

Statutory Declaration

I, George, Naomi,

I do solemnly declare that, on August 24th 2018, at 500, Blvd Renée-Lévesque Ouest

Health services:

A1: The one that I have the most information, in terms of date and time and location, would be in the hospital. My brother, he's Inuit and he is my adopted brother. Him and his girlfriend, she was giving birth and they were welcoming their baby on May [REDACTED]. This was at the Jewish Hospital in the birthing center. They arrived there before family arrived there. At no point were they not provided services or anything, but it was more the way that the woman who was working at the reception was talking to them. She was very rude to them.

My family and I, we were there, and then his girlfriend's family showed up afterwards, and when they showed up after we did, the woman at the reception went to go tell my brother to come tell us to stop asking to see them, but we were two separate groups. It's not like she had to repeat the information to two groups of people, she saw two different groups of people and she was complaining about it, and I just felt like she didn't have to go bother my brother with that, he was busy taking care of his girlfriend who was giving birth. She also told him to tell us to keep it down, to be quiet, but we weren't being loud at all, she was just very rude. I considered going to see the ombudsman at the hospital, but when I went to the front desk, the ombudsman's office was closed. I spoke to the security and I was telling her the situation and she said I could call the ombudsman the next day to make a complaint, and I didn't end up calling to make a complaint, because I welcomed my niece into the world and I didn't really think about it afterwards. After reflecting on it, I was like, terrible service. They are there to help facilitate that process with the family and the people that are actually giving birth, and she was just very rude, the way she spoke with my mother too.

Q1: Your brother's girlfriend, is she Inuit?

A1: Yes, she is Inuit.

Q2: From where?

A2: She is from Nunavik.

Declarer signature _____

Declared before me, _____

at _____ on _____

Q3: Do they live here in Montreal?

A3: Yes. They are both living in LaSalle.

Q4: So they know the area?

Police services:

A4: Yes. So that was what I witnessed in term of health. And then, there was - I don't have the date and I really wish that I did because this was a really intense situation. I was at the corner of Atwater and St-Catherine, I was just leaving a yoga studio there, and I had just turned the corner, and as soon as I turned the corner - so I was heading south on Atwater, and I turned on St-Catherine and Atwater— I saw right away that there was three police vehicles, and against the fence that is there, there was some Inuit people, and they were just sitting there. There was no activity at all, they were just sitting there and they were watching the police, because the police was lined up, three vehicles, and they were all in the corner, parked on the street, and they were kind of all talking to each other, but not talking to the Inuit people. I was like: "I'm going to stop and watch this, what is going on here". I just stood there in that area, watching. All of sudden, one police goes and is like: "Here, one for you, one for you, one for you", and was giving them tickets. I was like: "What are you ticketing them for?", and he answered to me in English, and he said: "Drinking in public". I didn't see them, they didn't have any alcohol in plain sight, but I don't know before I arrived if they had alcohol in plain sight. But then, one younger Inuit guy, he read it out loud: "What is *flanage*?", and I said: "That is loitering! You told me you were ticketing them for drinking in public", and he said: "Well, it's because I didn't know the word in English". I was like: "That's bullshit, you didn't even ask them to leave, you just came here and started giving them tickets". Then this other guy, he was the captain or something, he was like: "You don't know the reality, they are here all the time and are bothering the business nearby". I said I did know the reality, and that Indigenous people are overrepresented in the system because they do shit like this. I didn't swear because I was careful, but this police, this captain or whatever, was talking over me; we were almost in a yelling match and I was starting to get very worked up, but at the same time I didn't want to attack him because I didn't want to get in trouble. Then, I had the thought that I should ask them for their badge number, but then when I said: "What is your badge number?" they said: "Oh, we are from precinct number whatever".

Q5: Do you remember?

A5: It was the one on Guy and Rene Levesque I think.

Q6: Metro I think?

X

Enquêteur

X

Déclarant

A6: Yes, exactly. But I just thought it was so ridiculous because, like I said, I told them: “You didn’t ask them to leave”, and his justification was that they are always there. Just because they are always there, it doesn’t mean it’s loitering. If you’d ask them to leave, I’m sure they would just get up and walk away, but they just ticketed, without even talking to them. Has they said they were giving them a ticket for loitering, they guy wouldn’t have been surprised. It was just: “Here is a ticket, here is a ticket, here is a ticket”, and the guy was like: “What is *flanage*?” he didn’t even know. That happened in the summer of 2016. I see it pretty frequently, where there is police officers that are around downtown and there is homeless Inuit people that are kind of harassed by them, and so whenever I see something I always go and stand near to observe.

Maybe like two weeks ago, I think I was on St-Mathieu and De Maisonneuve, and I had just got out of the Metro, and there were two police there, and they were standing over this Inuit guy who was just sitting there, and it seems like they were just asking him to leave. Before it went in any other way, I just said: “Where are you going, I’ll walk with you, let’s get out of here”, and the police looked at me like I was interfering, but I’d rather that then....I could expect that they would take him in for some silly reasons. That was maybe like two weeks ago, but I don’t have dates and times.

Q7: That’s okay. If you had the power to recommend to the police station new ways to intervene with them, what would you recommend?

A7: That’s a good question. I really think it’s an attitude. There is just sort of this attitude towards Indigenous people, and particularly indigenous people who are already disadvantaged here in the city, and they just kind of look at them like they are garbage. I heard about that woman, [REDACTED], who was here for medical treatment, and somehow she ended up in a jail cell, and that’s because of this attitude. I don’t know what happened in between, but I’m not surprised that she ended up in that jail cell. Had nobody filed a missing person’s report, she probably would’ve stayed there. There is just this lack of understanding of the reality, and a lack of sensitivity. It’s part of this culture that the police have. I don’t know, maybe they need some kind of psychological assessment, they need more than just a sensitivity training.

I was at Cabot’s Square, maybe last week, and I saw police talking to a group of Inuit that I see often there. I went close to see what was happening, but they were responding to one of the Inuit’s man’s needs, because he had been physically assaulted. They were talking to him and they seemed to be responding to his needs; I thought that was new, usually it’s the other way around. I kind of stood by like I usually do and then the Inuit man was like: “Oh, you got here at a bad time, because I was just beat up”, somebody had jumped him, beat him up, and I was like: “It’s what the police were talking to you about?”, and he said yes, that he was telling him what happened. It seemed to be a positive intervention and I was happily surprised by that. For sure there are police that do good work, it’s just that in my experience, I’m seeing more bad experiences than the good ones.

Q8: Do you have other situations?

X

Enquêteur

X

Déclarant

A8: I remember this one time, it was also by Guy Metro, but I don't know if the man is Indigenous or not, so I can't really testify that.

Q9: Thank you very much.

X

Enquêteur

X

Déclarant