

Interview with Louis Taparti, Jr.  
May 9, 2004, Rankin Inlet

*Interview took place in Louis' office at Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. Conversation resumes discussing the special breed of dog traditionally bred by the Inuit, and the dog slaughters. I am relating a story about one of the descendents of those dogs that was thought to be highly intelligent.*

*I've seen descendants of those dogs. They are not on a team anymore, but near where I live there was this dog who was tied up, clearly from the line of team dogs and while I was watching, there was this free range dog who came up to the tied up dog. They did their little doggy hello, then the next thing the free one starts chewing on this line to set the other one free. I watched them for a half hour and during this time they were working together to free this one dog, in cooperation. No playing or rough stuff or anything, just working focused on the task. He did it.*

They did it? They got him free? Good for them.

*Then they went off running together, and I had to tell my neighbor this story. But your Dad was instrumental in trying to bring the capital to Rankin.*

Yeah, he was chairperson of the Rankin for Capital committee, he and Lorne Kusugak who is the Nunavut Implementation Training Committee (NITC) chief executive officer (CEO). I was against it. I wasn't a part of that. It was not really a part of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement (NLCA), it was something in conjunction with the claim because it was the splitting up of the territories.

*What was your principle objection to the claim?*

The extinguishment and a billion dollars. To a lot of people, a billion dollars might seem like a lot of money, but to my way of thinking, a billion dollars can be spent in a year. It wasn't in my opinion enough. And it really wasn't a billion dollars. It was \$580 million throughout the term that they were giving up the fund. If they invested it properly, it could be a billion dollars. The possibility of it being a billion dollars wasn't enough. Plus, the amount of land that was given, surface and subsurface is a pittance compared to the land mass of Nunavut. We have got a fraction of that subsurface. I understood the selection of areas where people lived established and all that stuff, I understood that, but if there was nothing to be gained but historical value, I think that wasn't enough. It was ratified and here we are today anyway. The ones who were against it are still very visible doing everything that they can to be sure that it is implemented and followed. I mentioned the other day about a riot here. I was going to high school at the time – Yellowknife. It would be my second year in high school, and before I left for high school, I used to run dances. There'd be a group of us in high school that would have dances over the weekends. I was one of the only ones with a stereo and I ran a dance on Friday nights. We had heard about the five narwhals that were caught, and the dance was over at one o'clock. I packed up and cleaned up the hall, and packed up my stereo and I was carrying

my amp. Louis Pilakapsi, Paul Patti, John Patti, Joe Kugluktuk and Big Mike Tuluguk were coming towards me and they were in a foul mood. They were coming straight toward me and I didn't know what to do, they were in a foul mood. They said, 'Drop your stuff and come with us!' I said, 'I'm not going to leave this expensive stereo just on the road!' 'Okay, put it under that house and come with us!' I did. I put it under the house and I had no idea where we were going. They took me down to the marine resource office and proceeded to break the window. Once the window was broken and cleaned off, I got lifted up and thrown in there. They told me to look for a tusk. I said, 'What kind?' They told me, 'A narwhal tusk.' I looked around the whole office and I couldn't find one. There were six of us, they wanted to meet at the hamlet office because Louis was the mayor. He was the mayor at the time. I was told to gather up as many people as I could. It was about two o'clock in the morning. I managed to collect about 75-100 people who were walking around at the time. It was a beautiful summer day. We all met at the hamlet. When we were meeting there the RCMP saw all the commotion so I guess they must have had some idea what it was about because they walked in with a gun packed and Louis Pilakapsi said, 'What do you want? No guns allowed in chambers. Get out!' He went out. Then someone came in and said, 'I saw them bringing something to the jail house. So that's where we decided to go. Everybody went from the hamlet office to the little jail cell, which was a self-contained unit, like a trailer. The five officers, and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) officer all with side-arms, and there was 75-100, I can't remember exactly but it seemed like a lot of people there. It was a very tense situation. The RCMP was very nervous. We looked through the window and we saw the tusks were in there. The mayor reached down and grabbed a rock, and now he was armed so you could see the RCMP unholstering the pistols, not unholstering, but unlocked, and he said, 'I'm the mayor of this town.' As soon as he picked it up everybody else picked up one, too. 'If I tell these people to break this window, they will do it.' He threw the first one, and then there was just a hail of stones being thrown toward this window. The window was broken and they cleaned it off, and I tried to jump in. I was grabbed from behind by the biggest cop there. His name was Summerfield, and he was a big guy, and really strong, too. I think we'd watched him bench-press 250 the day before. When he grabbed me, another one of my buddies, Simon Bruce, tried to climb in and he got grabbed by another cop. Bill Gawor, the only white guy on our side, he climbed in and we threw him a rope. He tied up the tusks. Somebody handed him a piece of blubber and he said, 'If you want evidence, here's your evidence and he threw it in there and we started pulling the rope. Fifty of us were pulling on this tusk and five of the RCMP. We were having a tug of war and the rope snapped. There were three of us holding on to it, me, David Ittinuar and Peter Anawak are the ones I remember hanging onto this tusk. Summerfield was ordering me to let go. And me and David were kind of young, so we just about let go, but Peter was a little older than us and he said, 'No way. Don't you let go, you got to fight. He gave us a lot more courage and we held on to that thing as tight as we could. In the meantime, there's this RCMP writing down the names of everybody that he could recognize. When the mayor saw this, he said stop to everybody. Come and line up and make sure they get your name right. We all lined up and gave them the right spelling. I saw my name five times! The next day on local radio, the Elders in town, Donat Anawak, he was one of the guys that had caught the tusks, the RCMP tried to walk into his house. They knocked on his door and said, 'Can we search your house?'

