

Statutory Declaration

I, Alaku Annie, Salluit, 1949-04-14

Story recorded on the 2018-04-24 at Qaqqalik building in Salluit.

I do solemnly declare that,

I wanted to talk about the incarcerated person that comes here for the court from St-Jérôme or Amos. They bring the incarcerated to the court and a person who is incarcerated, when the person is sentenced for a year or two, the only time they have a chance to see each other is only for five minutes. They don't have a chance to talk about things and they miss each other a lot. After this five minutes, it's the only time they have. This regulation has to be changed.

Q1: It's that way for the husband or wife, or common-law spouse; is it the same for a father, a mother, a family member?

A1: The whole family. There are no chances to have this kind of meeting with an incarcerated person. At least give them five minutes or more, maybe bring them in a room with a guard so the family could have a little time, like they do in prison.

Q2: Do I understand that they are not allowed anytime at all?

A2: Yes. In court, the hallway, that's it. They don't touch each other. There is a court there, in the hallway, the only chance they have is to touch a little, that's it. By the time they go to the court, that's the only time.

Q3: They can touch each other?

A3: For one or two seconds, that's it.

Q4: Are they allowed or not to have five minutes meetings, or to talk?

A4: The person who is about to be standing in front of the judge, the incarcerated, is placed over there. Where that incarcerated person is, there is a curtain, a cover, and the only time they can see each other is when the judge is talking to them.

Declarer signature _____

Declared before me, _____

at _____ on _____

other and touch a little is for the whole family to be here, waiting for the person to pass by. No time to talk or to keep an update.

I also want to mention that at the police station, when a person is going to be sent out to detention, there is no time to have a – let's say a person is about to leave and I want to go see my brother, I cannot go there. As Inuit, we have strong relationships between us, the family. It is so strong, and it is ignored by the justice and by the police. We need to get close and to talk to each other, to bond; there is always the bond that is strong.

Q5: You are talking about physical contact too?

A5: Yes, physical contact too. One of my grand-child was detained here because she had breached a condition by not saying that she was going in another city, in Ottawa. When my grand-child came back here, the cops took her because she had breached her conditions. By doing that, even me as a grand-mother I didn't get a chance to visit, or even contact her. It wasn't a big crime.

Q6: I didn't understand the part about Ottawa?

A6: My grand-child was sent to Montreal to the hospital, and she did not say that she was going to Ottawa to the probation officer. Because she did not say it, when she got back to Montreal and then went home, because she had breached her conditions, they had to send her down.

Q7: About the contacts with the prisoners when they come for court, what you are saying was it in the past or is it presently done like that?

A7: It is done like that even today. There was a gal, she followed her mother to Ottawa, that's what happened with my grand-child that breached her conditions. That's why when she came back they took her away. They took her to the police station here, and we didn't have a chance to go and see her, to visit her. It's a case I know but there are a lot of cases like that. I would understand very well if the person incarcerated would be there for homicide or a rape, those serious cases, it would be understandable that you may not be able to go and visit. But for breaching conditions, it's something that needs to be modified and looked into.

Q8: You wanted to talk about the police's needs to debrief or to receive some kind of service because they are exposed to many traumas?

A8: The frontline workers really need to debrief. Unexpectedly sometimes they might even do things unintentionally because maybe they have too much in their heads, too much trauma that they see and too much going on. I believe it's possible for them to have help.

X

Enquêteur

X

Déclarant

Q9: What you want to say is that maybe they don't receive enough help right now?

A9: Lots of people like that tried to commit suicide. Based on my knowledge, ten women and fifty-four men committed suicide.

Q10: This is during a period of how much time?

A10: From 1976 to 2016. Those who died while drinking, consumptions and accidents, not only by alcohol. Another, incarcerated, and the whole family. It is really needed in this community that each and every one of us need help and the ones I have on my list are mostly males; they have to be sent out because they don't talk about their problems. Because of that we need help, we need more rehabilitation centers and all of these services that we need, and we do not have. Healing sessions, there are no AA, it has to be volunteers all the time, and people do not come up to volunteer for such workshops.

Q11: It's a lot to ask to people who are already affected?

A11: We know people that are willing to travel. I've seen a lot of cases that even though they need help, when the plane is not coming in it's like they have no problems at all. The plane has been cancelled, cancelled, cancelled. People are happy. When the plane comes, everything pops up because of the alcohol. It affects everyone. There are people who seek help for rehabs, and AA, and when they come back they feel a lot lighter and happier. But because there are no services, nothing for them, no follow-ups, they relapse. It's unnecessary, if we had more services.

Q12: You are witnessing that there are no resources for follow-ups for people who go to rehab?

A12: Yes.

Q13: How did it come to you to take down these informations?

A13: I was working for social services every day, in the evenings, on family breaks. That's why I started taking notes on the family that are affected.

Q14: Are you still working for social services?

