

**ABUSE IN CARE ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY
STATE REDRESS INQUIRY HEARING**

Under The Inquiries Act 2013

In the matter of the Royal Commission of
Inquiry into Historical
Abuse in State Care and
in the Care of Faith-based
Institutions

Royal Commission: Judge Coral Shaw (Chair)
Dr Andrew Erueti
Ms Sandra Alofivae
Ms Julia Steenson

Counsel:
Mr Simon Mount, Ms Kerryn Beaton, Ms Katherine
Anderson, Ms Kirsten Hagan and Ms Lorraine Macdonald
appear for the Royal Commission

Ms Fiona Thorp appears for the Catholic Church

Mrs Guy-Kidd, Mr Jeremy Johnson and Ms India Shores
appear for the Anglican Church

Ms Helen Thompson appears for the Salvation Army

Venue: Level 2
Abuse in Care Royal Commission
of Inquiry
414 Khyber Pass Road
AUCKLAND

Date: 9 December 2020

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

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1 (Opening waiata and mihi)

2

3

4 **LOUISE DEANS - AFFIRMED**

5 **QUESTIONED BY MS ANDERSON**

6

7

8 **CHAIR:** Tēnā koutou katoa, kua huihui mai nei i tēnei
9 rā. Good morning, Ms Anderson.

10 **MS ANDERSON:** Good morning, Chair, and Commissioners.

11 Q. Louise, welcome. Can I get you to confirm for the
12 record that your full name is Louise Margaret Deans?

13 A. Yes, I confirm that.

14 Q. And you have a religious title as Reverend Deans?

15 A. I do.

16 Q. You might need to move that microphone just a little
17 bit closer.

18 A. Is that better?

19 Q. Perfect, thank you. In the course of this hearing
20 today, are you happy to be referred to as Louise?

21 A. I am.

22 Q. Can I get you to sit there while the Chair administers
23 the affirmation.

24 A. Okay.

25 **CHAIR:** Good morning, Louise. (Witness affirmed).
26 Welcome to the Commission and welcome to Ted, and which
27 of you is Lois, hello, and that must make you Patricia.
28 Thank you for coming to support Louise today.

29

30 **MS ANDERSON:**

31 Q. Thank you, Louise. The evidence you are here to give
32 today relates to abuse you experienced during the
33 period of your training to be ordained in the Anglican
34 Ministry?

35 A. Yes.

- 1 Q. Am I right that you began that training in the mid to
2 late 1980s?
- 3 A. 1984-1985.
- 4 Q. And you were ordained in 1989?
- 5 A. As a Priest, yes.
- 6 Q. And the abuse that we're talking about happened during
7 that earlier part of your ordination training?
- 8 A. It did.
- 9 Q. So, the abuse that you are discussing today occurred
10 over 30 years ago?
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. And it was about 20 years ago that you published a
13 book?
- 14 A. I did, yes.
- 15 Q. And you've got a copy of that book here?
- 16 A. I have.
- 17 Q. That's called the Whistleblower?
- 18 A. Yes, Abuse of Power in the Church - A New Zealand
19 Story.
- 20 Q. You have chosen in your evidence that you're giving
21 today, rather than having to retell your experiences,
22 the approach to your statement is to use extracts from
23 your book?
- 24 A. Yes.
- 25 Q. Obviously, your book is much more extensive than what's
26 in the witness statement, to talk about the abuse you
27 experienced but also given this is a redress focused
28 hearing, about the experience you had trying to get it
29 remedied through the Church processes?
- 30 A. Yes.
- 31 **CHAIR:** Can I remind everybody of speed. We have a
32 stenographer taking evidence and we have two signers,
33 so we have to be conscious of the efforts that they are
34 having to go to.
- 35 A. Right, okay.

1 **MS ANDERSON:**

2 Q. So, the parts you have selected for your evidence that
3 we're going to talk about today focus on both the
4 abuse, the impacts of that abuse on you and also the
5 attempts that you underwent to get the Church to accept
6 responsibility for what happened?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Just a little bit more scene setting. I will summarise
9 from your statement. You've returned to New Zealand in
10 about 1976 from a period overseas with your husband and
11 children?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. It's during that period that you begin a period of lay
14 preaching?

15 A. Yes, yes.

16 Q. Can you explain to the Commissioners, you know, what it
17 was between that period of returning home in 1976, your
18 commencement with lay preaching, that brought you on
19 the path of undertaking full ordination training?

20 A. Okay. In the 1980s, from mid 1980s on, the government
21 had withdrawn all subsidies and closed country areas
22 down. There was an awful lot of distress in the
23 community.

24 Q. You were living in the country, weren't you?

25 A. We were living in the country, just out of Darfield.
26 And there were a lot of suicides and all sorts of
27 things. I had a gun under my bath for a week. So, I
28 felt that it was really important, I had been doing
29 theology in a group over four years with the EFM Group.
30 The theology was a wonderful thing and very
31 strengthening and I really wanted to be able to serve
32 the community in some way. Most of the work that women
33 did in rural areas was voluntary and it seemed to me
34 that if I could train there, then I would be useful

- 1 within the context of the Church. And there was a very
2 powerful pull for me to do that too.
- 3 Q. You were training within the Church, you've described
4 to me there's Ministers who are paid, stipendiary?
- 5 A. Yes.
- 6 Q. And there were non-stipendiary, you were training for
7 non-stipendiary?
- 8 A. Yes, non-stipendiary, unpaid.
- 9 Q. What is the reason why you chose that focus for how you
10 would later work in the community?
- 11 A. Choose the focus of non-paid?
- 12 Q. Yes.
- 13 A. Well, the parish was pretty poor. There wasn't any
14 money and I was following suit, in terms of wanting to
15 have a professional role within the community but as a
16 volunteer. So, there was a balance in there for me to
17 do that.
- 18 Q. And this is in the context of in the Anglican Church
19 the first women were ordained in the Church in 1977, a
20 year after you returned to New Zealand?
- 21 A. I think, was it earlier than that? I can't remember.
- 22 Q. But still in the early period of women being ordained?
- 23 A. It was, I think I was about number 128 in total, yes.
- 24 Q. The section of your brief that I'm going to invite you
25 to read now relates to the factors that you have
26 identified meant that you were vulnerable as you went
27 through this ordination training.
- 28 A. Okay.
- 29 Q. Can I invite you to turn to paragraph 14 of your
30 statement.
- 31 A. You would like me to read that?
- 32 Q. And read from paragraph 14 to the end of paragraph 16,
33 please.

1 A. I am aware that the Inquiry is into abuse of children,
2 young persons and vulnerable adults. The abuse I
3 experienced occurred when I was an adult.

4 I explain in the next paragraph why I consider that
5 I was a vulnerable adult as I entered into and went
6 through my training for ordination, and also during the
7 period I was trying to get the Church to respond to my
8 complaint. The factors that contributed to my
9 vulnerability at the relevant time included.

10 A. I was training for something I really wanted to
11 do with limited alternative options.

12 B. I had to put myself into the hands of the person
13 taking the role of tutor or mentor to take me through
14 the process.

15 C. That when anyone is accepted for ordination, he
16 or she has someone allocated to them to be their tutor
17 and mentor. This person was to be referred to as
18 "uncle". I would describe this as establishing an
19 almost incestuous dynamic.

20 D. Once I was in the abuse process, my choices were
21 to leave or stay. I felt I would not let this man
22 deprive me of my Ministry opportunity that I was
23 focused on.

24 E. I did ask to change tutors but was told no. In
25 the absence of being able to change, this meant I had
26 to find ways around the abuse.

27 F. I had four young children and was living in the
28 country, but determined to finish my studies so that I
29 could undertake the non-stipendiary Ministry work in my
30 own rural community because the flexibility only
31 applies to the stipendiary, ordained people.

32 G. Like many of the other 35 women who complained
33 about this particular Priest, I did not want to
34 sacrifice my career.

1 H. I was concerned that if I spoke up early, I
2 would not get ordained.

3 And number 16, finally, I consider that the fact
4 that after I complained the Church made it clear the
5 issue was now subject to Church law, not secular law,
6 and that made access to the Police not available to me,
7 and that made me very vulnerable.

8 Q. Thank you, Louise. And you've referred in there of
9 being put into the hands of a tutor or mentor. Now,
10 the course of study you undertook for your ordination
11 was not coming to Auckland to St John's for a three-
12 year residential course? You were remaining in your
13 community and you were having this different way of a
14 path to ordination?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. And you describe in your extract from the book about
17 the first reaction to the allocation of the mentor that
18 was assigned, that you were assigned to. So, can I
19 invite you to read at paragraph 18, beginning on
20 page 5?

21 A. I therefore consider it somewhat ironic that my book is
22 now prescribed reading for those attending St John's
23 College.

24 R was appointed by the Bishop as my mentor and my
25 spiritual advisor. The title given to confer his
26 status in this role was "uncle" - a close family member
27 but not as close as a father. With both a biological
28 father and God the Father, there was a bit much
29 competition for that title. An uncle was close but not
30 too close. It was his duty to guide me as a candidate
31 in training for ordination to the priesthood, with his
32 wisdom, knowledge, experience and maturity. To be
33 truthful, I was delighted with his appointment as my
34 mentor. Apart from the initial embarrassment at the
35 first interview, which I had rationalised to be my

1 problem, I saw him as the ideal mentor for me. He was
2 funny, charming, conceited, egotistical and
3 challenging. He knew theology, he knew the Bishop, he
4 knew the Archbishop. He was a superb preacher and
5 liturgist. He was Chairman of the New Zealand Prayer
6 Book Commission and a member of a national theological
7 education committee for training clergy and lay people.
8 To me, it seemed that he was at the coalface of the
9 Church. He was the charismatic visionary.

10 Q. Thank you, Louise. As you've indicated, it's this
11 person that will have the yes or no,
12 green-light/red-light, over whether you are able to
13 progress to ordination?

14 A. Absolutely, total control.

15 Q. We are going to move now to extracts from your book
16 that deal with the description of the abuse that
17 occurred.

18 We have had a discussion about whether you would go
19 through these parts of your statement?

20 A. We did.

21 Q. As I've said, that are from the published book, but
22 you've made a very conscious decision that you do wish
23 to go through these parts. Would you like to explain
24 to the Commissioners why it's important to you that
25 this part of your evidence is heard in the oral
26 hearing?

27 A. So many times, we hear about abuse but it's left to the
28 imagination and because it's like on a piece of string,
29 what constitutes abuse? And there's a lot of confusion
30 about these areas between, you know, just flirting and
31 criminal acts.

32 So, I did make a very conscious decision that this
33 disgusting part of my evidence was really important to
34 be read out so that people would understand.

1 Q. Thank you, Louise. And the part we're going to start
2 at is on page 7 of your statement and it's the second
3 paragraph down on the page beginning, "About two
4 months".

5 A. Thank you.

6 Q. This is going to be quite a lengthy period, so if you
7 feel you need to take a pause at any point, have a
8 glass of water, just feel free. There's no need to
9 rush it.

10 A. Right. About two months after my selection, R began to
11 make sexual advances towards me. One day when we were
12 in his office, he sat beside me on the sofa and began
13 to stroke my face. I told him not to do that and
14 removed his hand. He laughed, took his hand away and
15 put it firmly on my thigh. I removed it from there
16 also, and at the same time I asked him to stop it. I
17 did not yell at him. I did not hit him. I merely
18 requested that he stop what he was doing. His sexual
19 advances were an intrusion into what I believed to be a
20 working relationship. I became very confused, my mind
21 went blank and I lost the thread of the conversation
22 completely. I felt ill at ease and most uncomfortable.
23 And yet, this was the strange dichotomy, I liked him
24 very much for all the reasons that I outlined earlier.
25 But when he added the sexual component, that really
26 confused things.

27 I was pleased with myself for having dealt with the
28 situation as I did - being firm, appealing to reason,
29 and leaving it at that. Adult stuff - let's be clear
30 about boundaries, I just wanted to get on with my
31 training. I believe that I had given him an
32 unambiguous message that I was not interested in him
33 sexually. But as I drove home, I felt nauseous and
34 found myself trying to figure out what had happened.

1 The minute I stepped through the door, the telephone
2 rang. It was R, solicitously inquiring whether I had
3 made the journey home all right. I told him that I had
4 and thanked him for his concern. I did not tell him
5 that I felt sick, confused and uneasy. I was walking
6 right into the trap. If I told him how angry I really
7 felt, shouted at him, or walked out on him, then there
8 would be no ordination.

9 After my mind cleared, I decided to do a bit of
10 investigation and check him out. By this time, I knew
11 that another woman from the country had been accepted
12 for non-stipendiary Ministry but she had withdrawn from
13 training. I wanted to know whether she too had
14 experienced sexual advances from R. Without mentioning
15 my own situation, I asked her as tactfully as I could
16 why she had withdrawn. She cited family reasons and I
17 did not pursue the matter any further with her. I rang
18 another woman whose candidacy had not yet been
19 finalised but who seemed to be seeing him in his office
20 regularly. She was a solo mother with three small
21 children and she had rented a flat within walking
22 distance of the college. She drove out to Darfield to
23 talk with me and without divulging any personal
24 information, advised me to be very wary of him because
25 he was dangerous. Later I learned that he had sexually
26 exploited her mercilessly and was psychologically cruel
27 to her and that he sexually used her and at the same
28 time had deliberately denied her access to the training
29 programme.

30 Now that I was aware of his propensities, albeit
31 without any specific details, I had to make a decision.
32 That decision was an important one to make because it
33 involved trust. I did not make it lightly, but I was
34 forced into making it. I was forced into a position of
35 having to decide to trust a man who was in a position

1 of trust in the Church but was not trustworthy in terms
2 of personal relationships. I rationalised to myself
3 that I had been put into his care by two Bishops who
4 must have been aware of his character.

5 I was told his training would be apt.

6 I did try to discuss the issue of sexuality in our
7 working relationship with him. I even went to the
8 extent of asking to be transferred to another mentor,
9 but he refused this request on the grounds that the
10 only other mentor available was not good enough for me,
11 and he thought that he was the only person who could
12 train me. Another little power play, and it trapped me
13 again. I had made a bid for freedom from him and it
14 had failed. So, I stupidly allowed the status quo to
15 remain, and I took what I believed to be the only
16 possible path and submitted myself to his care.

17 Eventually, I contacted another woman who had
18 trained under him for non-stipendiary Ministry and I
19 talked with her about the problem, that's of training,
20 and that he was always tired and too tired to do
21 anything. And she said that she too had experienced
22 the same compassion for him and said that she had once
23 invited him out to her place for lunch where he had
24 fallen asleep. She said that he had been pleased—she
25 had been pleased to offer him some respite from his
26 busy life. I thought that this was a good idea and I
27 invited him out to my place for lunch. I believed that
28 if he were not so tired he would be able to train me
29 better.

30 After lunch, as we were walking through the house,
31 he pushed me against the wall of a dark corridor and
32 began to kiss me. He pulled up my shirt and bra, then
33 he unzipped his trousers and then let his pants and his
34 underpants fall to the floor, leaving his genitals
35 fully exposed. I stared in bewilderment of the strange

1 sight of my spiritual guide standing with his pants
2 down 'round his ankles, his eyes had glazed over and he
3 was panting with his tongue out. I stood transfixed to
4 the spot. I had no idea what to do. All my natural
5 impulses towards self-protection had left me. I do not
6 know what would have happened if the telephone had not
7 rung. I leapt for the phone and answered it, pulling
8 down my shirt. While I talked on the phone, he left
9 his pants down. This breathing space gave me time to
10 gather my wits and after I had finished the call I
11 asked him to pull his pants up.

12 He left soon after, and only then did I have the
13 time to reflect on what had happened. I was shocked at
14 the incident and began to understand the implications
15 of any involvement with him. I considered reporting
16 him to the Bishop, but I realised that I could be held
17 responsible for the incident; since I had innocently
18 invited him to my house for lunch, it could appear that
19 I had "asked" for it. I blamed myself and took
20 responsibility for the attack.

21 The day of my appointment with the surgeon—

22 Q. Can I pause you, Louise. This is a subsequent extract
23 from the book?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. It's missing—we're not going through everything you
26 wrote in the book. This is jumping forward slightly in
27 time to this next section?

28 A. Yes. I had to go and see a surgeon with the thought
29 that I had cancer.

30 The day of my appointment with the surgeon, R rang
31 before I left home and said he needed to see me
32 urgently, so I arranged to see him on my way to the
33 hospital. When I arrived at the college, he looked
34 tired and grey. I thought he looked worse than I was,
35 and so sacrificial was I that I did not tell him about

1 my own little problem. I had given up talking to him
2 about myself anyway because he always turned this
3 around and made it seem to be a weakness in me. R
4 invited me over to his house, which was adjacent to the
5 college, saying that he had a book to give me. The
6 floor in the sitting room was covered in application
7 forms from the next year's students and he was also in
8 the middle of an Australasian three-week long
9 mid-Ministry reflection course. I wondered why I had
10 been called in to see him so urgently. We discussed
11 the book.

12 Then while I was talking he stood up, came over to
13 me, undid his trousers and pushed his penis hard into
14 my mouth. He held my head hard against his genitals so
15 that I could not move. I tasted the encrusted salt of
16 old urine as I gagged and gasped for breath. He
17 finally released me. I felt sick, degraded and
18 humiliated beyond belief. I left straight away and
19 went to see the surgeon.

20 Q. Thank you, Louise. I know that's not been easy for you
21 to read.

22 A. No.

23 Q. Do you want to take a glass of water before we move on?
24 The next section of your brief that we're going to go
25 through relates to the impacts that this abuse had on
26 you. So, are you happy to summarise for the
27 Commissioners what was the immediate impact of what
28 happened, what had happened on you?

29 A. There was the immediate impact, of course, and the
30 long-term impact. It's hard to remember. You know, I
31 felt so disgusting and yet I still had four kids to
32 look after and get ready for school in the morning and
33 make them breakfast. I became increasingly weepy and
34 crying and began having breakdowns, I would have to go

1 to bed, but you know my determination was pretty
2 strong.