He said, 'You got paper?' He was unilingual, but he knew about search warrants because his son was a special constable. They said 'nope.' So he slammed the door and he told this on air. It made a lot of us think. We were brought up to listen to authority, priests and RCMP, this was the first time we ever heard anyone go against authority, which gave us a better sense of who we were, what our rights were, and all that kind of stuff. The very next day, the magistrate was flown in and there were 55 people who were charged. All the charges were dropped and Rankin got a quota of five narwhal since then.

*So the whole thing started because there had been a quota?*

There was no quota. Narwhals aren't known to be this far south. We don't see them very often this close to Rankin. DFO took it upon themselves to grab the tusks as evidence because there was no quota for narwhals here. We knew that the policy for any confiscated evidence, whether it is antlers or tusks or whatever, they never go back to the hunters. They just end up as trophies for some resource office somewhere. Because this was something special, the hunters wanted to keep it.

*It could also have spiritual dimensions too, the fact that they don't come this far south.*

Yeah. It gave us a better sense of ourselves, how we could stand up for ourselves.

*Is Donat Anawak any relation to Jack?*

He's his father. Jack was adopted into this family. He considers himself part of both families. He knows a lot about this story.

*The passing of the generational torch.*

Even to this day, we have been asking people for pictures of this incident, and people who do have pictures are not willing to give them up because it's still up in the air, whether any publication, if they come out then they might revisit those charges. I think that was part of the agreement, to forget about this whole thing.

*So if I were to talk about it or mention it in my work?*

Oh, its public knowledge now.

*I don't think many people realize the extent to which there was civil disobedience among the Inuit. They think it was all done through negotiation. I just heard the other day that during the Constitutional debate, the Inuit broke off negotiation and apparently no Canadian flag could fly right side up in the Arctic during that period.*

*This is part two of a two-part interview. The interview took place in Louis' office following another interview with Raymond Ningeocheak, in which Louis served as translator. This conversation picks up on the two prior ones. In the first part of the*

*interview, Louis translates a song sung by a relative of his. It seems that he was unjustly accused of having stolen meat and he had to travel many days to set the story right. He hunted along the way to bring meat and skins with him to the other community. On the way there and back again, he creates this song. The songs play in the background and Louis translates during the pauses.*

It finally came to me, my song. What he is talking about it that the rumour came to him and now he has a song to tell it with. He is making this up as he is traveling. This song has no verses. There are a whole lot of caribou. I will not use animals in my song. I will only use people. They bring word from some people who have spread this rumour. He doesn't know what to do, so he will have to go to confront the people who are spreading this rumour. As soon as he saw Chesterfield, he started getting nervous and worried about this rumour. He is trying to figure out what to say when he gets there, but by the time he had gotten there, he had given out all the meat and the rumour was sort of forgotten and he turned around to go home. He said, I must have a mind like a woman to come and try to sort this out. He found it, he found the walrus dead, but he doesn't say why. The skin of the walrus, if he had been stealing it, he didn't get very much. He'd like to walk the world, but he is stuck over here because of these rumours. This next one is my mother. She sings her grandfather's song. He is a shaman. He wasn't around as a child, just until she was 14 years old, but she remembers a lot of the stories. She lived with her grandmother, and her husband wanted to find out what it was like to live in Chesterfield. He could astrally project from where he was and on his way to find out what the weather was like in Chesterfield, he was flying and all of a sudden he just fell. He turned around to see what had made him fall and there was another man coming from Chesterfield doing the same thing, to see what was happening in Rankin. He turned around to see if he could make the other man fall, and went to Chesterfield and came back. And the other guy in Chesterfield said the same thing about my mother's grandfather. Sure enough they caught each other on the way. I've never seen any of that. I know they did a documentary here on shamanism. The rumour has been that Ollie Ittinuar has some of that power still left. He's never been to the nursing station, never. He's 80 or 82 years old, and he still looks like he is 56.

