

Statutory Declaration

I, Kauki, George, P.O. Box 89, Kangirsuk, 1951-02-14

(Name, first name, address, birth date)

I do solemnly declare that,

I do solemnly declare, meeting with Michelle De Champlain, investigation agent from the Viens Inquiry, on August 13, 2018, in Kangirsuk.

I want to share something regarding my health. This is a complaint letter I wrote.

Q1. Can I read out loud the letter?

A1. Yes

“My complaint letter concerning that I feel that my right eye got blind due to the neglect and unbelief of the medical staff of Tulattavik Health board during [REDACTED]. I hope to get a respond to my attached complaint letter in the near future. This is my complaint addressed to Tulattavik medical hospital in Kuujjuaq.”

A2. So, it's the hospital of Kuujjuaq that you wanted to make a complaint about? That you want to complain about?

A2. Yes.

Q3. I thought it was in the services over here in Kangirsuk.

A3. Both.

Declarer signature _____

Declared before me, _____

at _____ on _____

“This is concerning about losing my eyesight on my right eye due to the neglect and unbelief of the local medical staff that I was getting blind. The local medical staff and also the visiting doctor who comes around every month from Kuujjuaq did not believe that I was going blind even though I was going to the local clinic every day, even twice daily.”

Q4. The doctor is it the same doctor who comes here?

A4. Yeah.

Q5. Do you know his name?

A5. No. I knew his name, but it's very hard to spell it.

“My left eye has also a pure eyesight. I got aware that my eyesight on my right eye was getting weak in the [REDACTED]. This is when I started to go to the local medical clinic that my eyesight was getting weak and told them many times that I wanted to see an eye specialist, but to no...”

A6. To no avail.

Q6. Available? They were not available. That's what you meant?

A7. No. They were available, but they didn't believe me.

Q8. They didn't believe you. So, did they tell you like this that they didn't believe you or they just said...

A8. They didn't tell me, but I know they didn't believe me.

Q9. You felt like they didn't believe you. Because they didn't give a reference to an eye specialist.

A9. That's right.

Q10. Ok, ok. And you said that you went more than every day, sometimes twice a day.

A10. Yeah.

Q11. It was the same doctor?

A11. Yeah.

X

Enquêteur

X

Déclarant

Q12. All the time.

A12. The doctor comes here only once a month, but the nurses there, they're here all the time.

Q13. Ok. And when you see the nurses every day, you told the same thing?

A13. Yeah.

Q14. What did they tell you?

A14. They try me with those letters. That's the only thing they did.

Q15. Ok. And they are all nurses?

A15. Even the doctors sometimes.

Q16. Ok. Did they say to you: "Well, maybe there's a problem." Or they just say: "There's no problem."?

A16. They told me it's no problem. That's why they kept me out of here to get a specialist.

"More than once I was told that wait for the visiting eye specialist who comes around once or twice a year."

Q17. So, "I was told", who told you that you will see a specialist?

A17. Sometime the nurse and sometime the doctor.

Q18. Ok. And did they make you ... did they write a reference, or did they tell you that they will put you on the list, or ...

A18. They didn't.

"My right eyesight got very bad in the month of October 2017. Why and why were these medical staff did not believe me when many times I told them that I was going blind up to the point I got completely blind in my right eye."

X

Enquêteur

X

Déclarant

Q19. Sometimes it happens that you were blind in your right eye? Sometimes you cannot see? It sometimes happens that you cannot? It happens?

A19. Yeah.

Q20. And after that your eyes came back?

A20. No. It never came back. Completely blind. But after that when I get blind they worked on my left one and that improved a little bit. But before I was not able to do anything even in the house, my house. Or outside. I couldn't do anything on my own.

Q21. Ok. I guess it was a scary situation for you.

A21. Yeah. Very, very scary. I was falling on the ground sometimes. Because of holes. That's how much I was getting blind. I couldn't see, I was getting help from my wife and my family to get up. They took my hand. But the medical staff they didn't believe me I was going blind.

Q22. They referred you to an eye specialist?

A22. Only very at the end. Only very at the end when I got blind.

Q23. Ok. So, at the beginning they just didn't believe you?

A23. They didn't.

Q24. At the beginning did they did a test with the letters?

A24. Yeah.

Q25. Ok. But they still didn't believe you at that time.

A25. They didn't believe me.

"Was it that these medical staff did not believe me because they thought I am a stupid Eskimo and an elder of 66 years old. Or was it that going down South to see eye doctor was too expensive and had to wait for the visiting eye specialist."

X

Enquêteur

X

Déclarant

Q26. That is twice in a year?

A26. Yeah.

“I even tried to be an annoying client so that I could be admitted to see an eye specialist but they did not believe me. How could they know I was ok when this is my body? Not theirs. Which I know was not ok.”

A27. So, you knew you suffered from something.

A27. Yeah, very much.