A14: I retired, I no longer work for them.

Q15: When did you work for the social services?

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Enquêteur

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Déclarant

A15: I was working for KSB, Kativik School Board, for thirty years; I retired in 2009. I worked for social services from 2010 to 2017.

Q16: Do you feel you made all the points that you wanted us to hear?

A16: I witnessed so much, and we need services. There are people who are about to give up, and we always have to go to their places in order to try to get them help. We do really need help here, rehabs and workshops, healing services.

Q17: So the need is for resources, human resources, and also structural places like offices and things like that, people to come and work, money to provide whatever they need, but also different projects and propositions of healing processes?

A17: I was born in an igloo, and I grew up in an igloo for ten years. I witnessed how to mediate with the people and with the difficult life. It was a way of the Inuit working on the person that has issues. The situation the person is in, other Inuit could work on it without trying to make money out of it. They knew how to take care of each other, they knew they had their whole power. They thought they had no strength, none whatsoever, when those teachers, those priests and all the white people came in; they took it away. They took their children away, and they took their power, their strength.

Even today, we know that we are strong, that we can help each other and solve problems. These things were taken by institutions which we can reroute.

Q18: I feel humble now.

A18: I was working in KSB as the head of the teachers, before that I had witnessed for eleven years. Being the principal for two years, I was just doing the mandatory, things that needed to be done, and I filed all those (notes). After that, there was a vice-principal, and even with that they were working together very well, and for those eleven years I started to witness, because I was elected by the members of the community and I was supposed to be the head of the teachers. When I became that I started to see that we can work as human beings, a white person or an Inuk person; we are here, and white people come here. When there are no races in between, there are great things and great projects that always prosper by working together. Just because you are a white man it doesn't mean that I cannot work with you. When Inuk and qallunaat are working together everything becomes clear, and that is why I believe that it is possible to work well together.

Q19: That was my question in fact, now that we are where we are, with the situation that is as it is now, how could people from outside the community help the people inside the community if needed?

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Enquêteur

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Déclarant

A19: When I was working in school, I saw white people on this side, and the Inuit people on that side. I started the project, I made a circle for white people and a circle for Inuit people. I said that the Inuk would adopt two white people, the family is adopting two white people. Every activity, anything they would do in the family, the family would invite those two white people; if they would go hunting, those two white people – because they are adopted- they would have to follow. After that there was no conflicts, no wars; it is possible to work together. There was a bond and they were closer together.

Q20: This experience took place here in Salluit?

A20: Yes, I started that. I'm not there anymore, I don't know what is going on.

Q21: Did you give a name to this project?

A21: No. It is made to approach them, to make them feel welcomed.

Q22: You are very wise, you have a lot of experience and knowledge.

A22: It started because of my roots as an Inuk. I gained knowledge. I was raped; I had a step-mother and there was sexual abuse. I am not a proud person, I know how to help because I had a hard time in life. I have a bachelor degree, a degree in social services, it's because of my willingness to help, knowing and understanding how it feels, that is why I am standing and I am not proud to have all those degrees and all that knowledge that I have, because I know how it feels to be needing help.

Q23: Did you want to share another story? You mentioned the Youth Protection?

A23: As a social worker, I witnessed – even though I am not working anymore, people come to me to talk. A parent lost his child because of a DUI (Driving under the influence of psychoactive substances like alcohol), they took the child away from him, a vulnerable family. They lacked support from other people, and sometimes they drink too much or cannot handle problems. Most of us we become very regretful for what we had done, the *regretfulness* is eating us alive and because a mother or a father doesn't have their child they drink heavily; that's what I've been witnessing. I want the DYP to look into the family. Let's say the children are taken away from that family, there is a whole family around; put them all together, try to negotiate where the child will be placed, instead of being sent out. That is one of the solution I want to see in the community for DYP.

Q24: This kind of approach does not exist here?

A24: Not to my knowledge. There were children that were sent away down South, at least they could give them a chance for the children to know they have parents, or the parents could go see their

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Enquêteur

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Déclarant

children down South so they wouldn't forget that they are family. There is a bond in-between and that way they won't lose the connection.

Q25: All the question of the lack of support that we are talking about, throughout all these examples that you are giving, we can see also that the placement of the children is an effect of the lack of support for the couple or for the family. Are you suggesting that with more support for the family there would be less children displaced, moved?

A25: They could build a group home and place the children, because the children are from here. The children get to have help under one roof, and the parents get to have workshops at the same time. Instead of those children being shipped away until they turn eighteen, they have to come back sometimes but not until they are eighteen, they are working separately; even before they turn eighteen, the children could go back home. That way the connection would still be around.

Q26: When you talk about a group home, you would imagine the group home would be in the same village?

A26: Yes for the children to be here instead of sending them away.

Q27: In each Northern village?

A27: Yes.

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Enquêteur

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Déclarant