3 The long-term impact as well was that I did
4 breakdown continuously, but I realised that my mind was
5 a good strong thing over my body, so I decided to study
6 and get out of his contact.

7 Q. So, that's a reference to you've tried to enrol in some
8 alternative modes of study?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Including through study in Dunedin?

11 A. Yes, and a CPE course at Sunnyside, as it was then,
12 yes.

13 Q. And just if I summarise rather than you having to go
14 through it, the impacts that you described in your book
15 included sleeplessness and sleepwalking?

16 A. Yes, sleepwalking.

17 Q. And being curled up in bed for days?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. And you described, the language you've used is you were
20 outside your normal experience?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. And, in fact, you became very, very low. Before you
23 had this aspect of the resilience you've described in
24 terms of deciding the alternative way that you would
25 look to continue on your ordination path?

26 A. I still had to keep in contact with him. I never knew
27 when he was going to call in again. So, it was not a
28 good time.

29 Q. And you also referred to it being at times very
30 difficult for you to stay in Church?

31 A. Oh, absolutely, yes. Well, I keep on thinking, you
32 know, when the Bishops say that R was going to be an
33 apt trainer and mentor, I thought, well, why did I get
34 landed with a sexual addict and a pervert who just
35 damaged women? It didn't seem to fit really, so I had

1 a lot of hard thinking about this and where I needed to
2 be but I'm quite a determined person and I thought this
3 is not going to stop me from doing what I felt called
4 to do.

5 Q. And did you feel at that time, Louise, that you could
6 inform the Bishop because the Bishop had been the
7 person that had assigned this mentor to you?

8 A. Patricia and I talked at length about this in a little
9 cafe up in Arthur's Pass. I think that we both came to
10 the realisation that if I said anything to the Bishop
11 nothing would happen and I would be taken out of any
12 training programme because it would be deemed to be my
13 fault, the fact that I exist is my fault. So, we
14 decided that I would keep on going. And then when I
15 was ordained, we would then be able to talk about it
16 because then we would be within the context of clergy
17 and would have to be listened to.

18 Q. And so, some quite conscious decision-making around
19 that?

20 A. Very, yes.

21 Q. You've described in relation to the extract in your
22 book, in relation to not feeling that you could
23 actually sit in Church at times, of a day where you
24 actually couldn't stay in the Church and you left?

25 A. Yes.

26 Q. This did actually lead to you making a disclosure about
27 what had happened, didn't it?

28 A. It did, it did. I told my Vicar. I didn't tell him
29 all the ghastly details but I said that there was a
30 problem.

31 Q. I'm going to take you, Louise, to the part of the
32 extract of your book that relates to this. This is on
33 page 14 of your statement.

34 A. Okay.

1 Q. Just to set the scene for the extract I am going to ask
2 you to read, you had a discussion with the Vicar's wife
3 because she came after you after you've been unable to
4 stay in Church and then a conversation with the Vicar
5 has followed. And the extract I'm going to ask you to
6 read begins, it's about nine lines down, beginning,
7 "When I had calmed down". This is in the context of
8 your discussion with the Vicar.

9 A. When I had calmed down, we discussed the option of
10 reporting R to the Bishop. However, the Vicar was
11 aware that R was doing valuable work in the Diocese and
12 he expressed concern about R's family and the belief
13 that they needed to be protected. In the final
14 analysis, he said that it was best to say nothing and
15 leave the women to deal with it.

16 Q. Thank you. Can you continue reading the next section?

17 A. Nevertheless, the most important thing for me was to
18 have told someone. It clarified things for me and I
19 resolved to change the way I operated. I learnt that
20 the only way I could survive was to be myself, to be
21 honest with myself, and to learn to handle the power
22 imbalance. I became aware that I did not really know
23 who I was because I had always tried to be the person
24 that someone else wanted or expected me to be, and this
25 had begun back in my early childhood. So, instead of
26 reacting to R's moods and petty tantrums, I tried to
27 maintain my own sense of self in spite of what he threw
28 at me.

29 Q. Thank you, Louise. That's the context in which you've
30 developed this strength that you've referred to?

31 A. Yes.

32 Q. And you've taken steps to create some more distance
33 between your training?

34 A. Yes.

35 Q. And R?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. The next part of your brief I'm going to take you to,
3 is an extract beginning at paragraph 20 on page 19 of
4 the statement.

5 **CHAIR:** Just before we do move on. Sorry to interrupt.
6 I hope you don't mind me asking, I don't want details.
7 We have read your brief of evidence and we know what
8 you haven't been saying in public. Can I confirm, is
9 it correct throughout this time, you have told us about
10 two incidents, that there were more you haven't told us
11 about and it was continuing; is that correct?

12 A. Yes, yes.

13 **CHAIR:** That is just for the record so that we know.
14 Thank you.

15 **MS ANDERSON:**

16 Q. This is reflections outside the context of your book
17 written some years ago about the impacts the abuse has
18 had on you. Can I invite you to read paragraphs 20-22
19 please?

20 A. The words describing the impact on me were written a
21 long time ago now. Pulling together my previous
22 writings and my current thoughts, I made the following
23 summary comments about the impact on me.

24 The impacts of this has been life-long. My
25 perspectives on human relationships and sexuality have
26 changed. Innocence about normal human relationships
27 have suffered irretrievable damage with a lost
28 innocence. There is no going back to a normal life.

29 Once I had raised the abuse I had suffered, my
30 Bishop would not licence me to Minister. I had a real
31 fight to get my licence reinstated. And initially, I
32 was only licensed on a year at a time basis.

33 Q. Thank you, Louise. Is your current licence
34 arrangement, it's now no longer on a year-by-year
35 basis?

1 A. No. Is it every two years? Every two years, yes, so
2 I'm on a good basis now, thank you.

3 Q. We are now moving to the parts of your statement using
4 extracts from the book that you wrote relating to the
5 steps that you took to get a remedy or redress from the
6 Catholic Church. We're beginning at, and again another
7 relatively long section to read, so do hydrate. We are
8 beginning at paragraph 23 on page 20 of your brief.

9 A. I now set out parts of my book that detail the
10 astonishing difficulties I and others had in getting
11 the Church to respond to what had happened.

12 In August of that same year, this is 1989, the
13 ordained women in the Anglican Church of New Zealand
14 decided to hold their first conference. It was a
15 wonderful coming together of all of the ordained women
16 in New Zealand to celebrate 12 years of women's
17 ordination. I was asked to be on the organising
18 committee, but I was unable to help since my oldest
19 daughter was sitting her first State exam and I felt
20 that this was a priority.

21 The programme included a workshop on sexual
22 harassment. The women's network had deliberately added
23 this workshop to the conference in order to initiate a
24 conversation about a problem we knew existed within the
25 structures of the Church, but which had not been talked
26 about publicly.

27 I was not able to be present, since I had to go home
28 to take my daughters to the Springston Trophy Riding
29 Event held in Waimate. To our surprise, nine women
30 attended that workshop and these nine women pledged
31 confidentiality. The content of the conversation was
32 to be kept secret among the members of the group
33 because the women were afraid of the consequences to
34 their careers in the Church and perhaps they too felt

1 that they had to protect the men who had sexually
2 harassed them.

3 Whatever the reason, the decision to keep
4 confidentiality clearly indicated the secrecy and fear
5 that surrounded the subject of sexuality in the Church
6 at that time.

7 It was also abundantly clear that whatever the
8 reason for the secrecy, no-one was going to divulge
9 what happened in the workshop. The problem still had
10 the potential to remain hidden.

11 There were 14 recommendations from the Ordained
12 Women's Conference. These included recommendations on
13 the selection and assessment of women for ordination,
14 justice issues, the continuation of barriers against
15 women's ordination, and sexual harassment in the
16 Church. The fourth recommendation was addressed to
17 Bishops, standing committees, St John's College and
18 Knox College. It read:

19 "We have discovered some dynamics of Church life
20 which create an environment in which sexual harassment
21 may occur, e.g. robing, travelling, meeting alone,
22 one-to-one contact with men in colleague and pastoral
23 situations. We acknowledge the reality that there may
24 be jealousy from the Vicar's wife. The Church can
25 include and attract people with difficulties with their
26 sexuality, the nature of the work makes us very
27 vulnerable. Sexual harassment in the Church can
28 include sexual jokes, language, people in power
29 positions blocking, inappropriate touching, invasion of
30 space, requests for sex, innuendos, corporate
31 harassment, for example synod. So, what could we do?
32 Talk about it. Follow hunches, physically move. Be
33 ready to be honest. Practice strategies. Teaching and
34 modelling behaviour. Don't give up. Carry on. Seek
35 support. Work on your self-esteem. Teach about

1 healthy sexuality. Actively develop healthy
2 relationships with clergy and lay leaders' wives.

3 At the end of the conference, an interviewer on
4 National Radio interviewed one of the organisers of the
5 conference and honed in on the need for a sexual
6 harassment workshop. He asked her if sexual harassment
7 in the Church was a problem. She replied that it was.
8 He pushed her further and asked if the problem was with
9 laymen or with clergymen. She replied that both were
10 implicated in inappropriate behaviour. He then asked
11 her again in an astonished tone if clergymen sexually
12 harassed women in the Church. Once again, she replied
13 in the affirmative. Again, he pushed her, wanting to
14 know what form the harassment took and offered the term
15 "groping" to assist with her explanation. She declined
16 to comment further.

17 This was the first public revelation of the problem
18 of sexual harassment and abuse by male clergy. It was
19 a milestone.

20 Q. Thanks. The next section you are going to read, we are
21 jumping forward a little part in your book.

22 A. Okay. On the 7th of September 1989, the newspaper ran
23 the article on page one. It was a good article and
24 covered the territory well.

25 It did not take long for the Church hierarchy to
26 track me down. There were not many women Priests
27 around with four children. I was sitting down to an
28 evening meal with my family when Bishop M rang. He had
29 just stepped off the plane from an overseas excursion
30 and, as well as being tired, he was extremely angry.
31 He demanded to know why I had not gone to him to talk
32 about the problem. I told him that I did not have
33 enough confidence in him to deal with the problem and
34 that he would have swept it under the carpet and got
35 rid of me.

1 He asked me if I would like to speak to the
2 Archbishop. I replied that I would be delighted to
3 speak with the Archbishop if he wanted to speak with
4 me, but I was nervous about talking to the Archbishop
5 in spite of my bravado.

6 However nervous I was though, I did not expect such
7 an outright attack from the leader of the Church. I
8 was taken aback by his line of questioning. He
9 informed me that I was completely at fault and blamed
10 me, casting aspersions about my moral character. He
11 said that R was a victim. I wondered where his
12 allegiances lay. They certainly did not lie with me
13 and other women who might be in danger. His first
14 allegiance seemed to be to R and to the Church.

15 Do you want me to keep going?

16 Q. Keep going to the next paragraph there.

17 A. The Church did not take the issue seriously. Two weeks
18 went by without any communication from the diocesan
19 office or the Bishop. It was evident that he hoped it
20 would go away, so that he would not have to deal with
21 the matter. My Vicar rang the Bishop to prod him into
22 action and invited him to come and see me. He would
23 not come but in his place sent out the Dean of the
24 Christchurch Cathedral in his position as Vicar
25 General. As I told my full story to him, I shook
26 uncontrollably, racked with feelings of anxiety, guilt
27 and betrayal. The Dean listened very carefully. He
28 told me that if I wanted to make a written formal
29 complaint it would ensure that the Church would allow
30 the correct procedure for this sort of complaint. Our
31 worst suspicions were confirmed, which were that the
32 Bishop would not even consider the matter until formal
33 complaints in writing were sent to him.

34 Q. Thank you, Louise. We're going to move forward in your
35 statement to page 26.

1 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Can I just confirm, so there was,
2 in-between the RNZ interview, another newspaper article
3 that you participated in that led to the Bishop's phone
4 call; is that how the narrative went?

5 A. I can't remember that.

6 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Okay. There's a reference to the
7 newspaper running an article on page 1?

8 A. Yes, yes.

9 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** You were then sought out by the
10 Bishop?

11 A. How do you want me to reply to that?

12 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** I am just wondering, there seemed
13 to be a missing part of the narrative and I see there
14 is an extract from your book that is excluded but it
15 seems that the Bishop has approached you after reading
16 a newspaper article that you appear to have been quoted
17 in. I was just seeking clarification.

18 A. I am sorry, I haven't looked at that.

19 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** That's fine.

20 A. I do recall saying that the Church was about people,
21 not about buildings.

22 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Okay. Ka pai, that's okay.

23 A. Sorry, a corporate memory.

24 **MS ANDERSON:**

25 Q. Louise, moving forward in time slightly to page 26 of
26 your statement. This is beginning where you're
27 referencing the distinction between the approach the
28 Church took to R, relative to the women.

29 A. Okay. At the same time that the women were strongly
30 motivated to do something, R was allowed free reign in
31 his office. The Board of Governors had given him a
32 lawyer to help with the processes. He had free access
33 to the college telephone and used this significant
34 resource to gather up his friends and colleagues to

1 defend him. He vilified the women, claiming that we
2 had thrown ourselves at him. We all knew better.

3 To put things on a more formal basis, according to
4 the original suggestion of the Dean, in September 1989
5 four brave but nervous women Priests submitted formal
6 written complaints to the Bishop following the
7 procedure laid down by the Church canons.

8 Q. Can I pause you there, Louise. That is a reference to
9 what's known as Title D?

10 A. Yes, Canon II Title D. We had faith in the process,
11 even though we could not foresee the future and were
12 ill-prepared for this pioneering journey for the
13 Church. The complaints went as follows.

14 We, being clergy, officials or members of the Church
15 of the Province of New Zealand wish to bring a
16 complaint against R.

17 Q. Can I ask you to speak more slowly, thanks Louise.

18 A. Okay. We, being clergy, officials or members of the
19 Church of the Province of New Zealand wish to bring a
20 complaint against R, a Priest of the Diocese of
21 Christchurch in relation to Title D Canon II 5.4(c) of
22 the Canons of the Province of New Zealand.

23 The complaint is one of sexual harassment, defined
24 as "unwanted imposition of sexual behaviour in a
25 context of unequal power" and committed in respect to
26 the undersigned complainant.

27 We respectfully request that you promptly and
28 appropriately investigate this complaint.

29 Q. Then we are going to move to page 27, the paragraph
30 beginning, "Once we had submitted our complaints"?

31 A. Once we had submitted our complaints, we waited. There
32 was nothing; no visible action, no consultation with
33 the women. Nothing at all. On the 20th of October
34 1989, a full month after our complaints had been
35 submitted, Bishop M wrote to inform us that, while he

1 took seriously any allegations of sexual harassment or
2 misconduct, the complaints about the Reverend Canon R,
3 although unspecific in some cases and unsubstantiated
4 in others, had been investigated. He also said that
5 the evidence which has been furnished does not lie
6 within the past two years as is required by General
7 Synod regulations and therefore a formal Commission
8 cannot be setup under the Canons.

9 Q. Can I pause you there, Louise. When you've read the
10 language there, when you're being told it had been
11 investigated but there wouldn't be a Title D process,
12 what's your recollection of what that investigation was
13 that's referred to at that part of your book?

14 A. We had just absolutely no idea. This sort of unfolded
15 because of the two-year thing and there were four of us
16 and he had asked two of the women if they had been
17 sexually abused within those two years and they had not
18 but the other two of us had and we were not asked.

19 Q. Thank you. Can I invite you to continue with the
20 paragraph beginning, "We were shocked"?

21 A. We were shocked on two counts. The reference to
22 unspecific and unsubstantiated complaints was
23 ridiculous. None of us had been asked by the Bishop
24 what our evidence was. I wondered what had happened to
25 the report that the Dean had written after he had come
26 to see me in the place of the Bishop. I knew that
27 report outlined very specific evidence, although
28 important information had been excluded because of his
29 own revulsion. I also knew that he had labelled that
30 report "extremely confidential". I began to suspect
31 that he had not shared his report with anybody else,
32 for how else could the Bishop claim that our complaints
33 were not substantiated?

34 Q. I will just signpost for the Commissioners that this is
35 an aspect we will be returning to after the substantial

1 statement has been gone through. It is just some
2 issues that have been raised by the Church in relation
3 to these matters.

4 Please continue, Louise.

5 A. Thank you. The second issue that he outlined was that
6 a formal commission could not be set up to hear the
7 complaints because the sexual harassment or misconduct
8 had not occurred within the last two years. The Bishop
9 had asked only two out of the four women when the
10 behaviour had occurred. He had deliberately not asked
11 the two of us for whom the misconduct had occurred
12 during the last two years. And neither would he listen
13 to us when we explained to him that he had asked only
14 two of the complainants and had in fact taken the
15 experience of the two to include all four. He had an
16 opportunity at this point to redress his neglect and to
17 institute the proper proceedings as they were laid down
18 in the Canons. But he chose not to do this. We were
19 outraged. It was clear that the Bishop was attempting
20 to put barriers up deliberately so that the complaints
21 would be invalidated. In his letter he continued
22 as follows:

23 "The Reverend Canon R has been formally admonished".

24 Q. Can I ask you to slow your pace a little there.

25 A. "The Reverend Canon R has been formally admonished and
26 warned and has had seniority removed. He was not
27 permitted to stand for General Synod, he is no longer
28 an examining chaplain, he is no longer involved in any
29 way with post-ordination training. He has been
30 replaced on the Provincial Board of Ministry and on
31 Theological Education By Extension. There will not be
32 any situation in which he will supervise women alone.
33 He has commenced regular therapy and will continue in
34 therapy to ensure that attitudes are carefully
35 monitored. He is required to be in supervision. He

1 has been removed from training roles, except in group
2 situations in a limited role when call in by someone
3 else."

4 Q. I will just pause you there. We have the reference to
5 therapy being offered to R. Were you offered therapy
6 at any point in this process?