*I just asked him to tell his story and he did, but then he flipped it around and he asked me what he should say at this conference. I just said that what I would ask my Elders is, 'What's my responsibility? How do I get to where you are? What's the most important thing I need to learn from you to pass it on?' I think that every culture on this planet exists for a reason because they possess a knowledge that is different from every other culture and each time culture dies, we lose that bit of something that could have helped us as a species.*

That is true.

*What is it that the Inuit have to teach the world? I said, 'What is that thing?' and I can only tell you what I have learned from other Elders, what Inuit Elders have told me: anger management, the ability to let go.*

I would agree with you to some extent. But my number one priority would be communication. In communication you take care of that anger management, because in my opinion, Inuit, if we were an animal we would be an ostrich. You hear this so often, 'aiunumoq.'

*Aiunumoq? What is that?*

Can't do anything about it. Someone dies, you know it hurts, but aiunumoq, such is life, c'est la vie. That is something that is used a lot here. It's everywhere because the kids don't know how to communicate, how to let people know what their problems are. That's why we have suicide, that's why we have alcoholism, drug abuse, all that stuff. If we had better communication skills, we would know how to talk to each other. There are people who are hanging on to hurts and anger for years because they didn't resolve it. That is why we have as much suicide as we do.

*Absolutely. So you think there has been a significant change in the ways in which people have to communicate, so it's stopped now?*

No, it has not stopped. If you are a child, it is still you are seen and not heard and that will always be there. I grew up with that kind of upbringing. I notice if I am in a bad mood, I don't want to have to explain to my five year old what I am doing. My daughter has to know absolutely everything. You are just a child, you are not supposed to know these kinds of things are something that I have used very often. I don't believe there is a god. I do believe there is a higher power. I don't believe in religion. I don't believe in ghosts. I have to touch it, I have to feel it, I have to explain it. I have pissed off a lot of people in this building by talking about this stuff. I probably didn't get elected by those people. But I don't think that religion has a place in politics.

*I often say that I am a person of no particular religion, but I am a person of deep faith. I take truth where I find it, whether it's from Snoopy the dog or whatever, universal things*

My father in-law, my in-law are both pastors in the Glad Tidings Church. My mother in-law is devout, devout, devout, to the extreme. My father in-law is a little bit easier to deal with. I have been asking questions ever since I was a little kid. I went to church every day, I read the bible, even though I didn't understand the language when I was reading the bible. My first question to a priest when I was talking about death and where you go after you die, 'What happens to little babies when they aren't baptized, do they go to heaven?' He said, 'No.' From there, I had a fundamental argument with religion. I argued with my father the last time I saw him. I said, 'What do you think about this couple lost their child after it was born. They wanted the child born in the Catholic Church. They said no, we cannot bury your child. The service cannot be held here because you were married in the Anglican Church.' I argued with my father about that. He was at the same time circulating a petition to have this other guy taken out of jail for five to ten years for molesting his daughter and some others. I said, 'What!' He said, 'His family no longer has a provider. They no longer have food on the table. They rely on social services and the Northern. That's not their diet, that's not their staple.' I said, 'What about the

