

Peteroosie Kuniliusie, Clyde River, NU

Born at Igaliqtuuq (Isabella Bay), 1934

Question: When did you hear of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement?

Peteroosie: I first heard about it when Uttuttiaq (David Iqaqrialu) was working with them.

Q: What did you think of it at the time?

P: I did not concern myself nor think of land claims at that time. It was afterwards when they were enumerating and told us that we would be compensated. They even said we would pocket some of the money personally that I began thinking about it.

Q: What did other people in your community think?

P: When we were told that we would be getting money as we were signed up at the parish hall, we started talking about the money we will be getting, but it turned out that would not be possible. I do not like that.

Q: Do you remember who worked on the agreement?

P: None of the negotiators ever came to this community so I do not know who the negotiators were. I have heard of some of them, but I cannot say.

Q: What did you believe would happen?

P: I have talked to Tunngavik more than once when they came here for a meeting, asking them where the things were that we were supposed to get because when we signed our names we were told that we would pocket some of it, but where is it? I was not very happy with them at the time because the government assistance that was there before was not there anymore.

Q: Why did you think that way?

P: The payments we used to get from Yellowknife were stopped when things came into effect and the only payments we are getting is from Ottawa.

Q: What do you think about the land claims agreement now?

P: Yes, we are still expecting it, we are still thinking about it, but don't say much about it because it seems we won't get anything. The only thing we get now is the pension from the federal government, and we get that monthly payment from Tunngavik. And I heard Paul Kaludjak talking at the general meeting this year at

Rankin Inlet where they will increase that payment after the meeting is over. Nothing has come to being, it is still the same.

Q: What do you believe is the most important Qaujimajatuqangit value contained in the NLCA?

P: It is in the lands that we own now that it has become convenient as we have to be involved when there is research conducted or when there are minerals discovered in those areas. That is where it is better.

Q: Only there?

P: It has not improved much, including the wildlife issues. I thought that we would have more say in things such as polar bears or with wildlife on the quota system. I was expecting Inuit to have more freedom in these areas but things have not changed much.

Q: Do you think any Inuit values are left out? What ones?

P: I don't think there is much left out, but Inuit self-determination is still not ingrained in our case. The self-determination we used to practice is not ingrained. Maybe it is because some people still do not understand it.

Q: What would you say to the future generations of Nunavut?

P: I do not have many thoughts to the future of Nunavut, as we will see it as it evolves. We will continue to see what happens with our land claims. I have used it in practice as we have been working on Isabella Bay (Igaliqtuuq) for many years, maybe over 30 years now to make it a wildlife sanctuary or whale sanctuary. Things were easier only by using the agreement with the government. It is very difficult to get things moving. By using it, (NLCA) it was easier.

Q: Any additional comments?

P: I don't have much to say but, I would probably have a lot to say if there was a meeting. Nunavut Tunngavik doesn't hold many meetings here. We have a lot to say about the important parts, but they just seem to disappear. They seem to lose them right away.