7 A. That was later, I think. The Bishop kindly offered me
8 one counselling session with a counsellor of his
9 choice.

10 Q. Thank you. Please continue reading.

11 A. The truth was that although R had been removed from his
12 positions of seniority, he had not had his licence to
13 function as a Priest removed. This meant that he would
14 still have access to women in his position as Priest.
15 Moreover, on the grounds that the Church did not employ
16 R, the Bishop had abdicated from all responsibility of
17 solving or resolving the complaints. The Bishop
18 informed us that the Board of Governors, that is of
19 GRO-B, now had the responsibility of considering R's
20 position as the Principal of the college and that the
21 Board would communicate separately with us. If we
22 wanted to take the matter further, he told us that we
23 should make another formal complaint to his employers,
24 the college Board of Governors.

25 Q. Please keep reading, Louise.

26 A. This was an interesting twist to events. Pilate was
27 washing his hands. I began to understand the meaning
28 of stonewalling. Even though the Diocese had appointed
29 R to so many of its most pivotal and vital activities,
30 at the final count they refused to take responsibility
31 for his behaviour towards the very people that he had
32 been appointed to care for. The Church leaders
33 abdicated from responsibility and devolved it to the
34 givers of his salary, who were now seen to be the
35 guardians of his moral behaviour. It was not the moral

1 power of the Church that came to be at stake, but
2 money. Although the Board of Governors paid him a
3 salary to be Principal of the college with male
4 university students under his care, it was not to these
5 that his abusive behaviour was directed. He sexually
6 exploited the people whom the Church entrusted to his
7 care—for selection, for training and for teaching—and
8 for this role he was not paid. The other anomaly that
9 became apparent was that the college was under the
10 auspices of the Anglican Church and the Bishop was the
11 Chairman of the Board of Governors. The college was
12 not autonomous but was ruled by the Church. The Church
13 had side-stepped the whole affair on the grounds of
14 money.

15 Q. Thank you, Louise. We're just going to move further
16 down that page to the paragraph beginning, "The Board
17 of Governors of the college"?

18 A. The Board of Governors of the college sent a letter to
19 me care of my Vicar, not to my home address. The
20 letter quoted a resolution made at their meeting on 19
21 October:

22 "The board notes that the warden in his capacity as
23 Bishop of Christchurch has received a number of
24 allegations against the Principal which may reflect on
25 the Principal's fitness to continue to hold the
26 position of Principal of the college, and that the
27 persons concerned be asked to make a formal complaint
28 to the Board should they wish to do so."

29 The sub-warden outlined the procedure clearly. If a
30 formal complaint is received, the Board or a
31 sub-Committee of the Board will set a date to hear the
32 complaint in full and will give Canon R the opportunity
33 to answer that complaint. A suitably qualified person
34 will be appointed to hear the complaint and communicate

1 his findings to the Board. The Board will then act
2 upon these findings.

3 We began again. The first complaint had been hard
4 enough to make. The second was even harder. The
5 submission was now a legal complaint to a secular body
6 that did not claim to have the compassion of Christ
7 but, instead, the fury of the law. We felt in great
8 danger. We were commanded to submit our complaints to
9 the Board's solicitor by 5.00 p.m. on the 6th of
10 November 1989. We requested an extension until
11 20 November so that we could consider our position.
12 The implication of the letter was that if we did not
13 comply with this, then our complaints would be invalid.
14 There was also a thinly veiled threat in the letter
15 with regard to the Board acting on the findings of the
16 suitably qualified man who would control the
17 proceedings. We were well aware that this was not a
18 court of law but a Kangaroo Court setup by the Board to
19 defend their Principal. It was highly likely we could
20 be sued for libel. In full knowledge of the dangers we
21 faced, we submitted our complaints on the 20th of
22 November for consideration by the Board on the 4th of
23 December.

24 Q. Thank you, Louise. We're going to move forward, just
25 to the next part, where given this process you are
26 attempting to engage with a lawyer to help you navigate
27 the process. We're beginning on page 32, at the second
28 paragraph beginning, "In desperation I rang a close
29 friend"?

30 A. In desperation I rang a close friend N, who was a
31 barrister. He was perceptive and got to the heart of
32 the matter quickly. Finally, he rang the Secretary of
33 the Board of Governors of the college to manufacture
34 him of the actions that he had undertaken on our
35 behalf. The result of my barrister friend's action in

1 ringing the Secretary of the Board was extraordinary.
2 It appeared that the Board had not taken our complaint
3 seriously and had had no intention of doing anything
4 with them. Now, when they saw that we were in deadly
5 earnest and would take them to Court if they did not do
6 something, their hand was forced. Either they could
7 sue us for libel, which would give them bad publicity,
8 or they could dismiss R, or force his resignation.

9 N's advice to me as a friend was that the Court
10 process was a harrowing experience. Any woman who
11 brought a case to Court against a man for sexual
12 misdemeanours was certain to be profoundly humiliated
13 and exposed. He told me that from his experience,
14 whatever the outcome of the case, the woman's marriage
15 would inevitably fall apart, and she would be
16 ostracised from her family, friends and community.

17 I gave careful thought to his advice. Of course,
18 the temptation was there to inform the world who was
19 right and who was wrong in this matter, but for the
20 sake of survival it was better left. But I was shocked
21 at his advice. The Church hierarchy had refused
22 justice. And now the realm of secular law made it
23 difficult for women to take their complaints to Court
24 and acted to humiliate women before it would mete out
25 justice.

26 Each woman complainant received a letter dated the
27 5th of December from the Secretary of the Board of
28 Governors of the college announcing that the Board had
29 received and accepted the resignation of Canon R
30 effective from 28 February 1990. The letter added "the
31 Board is accordingly not now in the position to pursue
32 the matters raised in the correspondence between us".

33 Q. I will just pause you there, Louise. This is the last
34 word on the second complaint, that not only yourself

1 but a number of women had made to the Board of the
2 college?

3 A. Yes, the same four of us.

4 Q. Can you please keep reading from the next paragraph?

5 A. Several members of the Board of Governors approached
6 me. One advised me to disappear for a few years.
7 Another asked me what was wrong with exposing oneself
8 in public. Another, who was the Vicar's warden in my
9 home parish, did not support the women and, although
10 the information was confidential, he told his wife, who
11 talked about it freely with her friends. This was not
12 helpful.

13 Had we complained so that R would resign? R was
14 gone—gone from the college and gone from the Diocese.
15 Was that what we had wanted? Several of our worries
16 were salved by this result. The women students
17 entering the college for the first time would be
18 protected from his sexually predatory behaviour. So
19 would the Churchwomen who came into the college for
20 theological education, training and course work. This
21 in itself was good.

22 However, there were two factors that gave us further
23 concern. The first was the knowledge that R had been
24 allowed to resign from his position as Principal. The
25 reason for his resignation was set aside as the Board
26 farewelled him at a party given in His Honour and gave
27 him what was rumoured to be a \$60,000 golden handshake—
28 a year's salary. We heard that the speechmaker at the
29 farewell party publicly apologised to R for the
30 victimisation and false accusations from which he had
31 suffered at the hands of the women.

32 Q. Can I just pause you there, Louise. Is it fair to say
33 that an aspect that comes out through different parts
34 of your book, is that there's actually a negative

1 reaction towards the women in the Diocese that have
2 come forward?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And that has continued for a period of time?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. What sort of period of time would you say that you've
7 experienced that reaction from members of your faith
8 community there, that have really transferred the
9 negativity towards yourself, consistent with the
10 apology given here in a public forum?

11 A. Well, fortunately Priests and Bishops come and go. And
12 so, within that timeframe there have been, you know,
13 people who don't even know about this. Although I
14 would say that GRO-B and I, we still experience the
15 fact that, you know, we were "those women", you know.

16 Q. I'm going to move. The group of women there having
17 received that response from the college, you didn't
18 leave it there, did you? You went on to have some
19 subsequent meetings with the Bishop?

20 A. Yes, we did because the next one is, "Meeting with the
21 Church hierarchy".

22 Q. I'm going to take you to the second of those meetings,
23 the content begins on page 38, the last paragraph of
24 that page. This is a meeting in January 1990. The
25 women have had their first meeting at the Bishop's
26 house on the 20th of December, so that's after you've
27 been informed of the resignation and the fact your
28 complaints weren't being heard.

29 And would it be fair to characterise, before we move
30 on to what you've written about the second meeting, is
31 it fair to characterise or do you want to characterise
32 in your own words the overall aspect of that first
33 meeting with the Bishop? Was that a meeting that went
34 well from your perspective?

1 A. It wasn't, it wasn't, it was antagonistic. The Bishop
2 had R's support people there and, once again, whereas
3 we'd been hoping that there would be a Bishops' Court
4 established to hear this, so it would be formal and
5 official, instead we were met again with another very
6 antagonistic, I would say, Kangaroo Court.

7 Q. And when you refer to Bishops' Court, you are referring
8 to the Title D Tribunal process?

9 A. Absolutely, yes.

10 Q. So, that first meeting hasn't been successful?

11 A. No.

12 Q. From the perspective of you and the others who attended
13 with you. We're just going to now move to the second
14 meeting which has occurred about a month later, January
15 1990, beginning at page 38, the last paragraph on that
16 page.

17 A. That's the next meeting.

18 Q. Yes.

19 A. The next meeting with Archbishop D, Bishop P from the
20 Dunedin Diocese, Bishop M and Bishop-elect Dean D, was
21 scheduled for late January 1990. It was not clear
22 whether this group was intended to be a formally
23 established Court of Bishops, which according to the
24 statutes and canons of the Church must be called to
25 hear complaints of this nature about actions that had
26 taken place within the past two years. In other words,
27 we were not clear whether Bishop M's error in asking
28 only two of the complainants whether or not they had
29 been harassed within the last two years was now
30 officially being rectified.

31 Q. Keep going.

32 A. I received a letter from Bishop M telling me that my
33 three support people had been cut down to one. It was
34 obvious that he either failed to understand or refused
35 to believe that one of the new complainants was not my

1 support person but was present in her own right to
2 complain about her treatment by R. I had to explain to
3 him again in writing that she had been present on her
4 own account, having experienced sexual harassment from
5 R, that this had been carefully explained to him at the
6 last meeting and that there were too many assumptions
7 and presuppositions floating around and these required
8 time and care to talk through and to clear.

9 Q. And, Louise, can I ask you to move to the bottom
10 paragraph on that page and continue reading from there?

11 A. The meeting was heavily weighted in terms of senior
12 members of the Church hierarchy. The Archbishop, two
13 Bishops, the Dean, who was the Bishop-elect, and two
14 Archdeacons were arraigned against six women Priests
15 and four lay women. However, we knew that we had an
16 ally in Bishop P, for she was known for her support of
17 women and the quality of her judgment.

18 Bishop M opened the meeting with a Bible reading and
19 with prayers for hearing each other with open hearts
20 and for reconciliation. The process for the meeting
21 was discussed and agreed upon. We were confused about
22 the difference between resolution and reconciliation.
23 We wanted some resolution to this matter in the form of
24 proper processes being put into place for future
25 complaints and also for the Diocese to believe the
26 women when they complained. It became evident
27 throughout the meeting that what Bishop M and the
28 Archbishop wanted was reconciliation. For us,
29 reconciliation was sending a confused message. Who
30 were we to be reconciled with in the first place? Were
31 we to be reconciled with ourselves and reconciled to
32 the fact that this is how men normally behave and we
33 should accept this behaviour as a norm? Or reconciled
34 with the Bishop? Or with the people who had vehemently
35 opposed us in favour of a man who was sexually abusive?

1 Or were we expected to be reconciled with the man who
2 had sexually abused us? We were very puzzled. It
3 appeared that the authorities wanted to smooth the
4 whole business over and carry on as though it had never
5 happened, even though they did not know what had
6 happened. Their focus of attention had been
7 concentrated on the validity of our complaints
8 according to the Canons and the Statutes of the Church
9 and they had done their best to declare that our
10 complaints were invalid because of the two-year clause.

11 Q. Thanks, Louise. I'll pause you there and just moving
12 over to the next page, page 42, the paragraph
13 beginning, "The Archbishop stated".

14 A. The Archbishop stated that the Church had its own law
15 which was separate and different from secular law. He
16 said that as Priests of the Church we did not have
17 recourse to civil law and that judgment would be meted
18 out by the law of the Church. He then informed us that
19 the law of the Church differed from civil law and that
20 it was concerned with forgiveness and reconciliation,
21 rather than with prosecution and punishment. He
22 commanded us to work within the law of the Church.

23 Q. Just going on to that last paragraph, I'll stop you
24 midway through that but if you can begin, "We were not
25 yet ready"?

26 A. We were not yet ready to fulfil the law of forgiveness
27 and reconciliation. We felt that it was too soon and
28 that there was a process in the act of forgiveness that
29 required the activity of both parties. To this end, we
30 requested the Bishop to ask R to write letters of
31 apology to us and to our families for the chaos and
32 destruction that he had caused in our lives. Without
33 his acknowledgment of the pain and suffering that he
34 had caused, we were unable to forgive him. We women
35 said that if he did not apologise to us, we would go to

1 the press again. We, in turn, were compelled into an
2 agreement that we would not go to the press without
3 prior consultation with the Bishop, who would approve
4 what had been written by us before it was published.

5 Q. Just pausing there, Louise. There was a process where
6 there was a to-ing and fro-ing over an apology that was
7 published. That's something that occurred as a result
8 of this interaction?

9 A. Did R apologise? R certainly did not apologise.

10 Q. No, it was an apology from the Church. You'd been
11 negotiating a draft of that for a period of time?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. But what I—the point just before the break because we
14 are about to take a break at 11.30, you've been going
15 for a long time, I thought if we could move to page 43,
16 which is we're now moving forward into 1991.

17 A. Okay.

18 Q. And just that paragraph, last paragraph, "In June
19 1991".

20 A. In June 1991, the Provincial Board for Ministry Tikanga
21 Pakeha, put out a document entitled, "Sexual
22 Harassment: An Issue for the Church". It took the
23 Church nearly 2 years to accept that there was an issue
24 and to deal with it seriously: It took enormous effort
25 from many people to come up with appropriate processes
26 to manage the tidal wave that swept over it.

27 Q. Thank you, Louise. I'll invite you to pause there and,
28 Madam Chair, I think that might be a convenient place
29 to take a break.

30 **CHAIR:** It is a very good time before we move on to the
31 next section, yes. We will take the morning
32 adjournment.

33

34 **Hearing adjourned from 11.28 a.m. until 11.45 a.m.**

35

1 **MS ANDERSON:**

2 Q. Thank you, Louise. Thank you for the evidence that
3 you've given so far. We are now going to move on to
4 the part of your evidence that has a forward-looking
5 focus, so we're at paragraph 24 of your statement of
6 evidence where you are addressing some recommendations
7 and then I will have some supplementary questions for
8 you in relation to those recommendation which counsel
9 for the Anglican Church have wished you to address.

10 So, for the moment, can I ask you to read from
11 paragraph 24 to paragraph 30.

12 A. Can I, Katherine, make an addition with the
13 recommendations that we have?

14 Q. Absolutely, yes, yes.

15 A. Thank you.

16 **CHAIR:** We have again given a copy of those additional
17 ones.

18 A. No, you haven't.

19 **CHAIR:** We haven't, okay. Is that something else?

20 A. These were something that Katherine said that the
21 Church lawyers—

22 **CHAIR:** Sorry, I got that wrong. Thank you, you add
23 what you want to your recommendations, yes.

24 A. Thank you. I have been asked to comment on what I
25 think the Church could have done better when I and
26 other women made complaints that we had been abused. I
27 understand this aspect of my evidence may help the
28 Commission when it is making recommendations about how
29 redress processes can be improved in the future.

30 My first comment is that while there clearly is an
31 unfortunate history of abuse in the Church, it should
32 never happen in the first place. Prevention
33 strategies, properly implemented, are crucial.

34 We made some comments here that sexism and the abuse
35 of power is systemic within the Church system. The

1 Church must first acknowledge that there is a problem
2 with the behaviour of some clergy seriously breaching
3 the Code of Conduct expected of them.

4 Q. Can I pause you there and ask, in terms of when you
5 reflect on the period from the beginning of your
6 history that's in this history in the late 1980s
7 through to the current time, do you think that there is
8 an acknowledgment by the Church that there is a problem
9 with the behaviour of certain clergy?

10 A. This is where I want to stand up and wave my arms and
11 stamp my feet because it's taken 30 years to get to
12 this point, 30 years of absolute denial and no
13 acknowledgment, they cannot even follow their own
14 processes, nor their own canons and rules but will do
15 anything to subvert them in order to make themselves
16 look good.

17 Q. And is that your perception of how you would interpret
18 the current landscape?

19 A. That is how I would interpret it.

20 Q. Thank you.

21 A. So, we did look at some issues for prevention.

22 Q. Before you read this out, Louise, I will just clarify
23 so that it's on the record.

24 In relation to these recommendations, the counsel
25 for the Anglican Church have asked for your further
26 reflections on this positive forward-looking component.

27 A. Okay.

28 Q. And that relates to three aspects that you've made
29 recommendations on. So, the first of those is in
30 relation to prevention?

31 A. Yes.

32 Q. The second of those that you'll come on to is in
33 relation to education. And then the final query they
34 had is the part of your evidence that discusses the
35 Title D recommendations.

1 And so, what you are about to address now is your
2 further supplementary comments about what further
3 reflections you've got on how prevention strategies
4 could be imposed?

5 A. That is correct, and I would like to add to that, that
6 the four of us here have worked on these extensively
7 over the last few weeks.

8 Q. And, again, to clarify for the record, all four of the
9 team that you and the three of the team that you've got
10 there with you, are all persons who have been ordained
11 in the Church?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. So, you have that inside knowledge?

14 A. We do.

15 Q. Thank you.

16 A. I am just going to refer to my own—

17 Q. Louise, why don't we go through first what's in the
18 brief and then we'll come back to the supplementary
19 comments?