daughter? She left home and when he went to jail, she came back home. She is going to have to run away again. Are you thinking about her?' No, he was thinking about the whole family that this guy provides for and we argued about it. I never saw him again. He left home that morning, and he died that weekend. But that's how he was. He wanted me to be where I am. All my upbringing is pushed away by my father because he was not more like a father. I was always reaching out to him, always wanting to be close to him. I left home when I was 12 years old when I went to high school. We had nine boys and one sister. We had fights every day. Groceries would come home and we'd be like a pack of wild wolves. I would just sit back and watch them, whatever was left over was mine and I was tired of that. I got my first job when I was ten years old. I was on my way to church, this was when I first started to question the priests and my religion, me and my mother were on my way to church one Sunday morning. She said, 'You always need money. Why don't you just walk in here and start doing dishes? They need a dishwasher.' I went in and started doing dishes. I got my first paycheck. I said, 'Wow! I can buy whatever I want.' I bought my own food. I'll give my mother some money. I bought my own food for about four years. I moved out after that. I was tall. Everybody thought I was 18, but I was only 12 so I partied and all that stuff. Then I went to high school. I could have graduated at 14. I could never get up on time, and I missed a year. I went to Iqaluit. That was the worst six months I ever spent in my life. I almost froze there December 12, 1979, my last night there, but that's a different story. I went back to Rankin. My parents went up to Repulse Bay so I went there. My mother adopted one of my cousin's kids. This happened to be my brother's natural born child. My brother committed suicide two and half years before and this kid was two years old. I brought him to my mother's in Repulse Bay. I lived there for two months. That was too small for me. I got a job and I got paid, and when I got my paycheck, I was told that I had to get to the end of the line so that all these other people can get a paycheck at least. The line was three months long. I moved back to Rankin. My parents followed a week later. I went back to high school in Yellowknife. I graduated there and I came back home. I told my Dad I really want to go hunting on my first day back so the next day we left, me, my father, and my two brothers. He said two words to me that took away 18 years of, 'Get away from me, you're not my son, get away from me, you're not my son, get away from me, you're not my son, get away from me.' He said, 'My best sons are no longer living with me.' There were just two of us who were no longer in the house, my oldest brother Harvey who lives in Repulse Bay and myself. Throughout my childhood everybody compared me to Harvey, and I didn't know why. My Uncle Tom says that me and Harvey are biological brothers, my mother differs, of course. I think we are because he and I are the tallest in the family, although I am taller than him. If I could put anybody on Jeopardy, I would put my brother on Jeopardy. I thought I was pretty smart, but he's very quiet. He doesn't talk much, because he grew up pretty much on his own, residential school in Chesterfield, residential school in Fort Smith, or here and then Churchill. He never grew up in my parents' house. He reads a book a day. All the books I read that are good, I send them to him. We played Jeopardy one day and I challenged him. He was up there with the finalists at \$19 and here I am at zero.

*Kind of like Sherlock Holmes' smarter brother Mycroft!*

Yeah! Actually Sherlock Holmes is my favorite character. I liked the old Basil Rathbone.

*Nigel Bruce! Me too. My father too, had always been distant and he was such a hard man back then. When he got his doctorate at the age of 50, he had this mailbox and it said Ed Dobbins so when he squished the DR on there, it said Dred Dobbins and that's how everybody read it, dread, which was good for me because I was the one everybody made fun of so it was a good thing that everybody feared my father. Then when we moved to Texas, I got the sickest I had ever been in my life, and I couldn't even read. All of a sudden I became aware of my dad just sitting there and I asked, 'How long have you been sitting there?' and he said, 'Long time.' I guess he had been sitting there for days and then he pulled out this collected Sherlock Holmes and started reading. I couldn't believe it, 'He's reading to me!' I was able to read myself, but I was still feverish.*

Me and my brothers were pretty lucky. We never really went out as a family to learn survival skills out on the land. It was only if you wanted to. I always spent a lot of time going back and forth to Chesterfield with my uncles and my aunts and my cousins. As a kid, I was always in boats. In Ferguson Lake, we spent three summers setting up a camp for sports fishermen coming up from the States. It was just our family and caribou herds migrated there and it was our initiation and our education and I am very fortunate to have gone through that, even though I was one of the youngest ones. I was sick. I knew I was going to die. Three days at 104 temperature. I guess my father felt the same way. One night at three o'clock in the morning he took his bible that he used for service, he was a Catholic lay minister, and he prayed for me. Because he prayed for me, it showed me that he cared, like he was extremely worried that something was going to happen to me. That next morning it was like I was never sick, I was fine and just from his caring about me. I know there is a higher power, and you know that higher power is love in whatever way, shape or form that it comes to you. Christians try to use it as Jesus is love.

*You were in Iqaluit first and then you went to Yellowknife. When did you first go to Yellowknife?*

From 1980 to 1982, I was in Yellowknife.

*And when did the riot happen?*

That was in 1981.