“Once or twice I was told that there were too few eyes doctor that I was not able to go South to see eyes specialists. Just going to the local medical clinic through the whole course of the [REDACTED]. At the time, I got really, really frustrating that at sometimes I did not go to the local medical clinic knowing that I was going to be told I was ok. My family members, especially [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] knew I was going blind while Tulattavik medical staff were saying I was ok. I was helping [REDACTED] build a cabin (shack), at our summer camp Qinirtuq. [REDACTED] was helping me get around like taking my arm, even sometimes taking me on his back because of many rocks in our camp due to my getting blind. At one time, we were travelling by canoe while [REDACTED] was not with us. We almost got lost going to Kangirsuk because of my poor eyesight. One day in the middle of [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I got hurt, that, because of my poor eyesight, hitting a TV stand on my nose and head.”

A28. When that happened, the clinic still didn't believe you?

A28. That's my scar... That's when I hit the TV.

Q29. You said that to the clinic?

A29. Yeah. And they still didn't believe me.

Q30. Ok. When you said that they didn't believe you, do you remember clearly their words, what they said to you?

A30. No clearly.

Q31. No? But what kind of things they said to you?

A31. They said I was ok.

X

Enquêteur

X

Déclarant

"I was blacked out and unconscious for few minutes. I was bleeding a lot in my wound and vomiting a lot because of my injury. I was brought to the local nursing clinic by an ambulance. The attending nurse told me that I was going home in few minutes because I was ok, even before they even examine my injury."

Q32. They didn't check your injury?

A32. They checked but they didn't even put Band-Aids.

"Here, I was at the local medical clinic and I was told that I was ok even before he examined my wounds. After he cleaned my wounds, he puts Scotch Tape on my wounds and told me I was able to go home at that time."

A33. Only a Scotch Tape, not even a Band-Aid.

Q34. A Scotch Tape, really?

A34. Scotch Tape.

"Because I was not able to stand on my own, I finally called Kuujjuaq hospital and he was told that I should take the medevac plane to go to the Kuujjuaq for further examination if my brain was bleeding. The medevac plane did not come until the next morning. I had to stay to the local medical clinic for the night."

A35. Do you know the reason why they cannot come, the medevac?

A35. They didn't tell me why.

Q36. They didn't take the time to explain to you?

A36. No.

Q37. If it was about the weather or there was other reason?

A37. The weather was ok. I remember that very well.

X

Enquêteur

X

Déclarant

"I was further transferred to Montréal not by medevac, but by regular first airplane. I was admitted to Montréal hospital if my brain was bleeding and it was a good news that my brain was not bleeding. And was transferred to Ullivik centre."

Q38. What's Ullivik centre?

A38. That's where the patients stay.

"The next morning at Ullivik centre I was told that I was to go home the next day while I thought I would see an eye doctor specialist because I had requested to see an eye doctor all summer long. That is when I realized that the local medical clinic or Tulattavik centre had never relayed my request to see an eye doctor."

A39 They told you that they will send you to an eye specialist, but the request was not done?

A39. Never.

Q40. How did you feel when you find out that they didn't make the request?

A40. I had to make a strong complaint about my eyesight. They only thought my brain was bleeding but my eyesight was almost gone. My eye was completely gone that day.

"Thanks to Kangirsuk nurse at Ullivik centre who made me an appointment to see an eye doctor the same day. That was finally the day that my eye doctor of Montreal found out that I was losing my eyesight. At one of my appointments with an eye doctor there were four eye doctors examining my eye while before the local medical staff had told me that because of shortage of eye doctor I will have to wait for the visiting eye doctor."

Q41. Where did you have your exam by specialists?

A41. Montréal.

"Finally, the visiting eye doctor came to Kangirsuk on [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] When I had already lost my eyesight of my right eye. That was too little, too late. We all know that our eyesight is very, very important and we all do not want to lose our eyesight, of course. It is very uncomfortable and very, very bad losing eyesight which I am sure would have been **prevented**. If local nurses and Tulattavik centre would have respected my request to my medical condition."

X

Enquêteur

X

Déclarant

A42. Did the doctor told you that your eye could be prevented?

A42. No. They didn't tell me.

Q43. Ok. You think that if the request was...

A43. Respected, they would have. It was too late.

Q44. For you, if they wrote down the request before your eye would probably be better today?

A44. It would have been prevented. I know.

"I even had to quit my job..."

A45. You worked where?

A45. I worked at the local hunting, fishing department.

Q46. Ok. You liked your job at that time?

A46. I had to. I don't do any work. It was too hard for me to see a computer. It was too hard to my eye.

Q47. But you enjoyed your job when you worked there?

A47. Oh, yeah.

"Because of my poor eyesight. I really think that my eyesight would have been prevented if my request to see an eye specialist were respected and attended to soon after my early request. I hope my present complaint letter does not go on deaf ears just like my request to see an eye specialist, eye doctor. We're not respected, and we're neglected. I really hope my present complaint letter is read and not be put on the filing cabinet and forgetting forever. I hope to get answers to my questions before I am dead."

Q48. When you said "questions", what kind of answers do you need?

A48. Like, I really wanted to see a specialist, but they never believed me, and it was very hard to ... mentally and ... it was hard. Even for my family.

X

Enquêteur

X

Déclarant

Q49. You saw a specialist. Did you like the services of the specialist that you saw?