20 A. Okay, we'll do the recommendations. We were down to
21 25?

22 Q. Yes, you've just finished 25 about prevention
23 strategies.

24 A. I would characterise present Church processes as the
25 ambulance at the bottom of the cliff. Education is the
26 only way the men and women to know what is appropriate
27 behaviour and what is not. And what are appropriate
28 feelings and what are not.

29 In responding to abuse, one of the systemic problems
30 is that the Bishop becomes focused on defending the
31 institution of the Church and his/her clergy.

32 The Church is focused on defending itself. The
33 victim is not seen as the Church's problem. Change in
34 institutional perspective is very much needed.

1 I also consider that unless the Church faces real
2 financial consequences for what happens to those in its
3 care, it won't fully comprehend the consequences of
4 abuse in its care.

5 As well as appropriate punishment according to—I am
6 saving the Church money here. As well as appropriate
7 punishment according to secular law, I consider there
8 should be an ability to fine an offending Priest a lot
9 of money - to indicate personal responsibility and
10 accountability. And this money should be given to the
11 victim as restitution.

12 Q. And just on that point, perhaps the point that we
13 haven't made at the conclusion of your evidence of
14 attempting to get a remedy, is that in the end you did
15 get a financial settlement with the Church?

16 A. Yes, we did.

17 Q. And that was in the vicinity—are you happy to say what
18 the amount was, or would you prefer that to remain
19 confidential?

20 A. It was some time ago and I'm trying to think. There
21 were nine of us who made a claim. We sat with
22 Nigel Hampton for about two years while the Church
23 considered its position and, in the meantime, we were
24 also required before the Church would consider that, to
25 see a psychiatrist.

26 Q. That was part of the process—

27 A. Goodness knows why.

28 Q. That was part of the process of getting the
29 recommendation to the Church as to what was the
30 relevant settlement offer that should be made to the
31 different claimants. The process they engaged was to
32 have you, each of the victims engaged with a
33 psychologist?

34 A. Psychiatrist.

1 Q. Psychiatrist and then there was a joint report from the
2 psychiatrist and the lawyer?

3 A. Yep.

4 Q. To the Church on settlement sums?

5 A. Yes. And I think the psychiatrist also had a hand in
6 apportioning the amount according to those who had
7 suffered the most and the least. And I think the
8 minimum was \$9,000 and I think the maximum was about
9 \$25,000, I think, \$25,000. And so, there were, you
10 know—that's how it happened amongst the nine of us.

11 Q. And it took some years to arrive at that result?

12 A. It did.

13 Q. As you said, you had a lawyer engaged in that process
14 to assist with the process to arrive at a relevant
15 settlement sum?

16 A. We had a QC, Nigel Hampton, yes.

17 Q. So, just moving on from the restitution point and your
18 paragraph 29 to your conclusion in paragraph 30.

19 **CHAIR:** Just before you do. A small point but probably
20 a large one, who paid Mr Hampton's fees?

21 A. I think the Church did.

22 **MS ANDERSON:**

23 Q. In terms of paragraph 30, your current concluding
24 comments because you do have more to offer?

25 A. Okay. I consider that the Church has a long way to go,
26 both in how it prevents abuse and also how it responds
27 to abuse. The recent 2020 reforms to the Title D
28 process simply are not enough.

29 Q. Thank you, Louise. The questions counsel for the
30 Anglican Church asked was for you to expand on your
31 prevention strategies.

32 A. Okay.

33 Q. Expand on matters relating to education and expand on
34 your comment relating to the Title D process.

35 A. Okay.

1 Q. You have prepared your thoughts and brought them along
2 with you this morning to read?

3 A. I have, thank you. This is our recommendations to the
4 Church.

5 The Church will take steps to ensure that such
6 conduct will never be repeated. These steps will be
7 spelt out, first of all in the Canons of the Church,
8 and secondly in the adoption of a national training
9 programme for all ordinands in New Zealand.

10 Education for ordination. We recommend that there
11 is a standardised national programme of education for
12 every ordinand. Along with academic training, we
13 recommend that all ordinands take a compulsory course
14 in relationship behaviour and training in this area
15 will continue after ordination.

16 The agreement to uphold Canons and Statutes. Before
17 a person is ordained, he or she signs an agreement with
18 General Synod that he or she will abide by the Canons
19 and Statutes of the Church. This agreement will in the
20 future contain specific information about Canon II
21 Title D and the ordinand will promise not to interact
22 with any person in their field of influence in a
23 deliberately sexual manner.

24 If a complaint under Canon II Title D is laid
25 against a Priest, the matter will be given into the
26 hands of an independent lawyer or the Police to
27 determine its veracity. If the complaint is upheld,
28 the perpetrator will lose his or her licence and pay
29 reparation to the victim. And we thought that having
30 their own insurance for liability would work for that.

31 Q. Assuming they can get an insurer that will take them
32 on?

33 A. Well, exactly, yes, I mean that might be too much. But
34 I think there's things in there so that they become
35 personally accountable. In our case, for instance,

1 there is no accountability taken by R. There was
2 nothing. We might have got a bit of money paid out to
3 us but there was never a Bishops' Court, Tribunal
4 established. There was nothing. We had to fight every
5 inch of the way.

6 The last comment here is that all valid complaints
7 will be received by a central authority and put on a
8 National Register of offenders to be made available to
9 all licensing Bishops.

10 Q. Thank you, Louise. The comment around having an
11 independent person involved with the Title D process,
12 what do you think the benefits would be of having
13 somebody outside the church running that process?

14 A. I think the Church has shown itself to be incompetent
15 in this area and it should be taken out of their hands
16 and into a secular body which is not rife with all
17 those underground things. I think it needs to be
18 independent and secular.

19 Q. Thank you. And were there any other recommendations
20 that you wish to add?

21 A. I'd like to expand on the one about having a national
22 standardised training programme for every ordinand.
23 There was some concern that it takes the power away
24 from the Bishop. It seems that people are being chosen
25 by Bishops willy-nilly and with no training are
26 ordained and given positions. And I don't think this
27 is a healthy Church. The Church is very different from
28 that.

29 Q. Thank you, Louise. Now we're going to turn to a couple
30 of issues that have arisen in the context of you being
31 able to give evidence here in this Inquiry.

32 A. Yes.

33 Q. The first issue that I'm going to address with you and
34 take you through some documents relates to the comment
35 that you've made in your witness statement at paragraph

1 17 on page 5. You don't need to turn to that, Louise,
2 but it's a statement that you made that the Church
3 tried to stop you publishing your book.

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. We're back in the period of time in 2001.

6 A. Mm-Mmm.

7 Q. And you've expressed there the sentiment that you had
8 then and now? Am I right that that's a sentiment that
9 you had at the time and that you currently hold, that
10 there was, from your perception, an attempt to stop you
11 releasing the book?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. And you are aware, aren't you, that the Anglican Church
14 doesn't accept that that's correct? That they say
15 there was no attempt to stop you publishing the book
16 but, rather, issues were raised with you or with the
17 publisher at the time about the accuracy of some of
18 those aspects in the book?

19 I'm just going to take you through some of the key
20 documents that outline this, so that the Commissioners
21 can be really clear in their own assessment of the
22 evidence and the aspects that were raised at the time
23 with you.

24 I'm turning first to document ANG007331. If that
25 can come up on the screen, please? Could we expand the
26 first paragraph under the heading?

27 This is a lawyer's letter dated 26 March 2001 and
28 what's recorded there is the letter is coming from
29 Mr Cotterill. He's writing as a solicitor for the
30 Diocese of Christchurch?

31 A. He is the Chancellor.

32 Q. He is a solicitor but he's also the Chancellor?

33 A. Yes.

34 **CHAIR:** What does the Chancellor mean? Chancellor of?

1 A. Of the Diocese. I think it's a name for the solicitor
2 who acts for the Diocese.

3 **CHAIR:** Oh, I see.

4 **MS ANDERSON:**

5 Q. It is a legal title, although this letter has not come
6 on Church letterhead, it is the legal letterhead. It
7 has been advised the Diocese has obtained a copy of the
8 report that you are about to publish?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. It identifies concern there are a number of
11 inaccuracies in the book which must be corrected before
12 the book is released to the general public?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Do you see that?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. And if we can just expand the following section within
17 number 1, all of text under that, thank you.

18 A. Okay.

19 Q. So, there are three allegedly incorrect statements
20 identify in this document. The first of them relates
21 to the statement that the person you disclosed to had
22 not told anyone about the content of your description.
23 We've had that reference in your evidence.

24 So, identifies the extract from the text there in
25 italics. And then the Church's view, "This is
26 absolutely incorrect and is very damaging. All who
27 read it will believe that he kept it to himself. This
28 is not so. It was passed on to the previous Bishop who
29 is described in the book as Bishop M. And there's
30 confirmation the report was marked "confidential" not
31 "extremely confidential" and that it's still held in
32 the Bishop's files in the archives in the Church in
33 Christchurch".

34 What they are asking there is, "We require this portion
35 of the book to be re-written or at least a retraction

1 and a public apology to be placed on each copy of the
2 book before it's sold".

3 And then there are other criticisms which I won't
4 take you through on the screen.

5 If we can just have the last paragraph of the letter
6 on page 2 expanded? It says, "There may well be other
7 similar errors and you should not assume in writing as
8 we have that the Diocese accepts the accuracy of the
9 book, rather it has had insufficient time to undertake
10 a complete review".

11 So, that's the initial correspondence that comes in?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. And it's fair to say, isn't it, Louise, that it doesn't
14 say that the book can't be released? It says that
15 they're looking for matters to be corrected before it's
16 released?

17 A. Indeed but they were matters that were not able to be
18 corrected.

19 Q. Because you have a difference of recollection?

20 A. Indeed.

21 Q. And then document ANG007330 is the response, David
22 Chisholm barrister, the very next day, sorry two days
23 later on 28 March. The first paragraph could you
24 expand that please.

25 A. You would like me to read this.

26 Q. No. Sorry, my instructions are to the helpful
27 assistant who is bringing it all up on the screen.

28 A. Thank you.

29 Q. This confirms he's acting for the publisher of the
30 Whistleblower?

31 A. Yes.

32 Q. And he's been instructed to respond?

33 A. Mm-Mmm.

34 Q. And he's also viewed the pages and discussed them with
35 you. So, this has all happened quite quickly?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And then paragraph 1, if you could expand all of that,
3 please. What the approach the response is identifying
4 one of the major themes in the book is the Church's
5 failure to take substantive action following
6 complaints. And then notes, "This is apparently not
7 disputed by you", meaning the lawyer. "You have
8 asserted in your letter however that the Bishop passed
9 the report on to the previous Bishop". And the
10 response from David Chisholm is, "This does not deal
11 with the author's primary complaint, namely failure to
12 take substantive action" and goes on to say, "You have
13 asserted that the report was marked confidential not
14 extremely confidential, this appears to be a minor
15 difference. However, the publisher is also prepared to
16 arrange for a statement confirming this to be placed on
17 a flyer"?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. In the document also dated 28 March, so it's ANG007328,
20 this is the response from Mr Cotterill and he's
21 acknowledging the letter from David Chisholm,
22 acknowledging that the flyer will be put in the book
23 concerning certain matters. And the last paragraph on
24 that page noting that they believe the matters set out
25 in the letter are serious, and must state if you do not
26 correct the position in the flyer, and this extends
27 beyond the issues that have been agreed to be
28 corrected, then Tandem Press and the author must take
29 the consequences?

30 A. Yes.

31 Q. What is your understanding when you see that language
32 of the lawyers?

33 A. I think that's very threatening and bullying language,
34 don't you?

35 Q. It's not for me.

1 A. But it is, it is. What's the consequence? It is a bit
2 like the findings of the GRO-B Board of Governors,
3 isn't it?

4 Q. Is it this type of language in this letter that
5 contributed to your impression that there was an
6 attempt to stop the book?

7 A. Absolutely, yes.

8 Q. If we move to the flyer, which is EXT0000792. It is a
9 picture of the cover of the book?

10 A. Prophetic.

11 Q. This is what was agreed to be put in, in the text
12 there. It confirms a written report detailing some of
13 the conduct complained of by the author is referred to
14 in specified on pages. On page 95 the author states
15 that the Bishop, then Dean, had kept the evidence in
16 himself. The Bishop asserts in reply however that he
17 then passed the report to the then Bishop of
18 Christchurch. Bishop then also confirmed that the
19 report was not marked "extremely confidential" but
20 "confidential".

21 A. You see, even then, you know, you query that with the
22 Bishop saying that there's no substantive evidence. If
23 he had received the report that D had written, he would
24 have had substantive evidence.

25 Q. And that's the reason underpinning your comment?

26 A. It is, yes.

27 Q. And without going through all the documents, there's
28 further exchanges between the lawyers where the lawyers
29 are attempting to get an apology for the statements in
30 the book and that apology is not offered?

31 A. No.

32 Q. The matter is resolved?

33 A. Well, I think that there was, excuse me, sorry to
34 interrupt you. The IRN, I think that's the media,
35 contacted Tandem Press, the publishers of the book, to

1 say that they had received a copy of a letter from the
2 Diocese of Christchurch, no wait a minute, no, the
3 letter had come from the publisher and me as the author
4 to say that there were defamatory comments in the book.
5 And that was absolutely not true.

6 Q. That's right, isn't it, Louise, and again without going
7 to the documents, that the Bishop was seeking to have a
8 communication that there was an apology but also an
9 acknowledgment that statements in the book were
10 defamatory?

11 A. Mm.

12 Q. And that acknowledgment was not provided?

13 A. They are not defamatory. I had had it read by a lawyer
14 before it was published, who said to me that if it was
15 all true, there was no way that I could be sued for
16 libel.

17 Q. And in the context of the letters that I've taken you
18 to, and we've seen the flyer that was put in the front
19 of the book when it was sold, with that countervailing
20 view, so the difference of opinion is clear to the
21 person purchasing the book, your statement is in the
22 book and the statement in the flyer?

23 A. What was peculiar was that I had endeavoured, my whole
24 principle with the book was to open up something and
25 not keep it secret. To keep my identity secret would
26 be going against that principle but I did try, I mean I
27 know it was a funny attempt, to just put the initials
28 of the men in the Diocese and yet, the Bishop at that
29 time clearly says three times that it was Bishop GRO-C
30 , whereas I tried to keep his identity reserved.

31 Q. And you are aware, aren't you, that in the context of
32 your witness statement being exchanged via counsel with
33 the Anglican Church, that the issues again are being
34 raised that these statements in the book should
35 actually come out of your evidence and not be given?

- 1 A. They'll stay.
- 2 Q. And did you have a reflection that you wanted to share
3 with the Commissioners about how you felt when you
4 learnt that the same issue was being raised 20 years
5 after the book had been issued?
- 6 A. It's very difficult to find a response for somebody who
7 20 years later is still then sending the Royal
8 Commission letters requesting his reputation to be
9 salved. And I just find that's very peculiar, if it
10 you don't mind my saying.
- 11 Q. That's your reflection on that?
- 12 A. It can lead to all sorts of other things, but I won't.
- 13 Q. The further aspect to touch on is you are aware, we
14 talked in the first part of your brief, your statement
15 that you read out related to the factors that you
16 considered made you a vulnerable adult at the time of
17 the abuse and through the process of seeking redress.
18 You are aware, aren't you, that the Church has raised,
19 did raise, an issue about whether your evidence was in
20 scope of the Inquiry?
- 21 A. Mm-Mmm, I am very aware of that.
- 22 Q. And that the final position on behalf of the Church was
23 that it would not oppose you giving evidence, but they
24 reserve their position in relation to your evidence?
- 25 A. The Archbishops recently released a letter
26 acknowledging the problem and an unequivocal apology to
27 all who had suffered and yet at the same time they seek
28 to withdraw this evidence from the Royal Commission and
29 I think that—
- 30 Q. Louise, can I just correct you? They haven't sought to
31 have it withdrawn. They raised the question.
- 32 A. Raised the question.
- 33 Q. The formal position now is there's no opposition to you
34 giving evidence.

1 A. Yes but I don't think—I think it still stands, you
2 know, as to whether it will be accepted or not. I
3 think there is still obviously an issue there.

4 It's all about the question of vulnerability and
5 who's not. I think that anybody who puts themselves
6 forward for training for the priesthood is very
7 vulnerable, as is anyone who seeks out to change their
8 circumstances and to change the world comes with
9 enormous vulnerability and there was too much of this
10 stuff happening, that if I didn't give evidence the
11 Royal Commission would never have known anything about
12 it. And I think it needs to be heard. It's not just
13 one person here, this is a whole lot of people and the
14 damage is as great to an adult as it is - well, I
15 wouldn't say as great because we do have more reason
16 and logic on our side - as it is for children.

17 So, you know, I really query and wonder if they only
18 wanted to query whether it should be given or heard
19 because they did not want anybody to understand how
20 badly they handled this.

21 Q. Thank you, Louise. And before I invite the
22 Commissioners to ask any questions of you, do you have
23 any other further comments you wish to make?

24 A. I want to make the comment that this is a very
25 constructive exercise. This is a wonderful opportunity
26 to warn and to revive the Church, to look at the
27 sexism, the power balances, the people within the
28 Church. It is enormously important that we are
29 constructive and that we have a future from this.

30 Q. Thank you, Louise. Just stay there and we will see if
31 the Commissioners have any questions for you.

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LOUISE DEANS
QUESTIONED BY COMMISSIONERS

COMMISSIONER STEENSON: I don't have any questions, thank you.

COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE: I do, I do. Louise, thank you very much for your evidence and certainly for your recommendations. You've actually answered a couple of my questions right there.

But just a couple of points of clarification. If I just start with your recommendation around the independence. So, if a complaint is brought against a member of the clergy to an independent lawyer or to the Police to determine its veracity, once they've done that, I'm just wondering would you consider that there should also be a right of appeal if the complainant isn't satisfied with that outcome to say to a higher body, independence of the Church, maybe to the Courts?

A. Absolutely, absolutely. Within there, there is then a proper process to follow.

COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE: So, that would then allow for the creation of some precedent of what actually happens in the Church?