*1981.*

Yeah – my first year coming back from Yellowknife. Before that we ran the dances every Friday night, but no one had a stereo that was big enough so it was a source of income for me to run the dance. I played video games all afternoon. If you beat the high score you would get \$20, and I beat the high score just enough. I made \$480 off one game that summer. I made another \$1,000 dollars running dances on the weekends.

*I worked summer camps. I understand that principle. When were you first aware of Inuit coming together for a common cause, gaining political awareness?*

My Father was a card carrying Liberal. Whenever the Liberals came around, they recruited him for their campaigning so I got a sense of that really early. Like I told you I was partying at the age of 12 so I wasn't waiting for alcohol at the age of 19. When I turned 19, I was waiting to vote in the federal elections, make my voice heard. This is something my father instilled in me. I don't know if my brothers feel the same way. I couldn't wait to turn 19 just so that I could vote and make a difference.

*I remember being so frustrated in 1980. Anderson ran as an independent. I was only 14, and Reagan won, see but for me Reagan wouldn't have won.*

You know it was funny, when I was in Yellowknife and it was my 14<sup>th</sup> birthday coming up. I went to the liquor store and I had a cigarette in my mouth just to make myself look older. ID's not a problem. For four years, I didn't have a problem. Then when I turned 19, they asked for my ID. I was so upset. I said don't move I have to get my father. My father just happened to be there for an alcohol and drug awareness workshop. He was playing pool, he was a pool shark and I went and got him. He said sure right away. As we were going out, a woman came up and grabbed him and said, 'Don't take him out, he hasn't lost a game!' He'd been playing for four hours and hasn't lost a game, and he'd been buying these women drinks. He was just smiling. He was cool, when I had him alone he was cool. But in the house, he was someone else.

*I know what you mean. Now that my dad is older though, he is really wonderful to be around.*

He's wiser.

*Yes, and he allowed himself to feel. So you came to awareness pretty early. Were you aware of what was going on with Tagak Curley and the whole movement?*

Not in a sense that I followed it. I knew that there were a bunch of guys in Ottawa trying to do something for us. I wasn't really sure quite what. I wasn't really into the politics around here. I was into federal politics. I don't know why. Perhaps Trudeau got in during that time that I started to vote so I really must have made a difference! I have watched this community grow from a really tiny community to where it is today, with the exception of five years living down South and three years going to high school. When I came back home, most of this stuff wasn't here when I left. I've seen this town grow and good or bad, it is still my town. It is always home, no matter where I go. I don't miss Rankin, I miss the land out there, that's what I miss when I go. Even though I didn't fish. It's just not something that I want to do all the time like my brothers. I just love the land. I love being out there.

*That's the way I feel. When I am home, I love the land, I love my mountain. The city I could take or leave maybe, but that's home for me, the Smokey Mountains.*



Did you get a chance to get around town while you are here?

*A little, but I never got out on the land.*

What time is your flight?

*1:15. I have to be at CBC at 10 to meet Elizabeth.*

If you want to get really confused, ask her about her relatives, how she is related to Jack.

*Can you give me a primer?*

Just ask her how she is related to Jack.

*I don't think I have told you, but I am trying to track relationships. She's the adopted sister of Louis and the blood sister of Jack. Am I right?*

Yes.

*Here's my chart. There are a lot of people on here, but there is still much more that I want to know. Someone made a comment to me that not only were all these guys descended from leadership families, but that most of them were related to each other. It was pointed out to me that men who are related to each other in Inuit culture are very used to working together toward a common goal.*

This is interesting. His father had two wives.

*Yeah I've got that somewhere, too.*

I know a lot more than I think about our history. I still consider myself a kid and I am almost 40.

*In my culture you are not considered an adult until you are 55.*

Really? I will be 40 this June.

*Really? I'll be 38 this August. I am truly fascinated by these relationships. I was talking with Michael Kusugak yesterday, got him to sign a couple of his books and he was saying, "Yeah, I'm related to half of Rankin, a quarter of this town and a quarter of that town." I said, "I noticed."*

I am related to most of Chesterfield one way or another. Most of them are first cousins. I've got a few cousins in Arviat, but that's pretty much it because they moved there. Three-quarters of Rankin I'm related to. Some of them I don't even know how I am related, but everybody wants to be your cousin, especially when they are drinking, 'My cousin! My cousin! How come you don't talk to me!'

