just still continued to put up tents and stay in tents sometimes.

P. RALPH: Right, but there would have been a lot of children, babies, in pretty unhealthy circumstances that represented a risk to their health?

L. ANDREW: Well, you had four doctors who did a report and they didn't mention babies. Their report didn't say anything about children. I haven't read Dr. Sarsfield's report and I think –

P. RALPH: We haven't found it.

L. ANDREW: Okay.

But I think people would be hit by what they would see – it's what you see. And what you would see going around this community would be children out playing, having fun, laughing, running.

The distress in homes – and I'm not for one minute saying there wasn't distress to children and we've already heard testimony. We heard the testimony from Jack talk about that. But that wasn't something that Social Services workers – myself, Peter (inaudible), we were not going into homes looking for what is going on in homes. And I don't know if that was any different than the practice in Goose Bay or on the Island at the time.

The system, as I understand it, operates on the basis of receiving a referral: from the police, from medical authorities, from community members, from families. And most of our interventions here took place because families came forward looking for help to try and take care of children. That's what I remember about those very early years.

P. RALPH: Ms. Andrew, you know, it's interesting. Twenty, 30 years after this, you see extraordinary number of Innu children taken out of the community, and it obviously had a terrible impact on the communities. But –

L. ANDREW: Should I respond to that?

P. RALPH: No, I'll ask a question now.

L. ANDREW: Okay.

P. RALPH: But 1979, 1984, around that period of time, there is terrible poverty, high levels of unemployment. There is a lot of substance abuse issues in the community, and it's hard to imagine that there weren't a lot of children that were going through a difficult time. But there doesn't seem to be any response from the province with regard to that situation.

L. ANDREW: At that time, me, Peter, Dorothy and Sebastian, we were the province.

I mean, we were here, and I doubt that I understood the impact of the suffering that must have been going on. But we responded to Innu who asked for help, when they saw the very difficult situations for their children. Whether that was their adult children who were parents, and they wanted help to help the children.

I was thinking earlier that one of the other sides of this coin was that the Innu alcohol program had started and was trying to work with parents, was trying to work with people who were wanting to feel better about themselves. As we said, the Band Council was trying to get people to go into Nutshimit – to support people to do that.

The other kinds of resources that would be present 30 years later, when many children started to be sent out of the province in response to gas sniffing, for example: in many instances – in almost all instances – those were parents who came forward and said: Please send my child away. Please take my child out of the community to resources that existed. Whether that was Wood's treatment home in Calgary or, you know.

I mean, parents started to learn about these other places and they believed their children would be safer. And I think they were very afraid, in many instances, that if they did not send their children away they would die. And so they came forward in large numbers.

That doesn't mean sending the children away wasn't sending a strong message to the children that they were the problem. They were a problem and that's not a message that – I think that's a terrible message to give to children: they're the problem, we'll fix it by sending you away.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Let's consider Anne's health. I'm thinking about maybe 10 more minutes.

L. ANDREW: Mm-hmm.

P. RALPH: Ms. Andrew, I guess Sheshatshiu had been a community for not very long at this point in the '80s, less than 30 years?

L. ANDREW: Mm-hmm.

P. RALPH: And Davis Inlet was, I guess, less than 20 years when you left.

At that point while you were working, were officials with the federal government working with these communities? Do you recall dealing with federal government officials?

L. ANDREW: No. Oh, sorry.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

L. ANDREW: Yeah, I don't recall any dealings that we, as community workers, would've had with anybody in the federal government.

We did have staff meetings and meetings with the regional office which was based in Goose Bay. And I believe there was a – I don't know if he was called the regional director; George Savoury was his name. But when it came to coming up with support or strategies or ideas to deal with the level of distress in this community, there really wasn't anything that was coming from the social services management.

Yes, we had a community service worker but there weren't additional resources or ideas. But again, what we were essentially seeing were the symptoms and the impacts of colonialism. And I don't think we understood what the supports and services and resources would be – I didn't understand at the time what those would be – that would address colonial impacts, trauma.

P. RALPH: I mean, during this period of time, did you have a sense that these were communities in crisis and that some sort of crisis response was required?

L. ANDREW: It's in much later years when I worked for CYFS that I would have heard the word "crisis" used.

I don't remember hearing the word "crisis" used in the late '70s, early '80s. And I think it's because a child protection system is designed, is set up to deal with a small percentage of any population that would have child protection issues – individual families.

So I'm not picking on Gambo, but we'll go back to Gambo. And I don't even know the population but if it's 700 people in Gambo, maybe 70 people total might be thought to make up families where there's child protection issues.

The difference with the Innu communities – and it's a profound difference, I think – is that at that point in time, there was not a

single family that was not impacted by all of these symptoms of colonialism. We didn't use the word. So it wasn't a crisis, it was just the norm. It was the day-to-day. This is how people were living. This was an entire collective that was experiencing all of this harm. It was an entire village. Here and Utshimassits, same thing.

P. RALPH: Just one last question for today: If you didn't call it colonialism, was there any sense that what was happening to the Innu was being caused by the non-Innu society?

L. ANDREW: I think, as social workers, Dorothy and – his name is –

P. RALPH: Peter.

L. ANDREW: Dorothy and Peter and I understood that the department, the organization, the system that we worked for, had no idea about what was going on here, what was causing all the distress, and they didn't have any idea how to address it either.

That's, I think, what we felt like. That the world outside here – and at that point for us, it was the department that we worked for – they didn't get it and, I guess, we thought we got it. I don't know that we got it but we saw something that they seemed unable or unwilling to see.

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: Okay. Well, thank you.

That concludes the hearings for today. I would like to thank everybody for being here today and Anne for her services and, of course, Kevin. We also thank the Elders, Elder Penote and Elder Tshaukuesh, for their faithfulness to always being here.

Tomorrow morning we start at 10:00.

Oh sorry.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: So at 9 o'clock tomorrow morning, we plan to visit an archeological site across the river. I don't know the location or if anybody –

P. RALPH: Everyone is invited.

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: – is in on that?

J. ASHINI: We can meet at Riverside Restaurant and I can take us there.

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: Okay, thank you.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Nine o'clock, thank you.

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: Meet at the restaurant on the other side at 9 o'clock.

P. RALPH: We can be here at 10.

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: Anybody who wants to attend, we'll meet there.

So I would ask Elder Tshaukuesh if she would say the closing prayer.

Thank you.

ELDER PENASHUE: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]