A. Indeed, yes, which would be extremely good.

COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE: Thank you. And do you see it in the same vein then as laying a Police complaint?

A. Yes, I do.

COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE: So, that would be a separate process but coming out of that particular process?

A. I think that, you know, if the Church continues to be incompetent with the way it deals with these issues, then I think it should be that the Court itself hands

1 the complaint to the Police and requests the
2 investigation.

3 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Now, I am taking you back to
4 when you had the first Bishops meeting where he
5 actually, he speaks to you and he says he's now
6 admonishing the Reverend Canon R and lists what the
7 admonishments are. What was your understanding at that
8 time about the power of the Bishop? Did he have the
9 ability to do that arbitrarily or was he required to
10 consult with other hierarchy within the Court to reach
11 that decision?

12 A. Look, I don't know who he may have consulted with. He
13 may have consulted with the Chancellor. The
14 understanding, and maybe the problem, is that very
15 early on, I think it was Bishop Selwyn said that each
16 Diocese in New Zealand is completely independent. So,
17 in other words, each Diocese has established its own
18 training, protocols and so on and so that really is
19 where the differential lies.

20 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** And that allows for the
21 clouding of processes?

22 A. It does, yes. If it's a national standardised
23 training, then you know where everybody comes from, in
24 terms of being on the same, standing on the same
25 platform.

26 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Thank you. And just my last
27 point of clarification. Congratulations on achieving
28 your goal and becoming licensed because that was your
29 goal right from the beginning.

30 A. Thank you.

31 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** You've moved from one year to
32 being two years now being licensed before you have to
33 renew your licence; is that correct?

1 A. That's up to the Bishop, as to whether he will renew.
2 Evidently, I'm retired but I'm not, but that's what
3 they put on my thing. It doesn't really matter.

4 **MS ANDERSON:** Can I interpose there? At the
5 adjournment, counsel for the Anglican Church did
6 indicate that the cycle is a three-year renewal and
7 that's consistent with all ordained persons. So,
8 although Louise has indicated two, it's likely to be in
9 fact three. But the key point being she's not on a
10 different system to anyone else now.

11 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Thank you, that was what I was
12 really just wanting to clarify, where that was at with
13 you.

14 A. It was a struggle.

15 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** We appreciate that. Thank you,
16 counsel, and thank you, Louise.

17 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Kia ora Louise, kia ora tatou.
18 It just seemed to me from your evidence that much of
19 what you endured could have been addressed if there was
20 an independent process put in train to address your
21 complaints, right, when you talk about the need for the
22 Bishop to defend the Church, for example. I just want
23 to ask more about your vision of an independent process
24 because you speak of an independent, either the Police
25 or an independent lawyer receiving the complaint. You
26 also talk about the need for the process to be
27 independent and secular. So, is your recommendation
28 that the body, there be a Tribunal or Commission or
29 something that's-

30 A. I think that would muddy the waters. There needs to be
31 a very clear short, sharp process of handing over to a
32 secular body in order to deal with that. Whatever that
33 secular body is, that can be neutral and dependent upon
34 with no attachments.

1 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Okay, loud and clear. Following
2 up with my colleague's question about the Police, did
3 you have any contact with the Police?

4 A. I sure did.

5 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Yep, yep, of course, yeah. And
6 how do you feel about that process, about engaging with
7 the Police?

8 A. It was awful.

9 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Mm-Mmm, okay.

10 A. Sorry.

11 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** It captures it. And you referred
12 briefly to counselling, that you had one session that
13 was with a counsellor selected by the Bishop; have you
14 received any other counselling apart from that?

15 A. Yes, I have, yes, and I paid for that myself but was
16 then, I think, reimbursed, it may have been, I can't
17 remember, either by the Church or by ACC.

18 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Okay, all right. And finally, I
19 take your point about the need for training at a
20 national level for those who have been ordained. I
21 assume also that you would also want in training an
22 awareness of sexual harassment to also extend to lay
23 people in the Church as well?

24 A. Yes, indeed, men and women, all of us. I think we all
25 have to be aware of how we treat other people.

26 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Kia ora, kia ora.

27 A. It's better in New Zealand at this time.

28 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Yes, agreed, thank you.

29 **CHAIR:** That is a very good introduction to the point
30 that I'd like to raise with you. I don't have a copy
31 of the Title D process in front of me, and I believe
32 that it's changed and morphed over the years, but all
33 the emphasis has been in the evidence on laying a
34 formal written complaint, and I think the wisdom now in
35 the sexual harassment arena, is that there should be

1 more informal ways of raising this, rather than going
2 through a written formal complaint.

3 First of all, do you have any views on that general
4 proposition; that a complaint of sexual harassment is
5 something that might not necessarily have to come by
6 way of a formal written complaint but just brought to
7 the attention of the appropriate authorities?

8 A. I remember, and I think I have written it as such, that
9 it was tremendously hard to write that piece of paper
10 and sign it.

11 **CHAIR:** Yes.

12 A. Because when you sign, hand it over, you're into
13 another universe.

14 **CHAIR:** Yes.

15 A. That you have no idea what's going to happen because
16 you're handing all the power over to the person to whom
17 you make the complaint, for them to verify or how they
18 process.

19 It is a most difficult thing because it's so hard to
20 talk about.

21 **CHAIR:** Yes.

22 A. And it is so tremendously painful inside and yet, we
23 might be the victims but actually we "asked" for it and
24 there's that awful thing that people are not going to
25 like you anymore because that's what happened to you,
26 and I think that's quite a common cause with women. It
27 requires enormous bravery and I would urge every woman
28 to be able to take that bravery and that courage that
29 they have.

30 **CHAIR:** Which then leads me on to other ways, other
31 ways, other methods of bringing the attention.

32 A. Yes.

33 **CHAIR:** And whether the full responsibility should lie
34 with the victim or not. So, what I'm suggesting is how
35 would you consider widening the entry point into the

1 canon law, if it's still going to be done under that
2 way, to other people lodging a complaint on behalf of?

3 A. Yes. So, then you'd have to have some sort of monitor
4 or counsellor within—

5 **CHAIR:** Yes, some sort of advocate who could stand with
6 you?

7 A. Indeed.

8 **CHAIR:** That's one way?

9 A. And I think that may be the better way because that's
10 more tangible, friendly-type, because we just know how
11 painful it is.

12 **CHAIR:** Exactly. So, it recognises the real pain of
13 doing this. The second aspect is, do you have any
14 views on the responsibility of clergy to report when
15 they see or suspect that this behaviour is going on
16 with their colleagues?

17 A. That's a tricky one, you know, telling on people and
18 that can lead to all sorts of awful personal grudges
19 and so on. So, you know, I wouldn't encourage that
20 really. It's tempting to say it is a good idea but
21 honestly, it's not in the end.

22 **CHAIR:** So, you have reservations about that?

23 A. I would, yes.

24 **CHAIR:** Even if another Priest actually saw something
25 happening to a person who was so vulnerable they were
26 unable to report?

27 A. I would expect that person would speak up.

28 **CHAIR:** That they would speak up?

29 A. They would speak up.

30 **CHAIR:** That's right.

31 A. Yes.

32 **CHAIR:** So, some form of responsibility but not tittle
33 tattle, if you like?

34 A. Mm, or personal grudges, you know, like—

35 **CHAIR:** Yes.

1 A. Like, the Communist Party was in China where you told
2 on your neighbour. You wouldn't ever want that.

3 **CHAIR:** Just to round up, what I am suggesting here is
4 that there may be a softening, or a possibility of a
5 softening of the entry point into the complaints
6 process?

7 A. Yes.

8 **CHAIR:** In various ways?

9 A. And there will be different ways.

10 **CHAIR:** That's right.

11 A. We will come to that point.

12 **CHAIR:** That's right. Because one of the dangers is,
13 isn't it, that unless it's written down as a formal
14 complaint, nobody will do anything until a formal
15 complaint comes in?

16 A. That's right.

17 **CHAIR:** And then people are absolved from are taking
18 action on the basis of we didn't get a formal
19 complaint. That is really what I'm addressing here.

20 A. It is that sort of dead duck thing.

21 **CHAIR:** That's right. Maybe you and your colleagues
22 would like to consider that a little bit more about the
23 subtleties of the entry point.

24 A. Thank you. Would you like a copy of our
25 recommendations about prevention?

26 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** We have a copy.

27 **CHAIR:** We have them.

28 A. Oh, okay.

29 **CHAIR:** Yes, they've been provided.

30 A. Thank you.

31 **CHAIR:** Louise, and I include in this your supporters,
32 on behalf of the Commissioners I wish to thank you most
33 sincerely for bravely sitting here today, and I know
34 it's not easy, but being bold enough to say this, for
35 carrying it for so long and carrying it bravely and not

1 letting it go. And it's only the determined brave
2 people like you who can make change and so, it's
3 extremely important that we've heard your story and we
4 commend you for that and thank you, you and your
5 colleagues as well for the support they've given you.

6 A. I would like to thank the Commissioners and Royal
7 Commission for all the wonderful work that you are
8 doing and New Zealand thanks you.

9 **CHAIR:** That's very nice, thank you. Right, on that
10 very happy note, I think we should take an adjournment.

11 **MS ANDERSON:** I suggest perhaps a short adjournment.
12 We will be able to move on with the reading of the
13 subsequent witness statement before the lunch break,
14 begin that, which will be part-heard over the lunch
15 adjournment.

16 **CHAIR:** Excellent, all right then, thank you.

17

18 **Hearing adjourned from 12.36 p.m. until 1.35 p.m.**

19

20

21

1
2 **EVIDENCE OF MARGARET ANNE WILKINSON**
3 **(Not in Person - Read by Sarah Cato)**
4 **QUESTIONED BY MS ANDERSON**
5

6
7 **CHAIR:** Welcome back everybody. Thank you,
8 Ms Anderson.

9 **MS ANDERSON:** Thank you, Commissioners. We are now
10 going to hear the witness statement of Margaret, better
11 known as Maggie, Anne Wilkinson. The statement is
12 going to be read by Ms Cato as Ms Wilkinson is not able
13 to be here today to deliver it in person.

14 **CHAIR:** I believe she may be watching, so if she is,
15 can we, on behalf of the Commissioners, acknowledge
16 you, Maggie, thank you for your evidence and we look
17 forward to hearing Ms Cato reading it.

18 **MS ANDERSON:** Before Ms Cato begins, I confirm the two
19 witness statements that have been provided are signed
20 by Maggie as being true and correct to the best of her
21 knowledge and belief.

22 **CHAIR:** Thank you.

23 **MS CATO:** "My name is Maggie Anne Wilkinson. I was
24 born in Auckland in 1944 and I am now 76 years old. My
25 maiden name was Evington. In terms of ethnicity, I
26 identify as Pākehā.

27 My evidence is about the abuse I experienced when I
28 was a young woman. It relates to my time in the St
29 Mary's Home for Unwed Mothers which began in 1964.
30 This home was run by the St Mary's Trust but I
31 understand that in the 1980s it transferred into the
32 name of the Anglican Trust for Women and Children.

33 My evidence also relates to my attempts to get
34 recognition and a remedy for what I experienced.

1 As I explain below, the treatment of me and others
2 in the home was harsh during my pregnancy. Worse was
3 to come, with my child being taken away from me without
4 my consent. While some people call this forced
5 adoption, I prefer to call it abduction. My child was
6 taken and given away by a self-righteous Matron of the
7 Anglican organisation. She was abducted from me at
8 birth and then given away to make strangers happy.
9 No-one bothered to look back at the grief of the
10 sacrificing mother.

11 In the early 1980s, my daughter, then 18 years old,
12 found me through JIGSAW, a service connecting adopted
13 children with their birth parents. We have a close
14 relationship but I will never forgive St Mary's for
15 taking her away from me.

16 A further important aspect of why I am giving this
17 evidence is that I present this information not only
18 for myself but also on behalf of our Support Group,
19 New Zealand Mothers of Loss to Adoption for Justice.

20 Our group includes adopted people who lost their
21 identities and whanau who were separated from their
22 mothers by the act of abduction.

23 The information in this statement is not only about
24 my own experience. There are others who have similar
25 experiences and whom have provided me their story and
26 given consent for me to contribute their experiences to
27 the Royal Commission of Inquiry. For privacy reasons,
28 I do not identify these others by name.

29 This statement is a demand for justice and peace on
30 behalf of the women and children who simply did not
31 cope with what happened to them - and either committed
32 suicide or existed with the burden of mental anguish,
33 unsupported, invalidated and unrecognised.

34 My experience of abuse in care. In 1964, I fell
35 pregnant with my first child. I was 19 years old. The

1 father of my baby refused to marry me and joined the
2 Army. He volunteered to be posted to Vietnam.

3 I was therefore in Whakatane living with my parents.
4 They were ashamed and did not want to tell anyone that
5 I was pregnant out of wedlock. They made me stay in my
6 room and out of sight. They told their friends and
7 associates that I was away in Wellington. This meant I
8 could not leave the house and I had to stay hidden from
9 the community.

10 My mother would not take me to see our family
11 general practitioner. This was all part of her wanting
12 to hide my secret. Instead, she arranged for another
13 local doctor to come to the house and discuss how I was
14 to proceed re my pregnancy.

15 The doctor recommended to my parents that I be sent
16 away to an Anglican home called St Mary's Home for
17 Unwed Mothers in Otahuhu, Auckland.

18 We were not a religious family and I am certainly
19 not a religious person.

20 The doctor described this place as a safe haven, a
21 sanctuary. He told my parents that I would be cared
22 for in the home. So, when my parents decided to send
23 me there, they expected a certain level of care.

24 It was neither a haven, nor a sanctuary.

25 St Mary's Home for Unwed Mothers. On the 16th of
26 January 1964, I was admitted to St Mary's. My parents
27 drove me to the home from Whakatane. I lived in the
28 home for 6 months and was discharged on the 27th of
29 June 1964. The areas of St Mary's that were public
30 facing, such as the office and the maternity wing for
31 married women, were nice and created the perception
32 that it was a good place.

33 There was a birthing suite and a public maternity
34 hospital on the premise where we birthed our babies.

1 The rest of the home resembled a concentration camp.
2 It was bare, with very little furniture. We slept in
3 dormitories. The home was always damp because of the
4 constant wet mopping.

5 The orphanage was a disgusting place, it was cold,
6 and we were not allowed to play with the children. The
7 children were crying out for attention. When I walked
8 past, they would run to the fence, but we were not
9 allowed to touch them.

10 The orphanage was full of the unadoptable babies,
11 which were mainly twins and Māori children and children
12 of mixed race.

13 Matron Rhoda Gallagher. The home was run by Matron
14 Rhoda Gallagher. I understand she is now deceased.

15 When I first met Matron, she seemed to have my
16 interests at heart and created the appearance in front
17 of my parents that she would look after and provide
18 care to me.

19 However, upon entering the home it became clear that
20 Matron's homey front room did not mirror the hell hole
21 out the back.

22 It became very apparent quite early on in my time at
23 St Mary's that the unwed women would not be able to
24 keep their babies and they would be forced to have
25 their babies adopted.

26 I found this out from the girls at the home, we
27 would talk about it. I was horrified and in distress
28 because I always wanted to keep and raise my child.

29 Matron was a vicious woman who would always shout at
30 us and say the most awful things to us. She would tell
31 us that we were selfish to want to keep our children.
32 She would refer to our babies as her babies. She would
33 say things like "someone better than you wants your
34 baby" and "there are lovely married couples just
35 wanting to give baby a home".

1 Matron would sneak up behind us and scare us
2 shouting in our ears, she would say the most terrible
3 things to us. She would tell us that we were fallen
4 women and that she would make decent women out of us.

5 The language that Matron used featured words such as
6 selfish, used, tarnished, illegitimate.

7 Another requirement Matron imposed was that we could
8 not be called by our own given names. Christian names
9 were changed and surnames disappeared - we all had to
10 take Matron's surname.

11 Communal clothes had to be worn from a shared box of
12 clothing. One's own garments could only be worn on a
13 Sunday if a visitor was coming.

14 When I look back on this, I see that the process of
15 institutionalisation was instant and we were
16 dehumanised.

17 There would have been between 18-22 unwed women at
18 St Mary's at any one time. They were young pregnant
19 girls in the home. They were told to say that they
20 were 16 years old if anyone asked them. There were
21 also a number of intellectually handicapped girls in
22 the home. This signalled to me that these girls may
23 have been raped but as far as I know there was no
24 support provided to them.

25 We were made to attend chapel twice a day for our
26 sins. Matron would deliver the service at chapel. I
27 recall one time another one of the unwed mothers
28 fainted in the chapel and Matron just told us to just
29 leave her there on the floor, no assistance was
30 provided to her.

31 Male missionaries would company into St Mary's from
32 time to time and they would attend our chapel service.
33 They made me feel dirty too. They couldn't keep their
34 eyes off our stomachs and breasts.

1 Rules were fiercely enforced and an inflexible daily
2 routine, along with a controlled "one way only",
3 Matron's way, of carrying out every function and
4 occupation one was assigned to.

5 The fear of being caught doing a chore a different
6 way to what Matron expected was overwhelming. Matron
7 had the ability to arrive silently and scream
8 recriminations if she spotted a variation.

9 The regimented discipline was excessive, cruel and
10 incapacitating. Any personality one may have arrived
11 with quickly dissipated.

12 We were institutionalised to the degree that we
13 became controlled by the punishing, oppressive,
14 authoritarian regime that was allowed by the overseeing
15 Anglican organisation.

16 We were treated as the proverbial dirty girls and
17 were punished daily with a heavy work schedule. It was
18 run in a military style. We were dictated to by a bell
19 that rang to indicate to us when it was time to get up,
20 eat, and go to work.

21 I worked hard in the kitchen orphanage and laundry.
22 This included laundry from the public maternity annex.
23 I cleaned and wet mopped constantly. I bottled the
24 produce from the harvest festivals. The work was
25 relentless and only with very basic equipment and
26 tools, even when we were heavily pregnant. This was
27 unpaid labour and the conditions were something out of
28 Dickens. This was taken as part of our punishment.