*I had Mary Cousins and Leah Idlout over to my house for dinner, and they had not had a chance to sit down with each other in a long time, years. I was hoping that Betty Brewster would come but she couldn't. They just starting talking and talking, and I just sat listening and then eventually they tried to figure out how they are related. They figured out that they were through Captain Bournier!*

Leah's mother grew up here. She was born in Chesterfield and she grew up here. I knew her mother before she left, and I went up to Cambridge Bay with her to record others for the new youth justice forum that we set up there. She is smart.

*Yes! And humble. You know she worked for several years in Quebec and her comment to me just casually, 'Yeah, that French language, I never really did get it!' Then I had Mary Cousins come over and tell me how she went to visit when Leah was living there and she was translating French perfectly.*

Yeah. I don't know what happened to her father that made her that way.

*Her father, she told me, deliberately planned for her to be in the modern world. She could sew with cloth, for example, but not with skins, that was his way of kind of preparing her for a future changing world.*

He committed suicide. I vaguely remember him. Mostly he came to town for work I guess. My uncle's story, you should see it. It's a documentary by John Houston. It's about the mother of all creation. It's interesting. I have a copy.

*Could you make a copy of it?*

I probably could yes.

*You are coming to Iqaluit, right? I come back on the 24<sup>th</sup> so I will be there.*

I will give you a shout. Plus my cousins Mark and Philip he's got the story of Kimiguk, which is a legend. Interesting story.

*I've never seen White Dawn either!*

Really? That is an interesting one.

*I have heard so many stories of Joanasie Salomonie, who was the star!*

And Abe Okpik, who was the shaman in that movie. Abe convinced me that under Project Surname that my number was W2 because I was born in Yellowknife, so for three years I was convinced that my number was W2. But the nursing stations they had these numbers on file, so I called up to find out what my number was. It was E31701. That was something else, Project Surname. I remember Abe on that trip when he was coming

around doing that. It was the first time I had seen him and Elijah Menarik were eating muktuk at my house. It was the first time anybody put ketchup on muktuk, both of them.

*What was Elijah like because I have read so much about him?*

He was kind of small, dark, very, very low voice, like he was a presence even though he was small in stature. Even next to Abe, because Abe was pretty big. He was just a quiet man. He wasn't imposing or anything, but when he spoke everybody listened. Everybody knew him because he did his stints with CBC, both TV and radio, so everybody around here knew what he looked like from his TV spots and everyone knew his voice because it was fairly distinctive. That's how everybody knew him, whether you were a child or an adult I don't know what his beliefs were, he was just well-known. Abe on the other hand was just a loud man. I was out with him in Iqaluit one time at the Legion and he had diabetes so every five minutes he would walk to the washroom. I was telling CBC that every time he came back he would say my name, Louis, Louis Taparti. I had people lining up to shake my hand because I worked for CBC and everybody listened to me.

*It amazes me how many people worked for CBC at one time.*

It's kind of hard not to because you are covering all these things and you have your own ideas, how it should be done, and sometimes I just shake my head as to how these guys went about business. I had to bite my tongue a few times. I had to walk out a few times. I scolded one of the Members of Legislative Assembly (MLA) one time, for good reason, too. He went back in there and stood up and did what I told him to do and he got more money. Even then, the money that was offered wasn't enough because it was for a search and rescue operation for one of my very good friends. I went down there and gave him a note and said the family has scraped together \$2,000 and they are going to be ok with \$1,000 from the government? You know that's wrong. They got \$2,500. Still, it was more than they would have got if I hadn't said anything.

*You are not apolitical!*

My father wanted me to be a civil engineer. I got into communications to let people know what was happening.

*Can you help me with this [list of people who were part of the process but have passed on]? Is there anyone I should add?*

She died of cancer, Anne. She was an interesting person. She was one of the first Inuit to work for CBC.

*When did she die?*

Oh it wasn't too long ago, maybe 1997. I may be wrong though.

*She was interesting?*

She was. Abe knew me more than I knew him. I met John a few times, John Maksagak. I knew Louis Pilakapsi, as much as I could know someone who lived in the same town.

*Getting you involved in the public protest.*

No, I attribute that to Joe Kaludjak. Louis was just the voice of us all. Joe is the one who got people down there because if it wasn't for Joe, I would have just gone home with my stereo. He said, 'No, just drop it.' I was fortunate being as tall as I am. It made people look at me a little differently. If I was shorter I probably wouldn't be here now.

*I matured early. When I was in high school, people thought I was in college and so forth.*

I've always looked older than I am. Everybody thinks my brothers are younger than me. They're not.