A49. Yeah, down in Montréal? But this guy, local in Tulattavik health centre they didn't believe me why. I don't know.

Q50. They were not specialists then?

A50. No.

Q51. No. But the specialists that you met, they were doctors, but not specialists?

A51. Yes. Specialists down South they were very good.

Q52. Ok. You were satisfied about the evaluation, the service, the health care that you received by them?

A52. Yes. Yes. But they didn't know I was completely blind that time. So, if they had sent me down South before they would have done something better.

“And I hope other complaints other than my complaint letter are respected because you become very much handicapped when you lose your eyesight.”

Q53. So, what you're saying is when people say something about their physical condition, to believe them and to take care of them and trying to find out what's going on. Is that what you're saying?

A53. Yes.

“I hope to get your response to my complaint in the near future in good manners.”

Q54. Like today? Is that what you mean?

A54. Right.

“And I have lost my eyesight which I use for shooting a rifle for hunting on the land and sea. I cannot longer go on the land and sea to provide for my family and neighbours because of the neglect and ignored my request to see eye doctors all summer long by Tulattavik medical staff. My family

X

Enquêteur

X

Déclarant

especially, [REDACTED] other people and [REDACTED] who escorted me to Montréal hospital for my head injury are my witness for going blind.”

Q55. So, they support you in all that?

A55. Yes.

Q56. And they knew from the beginning what's going on.

A56. Yes.

Q57. Did your family assist you at the clinic, to see doctors or nurses, did they assist you and talked to the nurse and the doctors?

A57. Not really.

Q58. No? Ok. You were on your own, let me say it that way.

A58. They escorted me down going South to Montreal.

Q59. But [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] didn't say to the nurse or the doctor: “Hey, [REDACTED] has a problem. You need to...”.

A59. No. Not really.

“And my blind right eye is my true and solid witness for going blind. Why and why were my request mistreated and ignored by the medical staff in Tulattavik who was supposed to tend to my medical needs?”

Q60. You were telling me that you made a complaint to Ungava Tulattavik health centre?

A60. Yes.

Q61. You made a complaint... They received your complaint the [REDACTED]

A61. Mmm.

Q62. And they sent you a letter on [REDACTED] Can I make a copy?

X

Enquêteur

X

Déclarant

A62. You can keep it.

Q63. And they said on [REDACTED]: "We received the letter in which you conveyed your dissatisfaction with our institution. We would like to inform you that we are currently investigating this matter and will contact you if further information is requested."

A63. But they never did.

Q64. You never had any information after?

A64. After, no. Nothing.

Q65. No respond, no call?

A65. No respond. No calls.

Q66. Do you call back them?

A66. I tried.

Q67. You tried but there's no answer?

A67. No answer.

Q68. Did you leave a message?

A68. No. Not really.

Q69. Ok. But you tried more than once?

A69. Yeah.

Q70. Ok. So, after that, it's written in the letter: "Occasionally it takes longer than 45 days to exams your complaint. In that event we will inform you of the reasons for the delay and update you on the progress of the examination." And it's signed by [REDACTED] You never had any news from them?

A70. Never.

X

Enquêteur

X

Déclarant

Q71. You made a complaint... Did somebody help you to make this complaint?

A71. No. Only myself.

Q72. Did somebody tell you where to make the complaint?

A72. I got the address of that person from my cousin here. She's not working but she's a member of the complaint.

Q73. Ok. Is there a place here where you can have a follow-up about this? You're on your own?

A73. I'm on my own. Completely.

Q74. And you've tried more than once to call this year. No answers.

A74. No answers.

Q75. And how it makes you feel that the fact that they don't answer you?

A75. Very bad.

Q76. Do you think that they do their investigations?

A76. I don't think so. After this letter they... Like I told in the letter, they will forget about my file. Forever.

Q77. Regarding the nurses here or the nurses in Kangirsuk you came to see. What do you think about the nurses? It's a large question, but I wanted to know what you think about the services by the nurses that you received.

A77. Some nurses they're very good during the services, but others they don't seem to care.

Q78. For the first time they met you they were ok, but after that you feel that they don't...

A78. That's right.

Q79. Are they very young nurses or experienced nurses or both?

X

Enquêteur

X

Déclarant

A79. Some experienced but some very young.

Q80. Ok. Do they take the time to listen to you?

A80. Not much, no.

Q81. Very quick services?

A81. Very quick services.

Q82. Do you have recommendations to improve the services, if I see the experience that you lived there. If you have any suggestion to improve those services what would it be?

A82. I don't know. Would they help me if I did more or did I do enough? That's very hard for me. Losing eyesight is very bad. Then what do I get after this? Do I get some money for their neglect? They didn't believe me. What do I get? Nothing. So, even after this what you going to do? What do I get?

Q83. If I was a doctor at that time and you come to see me, what kind of services you would like me to give you? Believe you first?

A83. Yes. But they didn't believe me. You would have brought me down to specialists in Montréal.

Q84. In Montréal right away or like a month or something like that.

A84. Yes. Even the first visit. Even the first visit in July and June, never. Until I got... I was blind.

X

Enquêteur

X

Déclarant