29 I experienced the hypocrisy of two chapel sessions a
30 day taken by Matron. When the culture of St Mary's was
31 cruel, punishing and stigmatising and there was no
32 compassion. As a single mother I qualified for a
33 Sickness Benefit from the government which was paid
34 directly to the home. I was allowed a small amount of

1 pocket money per week from that, enough for a packet of
2 barley sugars and some wool.

3 We were effectively locked up in the house and not
4 allowed to go anywhere. Whilst not physically locked
5 up, with no other options or money. This was the
6 practical effect.

7 For the majority of us there, the home was a prison
8 for sad girls with no choices and no advocacy. It was
9 a place of fear and punishment.

10 Food was a scarcity, we weren't given enough to eat
11 because Matron wanted us to have small babies so there
12 was no problems during delivery.

13 I had an obsession with food and would cut pictures
14 of food out of magazines and hide them under my bed.

15 I was not given any education about pregnancy or
16 what our births would be like. Matron did not allow or
17 give any opportunity for advice from anyone.

18 Letters were vetted by Matron coming into or leaving
19 the home. This meant that we were isolated and
20 controlled by her.

21 Social workers were meant to visit the home but they
22 were frightened off by Matron. I was told at a meeting
23 once in 1994 by an ex-social worker who is now
24 deceased, he apologised to me and told me that they
25 knew terrible things were going on at St Mary's but
26 they did nothing.

27 Hidden in the home were pregnant underage girls.
28 They were told to say they were 16 if asked. There
29 were young women with intellectual disabilities. They
30 were bewildered and lost. No-one asked about how it
31 was that these young girls came to be pregnant. I
32 consider this is a question that the Church should have
33 been asking.

34 Matron accompanied the girls when their allocated
35 doctor visited, which successfully stopped any

1 communication by me and others to the doctor about what
2 was happening or to seek information about the birth
3 and the fact that I wanted to keep my child.

4 My intent was always to have my baby and raise her
5 myself. There was a Pacific Island woman who worked in
6 the kitchen at St Mary's and she looked after her
7 daughter living on-site. I loathed St Mary's but to
8 keep my child I thought that I may be able to live and
9 work at St Mary's, just like the Pacific Island woman
10 in the kitchen. I spoke to Matron about this plan and
11 she seemed supportive and agreed to my request. I
12 believed that Matron was going to let me work in the
13 orphanage and raise my child.

14 However, Matron had no intent on following through
15 on her word. My mother visited me at Easter time.
16 Matron spoke to my mother and told her that "I was not
17 the type to cope with a child".

18 Later in my pregnancy when I happily disclosed to my
19 parents that Matron was going to support me to keep my
20 child, they told me that she was not going to assist.
21 They told me of the conversation they had with Matron
22 at Easter time.

23 I got in trouble one day when I got upset at a
24 fellow resident. As a consequence, I was placed into
25 an isolation room and given some sort of medication in
26 little "drops" to bring on my birth. I do not know
27 what these drops were called.

28 In 1964, I gave birth to my baby girl. My allocated
29 doctor attended the birth. He leaned on the counter on
30 the other side of the delivery suite while Matron
31 delivered my child.

32 It was a difficult delivery and I was torn to bits
33 inside. I was physically left in a mess with no
34 postnatal treatment or support.

1 A nurse let my baby stay in the room with me for a
2 short time. I placed my hand on her as she slept.
3 This was a big deal as she wasn't allowed to do this
4 and would have been in trouble if Matron had caught
5 her.

6 When I fell asleep my baby was abducted by Matron
7 and concealed from me.

8 I was drugged without consent, I was given
9 medication to stop lactation. My breasts were also
10 bound tight.

11 My baby was given to an Anglican woman who was a
12 member of the Auckland Diocese. I was called to say
13 goodbye to my daughter when they took her, but I was
14 not allowed to hold or touch her.

15 In 1964, eight days after the birth, I was taken to
16 the lawyer's office in Ōtāhuhu with no explanation
17 about what was going to happen. I was driven to the
18 lawyer's office by Matron. I think this was after my
19 daughter had already been taken away from the home.
20 There is a Church record that confirms this date.

21 I did not receive any explanation about my rights
22 under the Adoption Act 1955. I was not given any legal
23 advice or told of my rights as guardian to my daughter.

24 I was made to sign legal documents and made to swear
25 on the Bible and say that I was never going to try to
26 find my daughter. This aspect of being made to swear
27 on the Bible was common practice. While not legally
28 binding, this was very effective, emotional and
29 spiritual blackmail.

30 The lawyers that were used to draft the papers
31 during my time and up until 1970s are redacted. As I
32 have said, Matron took me to the lawyer's office along
33 with the papers. I know the name of the lawyer and the
34 person who acted as a witness.

1 I understand that the lawyer was a trustee of St
2 Mary's at the time and was also the partner of
3 (redacted). I consider there was a blatant conflict of
4 interest.

5 On the adoption papers it was recorded that "I
6 thought it was better for my parents that my baby was
7 adopted" and it also refers to me being
8 "disillusioned". These were the words of the author
9 lawyers or the social worker, they were not my words.
10 I was able to obtain a copy of these papers in the
11 1990s from a woman at Child, Youth and Family. She was
12 not meant to give this to me but she was generous of
13 spirit, as she herself had been through a similar
14 process.

15 I did not want to sign but I felt that I had to.

16 It is a legal axiom that consent not freely given is
17 not consent at all, and the history of the adoption
18 corruption in New Zealand relied upon invalid consents
19 obtained under pressure, manipulation, threats, illegal
20 practices, emotional blackmail and stand over tactics.

21 The fact that I swore on the Bible that I would not
22 try to find my daughter meant that I felt I could not
23 never take the steps to do so. I am lucky my daughter
24 took steps to find me.

25 The New Zealand Adoption Act 1955 states that the
26 mother cannot sign adoption consent until 10 days after
27 the birth. It wasn't legal if the mother signed before
28 then. That still is the law in New Zealand. It has
29 never changed. I was forced to sign the adoption
30 papers when my daughter was only 8 days old.
31 Therefore, I consider the adoption has always been
32 illegal.

33 I was discharged from St Mary's without my baby two
34 weeks after the birth. I was discharged bleeding, both
35 physically and mentally.

1 I was told by Matron that I would get back to a
2 normal life and I would forget about her. This has
3 never been the case.

4 After the birth of my child I realised something was
5 very wrong. I was bleeding profusely. I did not feel
6 like I could go to the GP because the birth was not
7 recognised, so I didn't seek any help for a
8 birth-related problem.

9 In summary, the treatment at St Mary's was bad
10 enough. But to walk out with empty arms, baby gone
11 forever, was the most horrendous walk of my life. As a
12 victim, I was punished. That punishment has continued
13 throughout my life.

14 The impact of the abuse on me and others. Life
15 after leaving St Mary's Home. I returned to Whakatane
16 for a short time. I phoned Rhoda Gallagher many times
17 from my parent's home pleading with her to get my child
18 back for me. My appeals were met with repudiation, the
19 deed had been done.

20 I found employment in Auckland and after saving I
21 went to live in Sydney Australia.

22 The bleeding was constant and a worry, so on the 6th
23 of January 1966 I made an appointment to see a
24 gynaecologist at Eastern Suburbs Hospital Clinic in
25 Sydney. I can't recall the name of the doctor, but he
26 told me that because of the tearing at the birth of my
27 child, I would be unable to conceive another child. I
28 was unable to afford his care and was terrified of
29 hospitals, so I persevered with living with the
30 bleeding.

31 I met up with my old and dear friend Graeme and we
32 decided to marry. At that time, I was working at the
33 Manchester Unity Sydney and during this period
34 mentioned to a co-worker that I was unable to have
35 children.

1 It was suggested that I see the Unity doctor,
2 Dr Green, at his Point Piper residence. Dr Green was
3 an elderly European and was semiretired. He was
4 horrified and angry at the extent of the damage. He
5 told my husband that if I had been left in that
6 condition in Australia, he would investigate and make a
7 complaint.

8 I then underwent a series of procedures cauterising
9 to repair and damage. This process was extremely
10 distressing, painful and expensive.

11 I know through my advocacy and lobbying work in
12 New Zealand, that many women experienced the same
13 treatment that I did at St Mary's. They have written
14 to me in support of an Inquiry into Adoption within
15 New Zealand. One woman who was at St Mary's in 1969
16 shared with me a similar experience to mine, where she
17 was peeling the potatoes one night, Matron smacked her
18 on the knuckles with a bamboo stick to indicate that
19 she was peeling the potatoes too thick and therefore
20 wasting money.

21 She often went without meals as punishment from
22 Matron and was regularly smacked around her legs and
23 knuckles for small, silly little things.

24 Another woman, also at St Mary's, in 1968 has
25 written to me and told me that after her time at St
26 Mary's, she had two nervous breakdowns and ended up in
27 a psychiatric unit after she'd tried to commit suicide.
28 Having to give up her baby to adoption was the catalyst
29 for her mental breakdown.

30 At this point, I believe it appropriate to
31 acknowledge the women who took, or attempted to take,
32 their own lives after losing their children, women who
33 suffered the unending grief and psychological wounds
34 from being systematically dispossessed of their
35 children who went on to realise that they could not

1 just "get on with their lives and forget", as they had
2 been reassured by social workers and by Matron.

3 Disenfranchised and isolated, trivialised and
4 discounted, in many instances their pain was
5 overwhelming.

6 Subsequent discoveries that their children had also
7 suffered from being placed with inappropriate adopters
8 and in some instances simply returned to the State as
9 unwanted chattels and/or who suffered years of abuse or
10 were simply treated as second best, compounded by the
11 unending distress of these women. I/we/they feel
12 betrayed and conned.

13 I consider I have been controlled, deliberately
14 discounted, and betrayed by the representatives of the
15 Anglican Church, who consider their status and
16 philosophy and their bottom line beyond question. The
17 responses from the Church, as I describe in my evidence
18 below, have continued to invalidate me. For all these
19 reasons, I have been grappling with the ongoing grief
20 and depression.

21 My husband has stood by me, my sturdiest support.
22 My children from my marriage were left with a mother
23 who was deeply depressed and suicidal and there were
24 many times they did not cope.

25 Attempts to get redress. In this section of my
26 evidence I will describe the personal remedy I have
27 sought from the ATWC, Anglican Trust for Women and
28 Children, and their response.

29 I also talk about the attempts to get redress
30 through political avenues.

31 Attempt to get response from the Anglican Trust for
32 Women and Children. In the mid-1990s, I was driving to
33 work one morning listening to the National radio when I
34 heard an interview with a person who attended an
35 Anglican Synod at Hamilton. The person being

1 interviewed spoke about the Anglican decision to accept
2 homosexuals. Big of them I thought but what about the
3 terrible punishment doled out to me and other young
4 women for daring to have any sexuality.

5 I contacted St Mary's, I was furious. I spoke with
6 and subsequently met the manager who had taken over St
7 Mary's and had turned it into a training facility.

8 The manager visited me at my home address and told
9 me how proud he was of the different philosophy that
10 the ATWC had adopted, focusing on education.

11 He wrote to the then Bishop of Auckland, Bruce
12 Gilbert [sic], to tell him that I was very angry and
13 suggested that an apology may appease me".

14 Q. Can I pause you there. We will bring up the document
15 which is Exhibit 8002. This is a letter dated 29 June
16 1992 on the letterhead of the Anglican Trust for Women
17 and Children.

18 In terms of the last paragraph on the bottom of the
19 first page, could you please expand that?

20 This is a reference to the current Chairperson
21 having been a regular visitor to St Mary's Home at the
22 time of Maggie Wilkinson's term of residence. The
23 letter states, "Keitha's comments are not inconsistent
24 with those contained in former trustee Dr Roger
25 Bartley's letter. Keitha recollects that the Matron of
26 the time wielded total power and authority over staff
27 and residents, and that outsiders were likely to
28 observe only that which the Matron chose to have them
29 see." And the last sentence beginning, "Keitha
30 expresses no surprise at the contents of Maggie's
31 letter".

32 And then the second paragraph, "The question
33 is - how best to respond to Maggie Wilkinson and, where
34 appropriate, to other women for whom the Church's care
35 was as damning and as damaging as that which she

1 experienced? I would very much like you to hear the
2 sad details from her personally, largely I guess
3 because you are by virtue of your episcopal role
4 uniquely placed to be able to listen and respond on
5 behalf of 'the Church'."

6 The second to last paragraph, "Just a detail in
7 closing. Maggie was cruelly duped into giving up her
8 baby for adoption. When in recent years she made
9 contact with her daughter she found the adoption had
10 not been all together successful, and that the child
11 had been severely burned in an accident. So the child
12 given up now bears physical scars which accentuate the
13 emotional scarring expressed in resentment at Maggie
14 not having kept her, thus Maggie gets to lose twice
15 over." And concludes, "I would be very grateful Bruce
16 for the opportunity to discuss this with you".

17 **MS CATO:** "In time I received a phonecall from Bishop
18 Bruce Gilbert [sic] who presented me with a verbal
19 apology. I was not satisfied with the verbal apology
20 and requested a written acknowledgment and apology
21 which was duly carried out."

22 Q. And can I have you please call up document 8003? This
23 is a media article from 1992, in November, and the very
24 last paragraph, "Mr Jackson said experiences such as
25 Margaret's should be acknowledged by the Church with
26 sadness".

27 **MS CATO:** "I believe that apology was only spoken and
28 written to merely keep an angry woman quiet.

29 In July 2014, I requested my medical file from the
30 Anglican Trust for Women and Children. I wanted to
31 know what the medication was that they gave me to stop
32 the lactation whilst at St Mary's.

33 I am aware through my research that the synthetic
34 oestrogen diethylstilboestrol, known by the acronym DES
35 or as stilboestrol, was administered to single mothers

1 without informed consent in hospitals where unmarried
2 women gave birth.

3 I was told by a woman named Kate at ATWC that those
4 records no longer exist because there was a fire.

5 I also made my request to the Anglican Archives. I
6 heard back from a woman named Mary who told me that the
7 papers could not be found and she said they were
8 destroyed when a hot water tank burst in the room where
9 the files were kept and it was flooded.

10 While I was looking at the ATWC website to look for
11 names and numbers to call, I read the history written
12 by Diane Kenderdine in 2011. St Mary's is not
13 mentioned in their history.

14 In 2015, at the recommendation of a dear friend, I
15 engaged with law firm, Cooper Legal, to seek financial
16 compensation from the Anglican Church for the treatment
17 I suffered at St Mary's and the unlawful abduction of
18 my baby girl.

19 I attended a mediation session with a representative
20 of ATWC, a lawyer for the Anglicans, my lawyer
21 Courteney Scott from Cooper Legal Wellington and my
22 husband Graeme Wilkinson.

23 I was offended by the Anglican Trust Women and
24 Children's representative's question. When I walked in
25 she asked me, "Margaret, were you brought up in the
26 faith?" I didn't feel this was relevant or
27 appropriate. The mediation experience was awful. As a
28 consequence, my depression intensified.

29 On the 21st of March 2016, Hesketh Henry sent a
30 letter to Cooper Legal.

31 Q. Can we please call up Exhibit 8004?

32 **CHAIR:** Just noting the date was the 1st of March, not
33 the 21st of March.

34 **MS CATO:** My apologies.

35 **MS ANDERSON:**

1 Q. Just noting this is a letter on the Hesketh Henry
2 letterhead dated 1 March 2016. It begins by raising
3 the concerns raised in correspondence from Cooper Legal
4 and advises that that letter has been carefully
5 considered by the Anglican Trust for Women and Children
6 and the Diocese of Auckland.

7 Could you expand, please? "First, we reiterate the
8 acknowledgment in our letter of 2 November 2015 of the
9 profound effect that Mrs Wilkinson's experiences have
10 had on her life. Her pain and her grief are very
11 evident, and neither the Trust nor the Diocese has any
12 intention or desire to trivialise or disregard her
13 experience or her suffering."

14 The second paragraph, this next paragraph
15 confirmation that the trust is seeking to find the most
16 appropriate response to what is both a deeply personal
17 matter for Mrs Wilkinson and an issue which affects a
18 large number of people who lived through this period in
19 our history.

20 The next statement is, "In making that response, the
21 Board and Diocese must also bear in mind the objects of
22 the trusts for which they are responsible and the needs
23 of present and future beneficiaries".

24 The next small paragraph, "Your letter states in a
25 number of places that St Mary's Trust broke laws or
26 breached a legal duty to Mrs Wilkinson. We disagree".

27 Turning over to page 2, second paragraph, "However,
28 whether those practices were unlawful, or breached a
29 legal duty, must be determined on the basis of the law
30 in 1964." And then concludes, "Legal standards of care
31 and medical treatment reflect the professional and
32 social practices of the time".

33 And then the paragraph, third to last paragraph,
34 "While the Trust and the Diocese does not believe that
35 a payment of compensation is an appropriate response to

1 this claim, they remain very willing to engage in a
2 process that may lead to reconciliation. The offer of
3 grief counselling will remain open to Mrs Wilkinson,
4 should she wish to take it".

5 **MS CATO:** I felt that the Anglican Diocese of Auckland
6 deflected responsibility by saying that the practices I
7 described would not be permitted today. I consider
8 that the approach of "that's what happened then" is an
9 attempt to deflect responsibility. It is also,
10 however, an implicit condemnation of the people who
11 represented the Church at the time. It seems to be a
12 cop-out.

13 The response letter from the Anglican Trust implies
14 that I was not merely placed in St Mary's as a boarder.

15 Q. Is that I was merely placed?

16 A. The response letter from the Anglican Trust implies
17 that I was not merely placed in St Mary's as a boarder.
18 St Mary's was not a boarding house. They only took in
19 unmarried pregnant women. They made them pay for the
20 cost of their board through their Sickness Benefit but
21 also forced them to work as domestics as well.

22 I take great exception to the inference that it was
23 perhaps the fact that I was a rather pathetic child and
24 that was the reason I did not cope with the treatment
25 at St Mary's. St Mary's in the time of Matron Rhoda
26 Gallagher could not be with a strict boarding house.
27 In hindsight, I would go as far as saying my soul was
28 raped when I was at St Mary's.

29 The letter also attempts to reduce Matron's part in
30 her betrayal. My mother simply echoed Matron's words.
31 Up to that point I believed I had Matron's support to
32 keep my child. This inference is an old attack of
33 using "transference" in an attempt to turn Matron's
34 actions back on myself and my mother.

1 The whole process cost me \$10,000 in legal costs to
2 Cooper Legal which the Anglican Church refused to
3 contribute towards. All they offered me was six
4 counselling sessions.

5 I felt re-victimised by engaging with the Anglican
6 Trust for Women and Children.

7 On 9 November 2015, I contacted the Waihi community
8 constable and requested that the Police investigate the
9 possibility of taking criminal action against the
10 Church for kidnap and abduction.

11 On 11 December 2015, I met with a Detective who
12 explained to me that I could not bring a charge against
13 the Anglican Church for abduction or kidnapping.
14 However, if Matron Gallagher had still been alive, I
15 may have been able to bring charges against her.

16 Attempts at political solutions. Calls for the
17 reform of the New Zealand Adoption Act 1955 have
18 occurred over a lengthy period of time motivated by a
19 wide range of interest groups. Changing social needs
20 and expectations has prompted reviews of the Act in
21 1979, 1987, 1990 and 1993. However, none of these
22 reviews led to legislative change.

23 I was a member of Movement Out of Adoption (MOA)
24 which was setup by Robert Ludbrook in the 1990s. This
25 group no longer exists. MOA had the support and
26 assistance of a membership of 110. Its main aim was to
27 educate the population about the Adoption Act 1955.
28 MOA hosted conferences, met with various groups,
29 including doctors and other Social Services, plus
30 politicians across the board. MOA worked through
31 community development to highlight the flaws, inequity
32 and harm perpetuated by closed adoption through the
33 Act.

34 Part of MOA's lobbying was to tell the stories of
35 those that abduction/adoption had impacted on, and

1 these stories were published in the Woman's Weekly in
2 1994.

3 Q. Can we please call up Exhibit 8005? This is a magazine
4 article with the title, "Hell at St Mary's" and
5 identifies, relates to the pain and suffering Maggie
6 Wilkinson endured as a young unwed Mum in the Anglican
7 Church former St Mary's Home still with her 30 years
8 later. It is a report by Judith Thompson. Can we
9 expand the bottom right-hand quote from Maggie? The
10 quote is, "It's an anger that demands an answer as to
11 why we were punished so badly, why we were expected to
12 silently disappear, to remain burdened with the grief
13 of suppressed maternal feelings after we had been
14 robbed of our most precious gift". And a reference
15 that I'll read out, doesn't need to come out on the
16 screen, "The home had an overwhelming atmosphere of
17 guilt and punishment and the conditions were
18 Dickensian."

19 Bottom right-hand extract, page 3, "Maggie describes
20 her experiences as an abuse inflicted by the Anglican
21 Church which she believes chose either to condone or
22 ignore what was happening. She also believes Social
23 Welfare workers chose to turn a blind eye".

24 The article ends, "I do not accept what has
25 happened, she says, I simply live with it".

26 **MS CATO:** "The work of MOA was consistent with Joss
27 Sawyer's book *Death By Adoption* 1979 for the practice
28 of closed adoption.

29 The practice used birth certification to disown
30 children's biological roots and was accompanied by
31 forms of pressure and force on women to sever their
32 immediate and ongoing relationship with that child's
33 life, which is legal fiction.

34 The practice is and was sustained by its secrecy
35 which childless couples or those choosing not to have

1 their own children. This activity was enabled by a
2 cloak of public shame around single parenting.
3 Significantly, it proved to disadvantage Unwed Mothers
4 and their biological children for the benefit of
5 others.

6 The practice nevertheless represented a truth that a
7 number of people involved in individual closed adoption
8 acts, were advantaged by securing children and held
9 moral or social investment in that activity.

10 It is in *Death By Adoption* that the stories and
11 experiences of women who lost children via adoption
12 began to be heard and communities concerned with
13 adoption as social injustice formed.

14 In the mid-1990s, there was growing concern to
15 investigate closed adoptions. There were many other
16 support and lobbying organisations operating, such as
17 JIGSAW, Adoption Support Link, Siblings Affected by
18 Adoption, and Aotearoa Birthmothers Support Group.
19 These support groups advertised their services in the
20 front pages of telephone books and in national and
21 local newspapers.

22 In May 1999, the current events TV show 60 Minutes—
23 Q. Can I correct that, it should be 1994.

24 **MS CATO:** Sorry, 1994, the current events show 60
25 Minutes offered a two-part story, a special
26 investigation into the history of New Zealand adoption
27 procedures, case studies of adoptions that went
28 horribly wrong and a call to change the adoption laws.

29 **MS ANDERSON:** Commissioners, it's an extract from that
30 documentary that will be shown at the end of this
31 evidence, which we are unable to transmit via the live
32 stream, so we will move into turning off the live
33 streaming when we come to that part of the evidence.

34 **CHAIR:** Thank you.

1 **MS CATO:** "I wrote about my experience in St Mary's and
2 sent that manuscript to Renee Taylor. I also put other
3 women in touch with Renee. She used the stories as a
4 base for her book titled Does This Make Sense to You
5 published in 1995. This book was later made into a
6 film A Piece of My Heart, released in 2009.

7 This was a call for community accountability. This
8 should have been enough to alert commenters/politicians
9 to investigate the practice of adoption in New Zealand.
10 However, this did not happen.

11 Government Administration Committee. In 1997, we
12 lobbied for a Government Inquiry into adoption in
13 New Zealand. In the end, the Government Administration
14 Committee did not recommend an Inquiry.

15 It seems that this Committee did not make much
16 attempt to contact the advocacy and support community-
17 based organisations I mentioned. With the many
18 adoption support or lobby groups widely advertised and
19 easy to contact, it is a concern to me that the issue
20 was treated with such indifference.

21 The Adoption Act 1955 has been quietly modified over
22 the years in an attempt to make the suggested changes
23 by those who identify the many flaws, which has been
24 the reason for political statements such as "it's not
25 like that anymore" which in turn seems to be an excuse
26 to rid themselves of their reality of what actually
27 happened and the need to do anything about it

28 These points listed are to note the wider legal,
29 social context around the implementation of adoption
30 which caused harm, that an apology is not enough, and
31 restorative actions should mirror the outcome of the
32 Australian apology.

33 The statutes and practices were remarkably similar,
34 and Australia followed New Zealand's 1955 lead statute
35 bypassing very similar legislation in the 1960s.

1 Unlike New Zealand, however, Australia revised its
2 legislation in 1993, applying a "best interests of the
3 child" principle which is still notably absent in
4 New Zealand's outdated statute.

5 As in Australia, New Zealand's practices had racist
6 elements and the placement of Maori children with
7 Pākehā families was not uncommon, while the reverse
8 situation was very rare. Many Māori children were
9 subject to secret adoption in Pākehā families, some
10 apparently with no regard whatsoever for the impact on
11 these children. In my daughter's case, her father was
12 Māori but it is only now, much later in her life, that
13 she is learning about and connecting with her whānau
14 and culture.

15 I belong to the lobbying and Support Group
16 New Zealand Mothers of Lost to Adoption for Justice.
17 In 2017 we petitioned the government to undertake a
18 full inquiry into the practice of forced adoption in
19 New Zealand during the 1950s to 1980s and that the
20 inquiry include and acknowledge the abuse, pain and
21 suffering caused by the State sanctioned practice of
22 forced adoption.

23 On the 15th of March 2017, we prepared submissions
24 to accompany this petition and in early 2017 I
25 presented them to the Social Services Select Committee.

26 I was devastated when a representative of Oranga
27 Tamariki refused to speak to our submission but instead
28 read the Adoption Act 1955 to us at the subsequent
29 hearing. I found this to be a cynical response to our
30 plea.

31 Our petition was dismissed.

32 A copy of the House Select Committee report, I note
33 that on page 3 it states:

34 "Most of us do not believe that an inquiry is the
35 best way to deal with this issue. Although we do not

1 agree with many adoption practices from the 1950s to
2 the 1980s, we note that these practices reflected the
3 social values and attitudes at the time. We note that,
4 as attitudes and values have changed, so too have
5 adoption practices. Some of us consider that an
6 inquiry would clarify what involvement social workers
7 had in adoptions. An inquiry could help to identify
8 other forms of reparation for women who were forced to
9 adopt out their children.

10 It could also help bring closure for families who
11 were affected by forced adoption."

12 New Zealand Mothers of Loss to Adoption for Justice
13 considered the dismissal unjust, given that women from
14 countries such as Australia, Canada, Ireland and
15 Holland have all been acknowledged and apologies have
16 been made plus support services set in place for those
17 lives that have been impacted by loss due to the
18 abduction of babies and the adoption process.

19 I feel that we had been given hope to have our
20 voices heard, only to have our hopes dashed. This was
21 not the first-time politicians had pushed aside the
22 important history and issues we were raising. The
23 question I have is: what are the forces in the
24 background which appear to me to have had powerful
25 impact, that keep preventing a proper inquiry?

26 The harm done to us is so deep and so extensive that
27 many in the adoption community regard attempts to
28 explain away what happened to them as unconscionable
29 revisionism, politically motivated, and a further
30 attempt to evade moral and political responsibility for
31 the very real wrongs done.

32 Recommendations. I have been asked to comment about
33 how redress for the type of abuse I suffered could be
34 improved in the future.

1 In relation to the Anglican Trust, my comments are
2 set out below. I also comment on what I think the
3 State should do.

4 A July 2016 New Zealand Herald article notes that
5 the Anglican Church of Aotearoa New Zealand and
6 Polynesia declared assets of \$1.7 million and an annual
7 income of \$1.9 million.

8 With this in mind, I wish for the Church to
9 financially resource an independent counselling service
10 for the mothers and their children that were abducted
11 by St Mary's, and other similar homes. I wish for them
12 to fund these services with no conditions or intrusive
13 questioning of their victims.

14 I also wish for the Church to issue a public apology
15 to all the mothers and children who were affected by
16 their illegal practices and for them to publicly
17 validate the suffering that they have caused for
18 generations.

19 In relation to what the State could do better, it is
20 time that the State or faith-based regime of abuse get
21 acknowledged, without the excuses and dismissive
22 attempt to alienate our physical being and pain of "but
23 that's just what happened then" or "it's not like that
24 anymore".

25 We ask that you hear us, that you hear how women,
26 and known and unknown families, have had to endure
27 terrible injustice, mourning missing members and
28 seeking their inclusion remain experiences which, if
29 unresolved, continue to haunt the pursuit of wellbeing
30 which we must all engage in.

31 We seek restoration of our truth in families,
32 communities, Church and State for we are part of the
33 unfortunate history. We ask for a full Inquiry, report
34 and opportunity for mediation and real robust
35 discussion with those affected.

1 An apology is not enough. Very substantial
2 legislative change is also urgently needed. The
3 failure to take it is a stain, an ominous complicity
4 with the abuses of the past, supportive of the secrets
5 and lies mentally and a culture of secrecy which meant
6 that the faith-based and State's mistakes were easy to
7 cover up, ignore, deny and perpetuate.

8 This submission seeks that the Royal Commission of
9 Inquiry recommend that there be a broad and full
10 Inquiry into the practice of abduction, concealment of
11 babies, which led to forced adoption in New Zealand
12 during the 1950s to the 1980s and that the Inquiry
13 include and acknowledge the abuse, pain and suffering
14 caused by the faith-based and State sanctioned practice
15 of forced adoption."

16 Q. Can you read the conclusion, please?

17 **MS CATO:** "The Church seemed to infer that they
18 provided a service by taking our babies off us so that
19 the secret was hidden forever, with our lives intended
20 to be able to carry on as if our babies had not been
21 born. Maybe there was a minority of young women who
22 went along with that. However, that does not justify
23 the punishment I felt (and as felt by many others in
24 the same position as me). It definitely did not take
25 into account those who desperately wanted to love and
26 raise our babies. No other options of support were
27 given, because Matron was obsessed with our children
28 being given to married couples.

29 In terms of seeking redress, I was not able to get
30 the Church to meet any of my needs. It seems amazing
31 to me. The Church had the opportunity to respond with
32 any terms they thought appropriate. Instead, I was
33 faced with an incredible refusal. The Church has
34 rubbed in the harm, causing me depression. This hardly
35 seems Christian".

1 Q. Thank you. There's a second supplementary statement by
2 Maggie. Could you begin reading that at paragraph 3,
3 please?

4 **MS CATO:** "I would dearly love one of the beautiful
5 stained-glass windows of the Holy Trinity Cathedral in
6 Parnell, one of the prominent windows be dedicated by
7 the Anglican Church to the many mothers destined to a
8 lifetime of grief and to their children who were taken,
9 abducted, by the judgmental philosophy of the Church.

10 To acknowledge and remember with sorrow the impact
11 of that action on those who were harmed by faith-based
12 actions and New Zealand's adoption legislation.

13 Although I would rather a remembrance place not to
14 be a place in a building of religion - I would
15 definitely love an acknowledgment to be in a position
16 of prominence so that people can mull over a practice
17 that was, and is, normalised by religion and society.
18 And so, they can begin to think about the harm done by
19 taking a newborn from his or her mother".

20 Q. Thank you. It's at this point, Commissioners, that the
21 live streaming will need to cease. Before it does
22 cease, Commissioner Alofivae will be thanking Maggie
23 and I think it's appropriate we do that before the
24 livestream ceases.

25 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Sarah, first, can I start with
26 you, to thank you for the eloquent way in which you
27 read Maggie's statement. Thank you for bringing her
28 and her experiences alive for us here in the room this
29 afternoon. Maggie, I understand you are watching and I
30 hope you are there with your survivors. We appreciate
31 that this is a distressing time for you but such as
32 your commitment to the kaupapa of the Commission that
33 you are prepared to share your statement in such a way
34 that we could hear from many voices of women that were

1 in a very similar situation to you that would otherwise
2 have not come forward who were also at St Mary's.

3 We want to thank you, Maggie, for your courage and
4 your bravery. And thank you for your continued
5 activism in your attempt to bring about legislative and
6 social reform, for shining a light on an issue that has
7 become increasingly more important, that of adoption
8 and what's happened.

9 Maggie, on behalf of the Commission, we receive your
10 evidence and we just wish you continued strength as you
11 continue to navigate the processes. Take care.

12 **CHAIR:** Thank you. The livestream can end here.

13 **MS ANDERSON:** Yes, the technical people have that under
14 control, I understand.

15 **CHAIR:** Thumbs have been raised in all directions.

16

17 (Livestream ended and video played)

18

19 I take it that is the conclusion of the evidence?

20 **MS ANDERSON:** It is the conclusion of the evidence.

21 **CHAIR:** Thank you again, Ms Cato, for bearing the
22 burden of reading that very powerful evidence. We will
23 take the adjournment.

24

25 **Hearing adjourned from 2.52 p.m. until 3.10 p.m.**

26

27

28

1

2

MRS D - AFFIRMED

3

QUESTIONED BY MS MACDONALD

4

5

6 **CHAIR:** Hello, Ms Macdonald. You may start.7 **MS MACDONALD:** Good afternoon, Commissioners. The

8 witness we have this afternoon is Mrs D and she is

9 within the building but in a separate room. You can

10 all see her?

11 **CHAIR:** Yes, we can see her. Can you see us, Mrs D?

12 Perhaps not at the moment.

13 A. Yes.

14 **CHAIR:** You can? Oh, that's good. First of all, we

15 are about 15 minutes late and I'm sure every one of

16 those 15 minutes was agony for you, so I'm sorry for

17 that. We try hard to keep to our timetable but we do

18 get a bit delayed occasionally, so I am sorry for any

19 damage that might have caused you. Let's start now by

20 acknowledging your support person, hello, thank you for

21 being there for Mrs D. And just to ask you to take the

22 affirmation, Mrs D. (Witness affirmed). Thank you

23 very much, now I'll leave you to Ms Macdonald who will

24 ask you some questions.

25 **MS MACDONALD:**

26 Q. Mrs D, you have come to the Commission today to talk

27 about what happened to you at St Mary's Home for Unwed

28 Mothers. I'd like you first to start with any opening

29 statement you have and then you can go on to start to

30 tell us a little bit about yourself and your

31 background.

32 A. First of all, I'd like to thank my daughter.

33 **CHAIR:** Just take a breath and some water and your

34 time, please.

1 A. And my granddaughter for coming as my support people.
2 And I'd like to thank my Counsel Assist for all the
3 long hours and caring support preparing my statement.
4 I'd also like to thank the Commission for inviting me,
5 enabling me to present my story.

6 **MS MACDONALD:**

7 Q. Do you want to start by just telling us a little bit
8 about yourself?

9 A. Yes. I was born in Tauranga in 1953. I am 67 years of
10 age.

11 I have three children, a girl and a boy in
12 New Zealand and one son in Australia who was taken from
13 me at his birth by Matron Gallagher at St Mary's Home
14 for Unwed Mothers. I was married twice, the first time
15 at 16. Neither of these marriages lasted and one of
16 them was to a very violent person. Relationships were
17 very difficult for me because I carried a big secret of
18 what happened to me as a young person.

19 Everything I achieved I have done on my own. I
20 became a nurse at 16 until I was forced to stop my
21 career. I went back to study at 55 and got my nursing
22 degree finally. I have five grandchildren and they are
23 the light of my life. Everything I do is to give back
24 to my children and grandchildren. I have experienced
25 some terrible things but I have had to be a survivor.
26 I cannot be a victim. I had to get on with things. I
27 would not wish what happened to me on anyone but
28 sometimes, I wish people could just walk in my shoes.

29 Identify as a New Zealand European and I am proud to
30 come from Tauranga. My parents ran a business there.

31 I contracted polio as a child, a baby, and when I'm
32 tired I still sometimes have a slight limp. I suffer
33 from post-polio syndrome and this causes persistent
34 fatigue, muscle weakness, muscle and joint pain and
35 sleep apnoea.

1 I have been a hard worker all my life and I was
2 brought up this way. In fact, when I was younger, my
3 parents would deal with any lingering polio symptoms by
4 telling me to work harder.

5 My Dad was a Presbyterian and we were brought up in
6 that Church until the Church complained about my older
7 sister wearing trousers to Church. Then we didn't go
8 back. My mother was an Anglican and she trusted the
9 Anglican Church, and this is how I was sent to St
10 Mary's Home — oh my God.

11 Q. You're doing absolutely fine. You can take as much
12 time as you like.

13 A. This is how I was sent to St Mary's Home for Unwed
14 Mothers in 1969.

15 I was 15 years old. I was very fit because I was a
16 keen surfer. We used to bike to the beach at the Mount
17 after school and surf until it got dark. I did not
18 even realise I was pregnant until I had stomach pains
19 when I was around five months pregnant. I already
20 suffered from endometriosis and one day I had terrible
21 stomach pains and my friend took me to her doctor at
22 the Mount. They thought maybe it was a urine
23 infection. Then they did a urine test, they said they
24 would send me the results. My mother got sent the
25 results and told me I was pregnant. I was so naive
26 about bodies and their functions that I did not realise
27 what had been done to me by an older boy. He sort of
28 tricked me into it. We knew nothing back then,
29 absolutely nothing about sex or even periods. And even
30 our mothers didn't tell us.

31 For a time my mother was not living with us and my
32 Dad was working overseas, so my sister looked after us.
33 She was 16, three years older than me, and I was three
34 years older than my brother. If the authorities had
35 known we were alone, they might have taken us into

1 care. My Dad sent money from overseas and we never
2 missed a day of school or got ill, so no-one found out.
3 I am still very close to my sister.

4 It always upset me that my mother sent me to St
5 Mary's. I came home from school and my bags were
6 packed and I was whisked away. I couldn't understand
7 it because we had a good relationship otherwise. And
8 when she was dying, I finally asked her and she got
9 very upset. She said when she realised I was pregnant
10 she asked the Anglican Church for advice and the Church
11 had said to send me to St Mary's.

12 She went to the Church for help and she trusted them
13 to tell her the right thing to do.

14 When I was in the home, she came to visit me every
15 single week for three hours on a Saturday afternoon all
16 the way from Tauranga to Auckland. She would take me
17 out for afternoon tea. I cried when she dropped me
18 back and it must have been an awful trip home for her
19 too. I would try to tell her what was happening but
20 she didn't believe me at the time. She trusted them to
21 look after me.

22 **CHAIR:** Mrs D, you don't have to go through this pain
23 if you don't feel up to it. We have other ways of
24 dealing with it. For example, somebody else could read
25 it in your presence, if that would help you. Would you
26 just like to couple of minutes to talk to Ms Macdonald
27 about how you are and whether you'd like to continue or
28 maybe do it in a different way? Would you like that
29 opportunity?

30 A. I think I would just like a few minutes just to get
31 myself-

32 **CHAIR:** To compose yourself.

33 A. I have read this and reread it and I was fine.

34 **CHAIR:** And now the moment has overwhelmed you. Look,
35 we will give you a few minutes. You just let Ms

1 Macdonald know when you're ready to come back and
2 discuss also if there might be another way of doing it,
3 if you want to. But it's entirely it's entirely up to
4 you which way you choose to go. All right?

5 A. Yes.

6 **CHAIR:** Thank you.

7

8 **Hearing adjourned from 3.23 p.m. until 3.40 p.m.**

9

10 **CHAIR:** Hello Mrs D, we're back again, are you feeling
11 a little more composed?

12 A. Yes, thank you.

13 **CHAIR:** Let's get on with it then, get the agony over
14 with. Thanks, Ms Macdonald.

15 **MS MACDONALD:**

16 Q. If you just want to read from paragraph 14, please,
17 Mrs D?

18 A. While at St Mary's I was a son who was forcibly removed
19 from me immediately after his birth and against my
20 will. I was made to give birth laying on my side so I
21 could not even see the baby. I was left alone in
22 labour for three days in a bare room, except for when
23 Matron Gallagher beat me. I mean literally beat me.
24 Punched me and slapped me as I was in labour and
25 delivery. She said I deserved it because I was
26 promiscuous. I was given food during this time but I
27 do not remember any doctor coming to check on me during
28 my labour.

29 My first child was taken away by adoptive parents at
30 10 days old. My Mum saw him in the nursery. I had
31 never been allowed to hold him or even see him. I only
32 saw him through the window of the nursery when the
33 nurse on duty left the curtain open toward the end of
34 her shift. We all got to know it was about 10.00 p.m.
35 at night she would do this and that secret was passed

1 down to all the girls in the dorm. I wish I knew the
2 nurse's name because it was pretty much the only act of
3 kindness we ever received in that place. I remember we
4 would hoist each other up and try to get a glimpse of
5 our babies. My sister was visiting me. She was
6 pregnant with her first child and while visiting me at
7 St Mary's she went into labour. She gave birth at St
8 Mary's and both of our children were in the nursery at
9 the same time.

10 A lawyer came to St Mary's after the birth of my son
11 and I was made to sign papers. I was never told I had
12 any right to decide whether or not my child would be
13 adopted. I did not want my baby to be adopted. I
14 never agreed to this. Matron used to say to us that we
15 had given up all rights when we went into St Mary's. I
16 do not know the name of the lawyer but his name will be
17 on the adoption papers. 30 years later I was so sick
18 of all the hurt that I went to an organisation called
19 JIGSAW to see if they could help me. A woman called
20 Nola Pinny encouraged me to apply for my son's birth
21 certificate. She was very supportive. I didn't think
22 I would get it but a couple of weeks later I had it in
23 my hands. It had the name of the adopted family on it.
24 We looked in the Auckland phone book and remembered
25 being told he was flying north. There was an odd phone
26 number that we later found, it was a Waiheke number.

27 My daughter actually phoned the number and an older
28 lady answered. But we were going to tell a false
29 reason for calling but I actually just ended up telling
30 the truth on the second call. She asked me to call
31 back in half an hour. She was the mother of the
32 adoptive mother who had moved her family to Australia
33 years before. The mother was literally on her way to
34 Waiheke from Australia to move her mother from Waiheke
35 down south. The mother answered when I rang back, she

1 said she had been waiting for a call from me for
2 30 years. She told me she had paid \$200 to the Matron
3 at St Mary's to buy my son to replace her baby that was
4 stillborn. She'd even given my son the same name as
5 the baby who died. She said it was the worst \$200
6 she'd ever spent. I found out that my son had grown up
7 very troubled. Apparently she had always told him he
8 would never measure up to her own son. He had had a
9 very difficult life and was especially upset about not
10 knowing who his father was.

11 I arranged to meet the adoptive mother as she was
12 coming back through Hamilton where I was living. I
13 wanted to give her some things for my son I had kept
14 all those years, a Pounamu and a poem on a plaque. It
15 was a crowded train station in Hamilton because it was
16 the week of Field Days but the crowd somehow parted and
17 we saw each other. I told her that I had seen her
18 through the window at St Mary's as my son was being
19 taken away. And I asked her if she'd ever thought
20 about me over the previous 30 years. I had never been
21 told anything about how he was doing. The adoptive
22 mother had never tried to find me or help him try to
23 find me but she said to me that somehow it was my
24 responsibility to fix him.

25 I had always told my children about my firstborn son
26 from the beginning of their lives. I phoned my son in
27 Australia and wanted to be able to welcome him into our
28 family, but he only wanted to know who his father was
29 and whether my family were wealthy.

30 My other son tried to contact him, and we offered to
31 pay for his flight to come over. I have tried to keep
32 in touch with him and told him that if he wants to come
33 to New Zealand, he can meet his family.

34 Q. Thank you, Mrs D. Now, that wasn't your only
35 experience of St Mary's, was it?

1 A. No. My son was born in late 1969. I left St Mary's
2 two weeks after my son was taken from me, then started
3 nursing training in February 1970 because of an
4 arrangement because I was so young, the arrangement was
5 made between Matron Gallagher and Matron Wilson. I had
6 always wanted to be a nurse. I became pregnant again,
7 never thinking it would happen again because there was
8 no contraception, and was not considered old enough to
9 live independently. Matron Wilson at the hospital
10 where I was training said I would have to give up the
11 baby if I wanted to continue nursing and register.

12 I knew that nursing was the only way to support
13 myself and my children. I had always wanted to be a
14 nurse, so I did not want to give it up, but I felt I
15 was being blackmailed into giving up nursing as lots of
16 young nurses became pregnant. There was another young
17 woman who had a baby and was allowed to graduate. I
18 remember Matron held up her nursing badge in front of
19 me and said, "You will never get this".

20 I went back to St Mary's to have my second child. I
21 was absolutely clear that I did not want to give her
22 up. I would look after her myself.

23 My daughter was born in 1971. I was told by CYFS
24 that I had six weeks to get everything together and
25 show that I could support my baby. I went back to
26 Tauranga and my Mum helped buy a bassinet, pram and
27 clothing. I managed to get a cleaning job at night so
28 I could look after her.

29 About 10 days after my daughter was born, I had been
30 taken with two other girls to a lawyer's office at
31 Otahuhu. The paper we were forced to sign was folded
32 so we were not able to read it but one of the other
33 girls who was from Australia asked what it was we were
34 signing. Matron Gallagher said it was for continued
35 care as we were not paying for care at St Mary's. We

1 did not get a copy of the papers, even when the girl
2 asked for them. We were not told they were adoption
3 papers, but I think that was what they were now, from
4 the later letter stating the adoption was not
5 finalised. There were two of us there who wanted to
6 keep our babies.

7 To get to the lawyer's office, coming from St Mary's
8 we used the Great South Road entrance, we turned off
9 onto Great South Road left and drove north to the fork
10 of Great South Road. We veered right past the war
11 memorial and statue with the horse and the lawyer's
12 office was upstairs in a building on the right. The
13 lawyer was an old Pākehā gentleman, he wore glasses.
14 He did not discuss anything with us or explain what we
15 were signing. He only spoke to Matron Gallagher.

16 I think my daughter must have left St Mary's after
17 me as I saw her at two weeks old when I left. I was
18 waiting to collect her at six weeks but she did not
19 come. I found out later she was taken to a family
20 later in 1971. It may have been one of Matron
21 Gallagher's friends because she was suspected of giving
22 or selling babies to friends of hers. CYFS contacted
23 my Mum by phone to be told the placement was not
24 working out and the baby was now in new foster care.
25 Years later the official line from CYFS was that as the
26 baby's biological father was Māori, the baby was too
27 dark for the family as she did not fit in with their
28 existing child.

29 I was asked if I wanted my daughter back which I had
30 always said I did or is she to be placed again? I
31 immediately went with my Mum and sister to the foster
32 home to pick up my daughter. The foster family were
33 very nice and were appalled at what had happened. When
34 we arrived they were in tears. The husband who had
35 gone to get my child was crying his eyes out.

1 My baby daughter was black and blue. She'd been
2 badly beaten. She was 11 weeks old.

3 Q. Mrs D, what did you and your mother was with you, is
4 that right?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. And your sister was with you?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. What did you do when you realised what had happened to
9 your daughter?

10 A. The foster family said, we took photos and the foster
11 family said that they'd never seen such a thing and we
12 should take further this further and they would always
13 be witnesses.

14 Q. So, just to make that clear, your baby daughter was
15 taken from St Mary's and given to a family, and that
16 family, while she was with them this had happened, and
17 then someone, CYFS it would appear, had taken the baby
18 and placed her with the second foster family?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. And it was when she arrived with that foster family,
22 they were just appalled. So, they encouraged us to do
23 something and go to the Police and complain. After my
24 daughter was returned to my care, I tried to find out
25 what happened. We had taken the photos of my baby's
26 injuries to the Police in Tauranga. We never got
27 further than the front desk. We told the older male
28 Police Officer that I had been at St Mary's and that
29 CYFS had taken my baby and she had been beaten. We
30 showed him the photos. Police said it was a family
31 issue and directed us back to CYFS and St Mary's.

32 My mother called Matron who said to her "if I were
33 you I wouldn't complain too much" and that if we did
34 not destroy the photos they would take my baby away
35 again. My Mum was scared and destroyed the photos.

1 Q. Can I just confirm whether you that that was Matron
2 Gallagher who said that to your Mum?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Thank you.

5 A. Yeah. And CYFS, we contacted CYFS, they did not want
6 to know. They refused to tell me who the adoptive
7 family was. They have continuously refused to tell me
8 and refused Official Information requests on the
9 grounds that the adoption was revoked, so never
10 legalised. This does not make any sense to me at all.

11 I had been prevented from completing my nursing
12 qualification and I worked in many jobs over the years
13 to support my family. My sister had two children and
14 she helped me. I lived for a time in a flat at the
15 back of her house, so she could look after my children
16 at night. And when I went back to Tauranga with my
17 daughter, we lived in our family home with my Dad and
18 brother. My Dad was so shocked as he was told I had
19 gone nursing and then I come home with a baby. They
20 bonded immediately though. It didn't take long before
21 he was taking her off to work with him, with the
22 bottles and nappies and the family dog.

23 I worked in a supermarket, I trained as a
24 phlebotomist and lab technician, and I went back to
25 study nursing at the age of 55 and gained my Bachelor
26 of Nursing degree and did one year post grad. I am now
27 working as a qualified staff nurse. Matron Wilson was
28 wrong. When I graduated it was my proudest moment in
29 my lifetime.

30 Q. Thank you very much, Mrs D. Now the next bit of your
31 statement deals with more detail about your experiences
32 of abuse at St Mary's. So, just take it slow and if
33 you want someone else to read for you, we can do that
34 in portions. You just see how you go.

1 A. Okay. In a time when I felt I should have received the
2 most support and compassion from the Church, the nine
3 months I spent at St Mary's were instead categorised by
4 fear, loneliness and mistrust. The misplaced shame I
5 already felt was reiterated daily by Matron who even
6 beat me during the delivery of my children to reinforce
7 I should be punished for my actions.

8 She should have been a caring figure.

9 Not only were my children removed from me once I had
10 given birth to them but I was made to labour alone for
11 72 hours on both occasions. I then had to give birth
12 on my side specifically so I could not catch a glimpse
13 of my newborn children.

14 We girl at St Mary's were not allowed to use our own
15 names. We were given new surnames. Then our identity
16 was stripped from us even further by being referred to
17 as "Gallagher's girls". The same surname was given to
18 all the other girls. Gallagher was Rhoda Gallagher's
19 surname, the Matron. She is dead now. We were not
20 allowed to tell each other our real names. We did
21 though, as a sort of act of rebellion.

22 Sometimes in your life you meet someone who has been
23 at St Mary's and we describe ourselves as "Gallagher's
24 girls" which sort of sounds cheerful, like Land Girls
25 or something. It is not that. It is simply a badge of
26 survival and we recognise each other for what we all
27 experienced.

28 If we tried to run away or they found out that we
29 had told each other our real names, Matron would
30 threaten the girls that if they did not do exactly as
31 we were told, our babies would die. She used to say
32 "The woodbox behind the chapel is where your babies
33 will end up".

34 All the nuns and the sisters behaved the same way
35 towards us. No-one stood up to Matron Gallagher. The

1 only person who did at all was the nurse who left the
2 curtain open.

3 There was an Australian girl who was all by herself
4 in New Zealand with no family and I felt sorry for her,
5 so I asked my mother by letter if we could take her
6 with us for afternoon tea. Matron Gallagher told us
7 she could not come. I did not understand how she even
8 knew I had asked my mother but then my Mum told me that
9 all my letters arrived with big sections blocked out,
10 so obviously all our letters were opened and censored.

11 On my first week at St Mary's, I was so lonely and
12 shocked at the treatment that I cried a lot in my
13 pillow and one of the older girls gave me a Little Red
14 Diary and said "this will be your friend, write it down
15 and keep it forever".

16 I kept it in my bra and did keep it forever and
17 wrote all sorts of things in it. I last looked at this
18 diary when I was packing my possessions up for storage
19 13 years ago and was going to throw it out as it meant
20 nothing to anyone else but I could not, so I hid it
21 with my firstborn's birth certificate.

22 Q. And do you think that you still have that diary?

23 A. Yes, I do, it's still in my storage.

24 Q. So, you've told us about some of the behaviours of
25 Matron Gallagher and the other nuns and sisters at St
26 Mary's. Were you mistreated by other people while you
27 were at St Mary's?

28 A. Yes, I was sexually abused by two doctors; one younger
29 and one old. The older one was Dr Caffell. I remember
30 his name but it was confirmed to me by one of the girls
31 I met in later life who said she went to see his grave
32 in Purewa Seminary. I remember he was much lauded on
33 his passing. I was upset to think his family thought
34 he was such a saint. There was inappropriate touching
35 of my breasts and vagina under the guise of a weekly

1 medical examination. I am a qualified nurse and I can
2 say categorically that the examinations I am talking
3 about were not a necessary procedure for regular
4 antenatal compassions. Not all of the girls got the
5 same examination. We built up courage to talk to
6 someone about it, to the sisters, nothing was done and
7 it carried on.

8 Q. Thank you. Do you want to go to paragraph 52 and tell
9 the Commissioners whether, as well as the inappropriate
10 touching or assaults, whether the doctors did anything
11 positive for you?

12 A. No, neither doctor prepared me with any knowledge of
13 delivery or attended during the labour or the birth.
14 Dr Caffell was the doctor for both stays at St Mary's
15 and Matron was normally in the room I think in case we
16 spoke of the evil happenings at the home. Matron never
17 questioned the regularity of the vaginal examinations
18 by either doctor. In fact, I had no recall or memory
19 of any discussion between Matron and them at the
20 examinations.

21 I recall a girl called Alison who died giving birth
22 to twins. She was left to labour alone for two days.
23 She was screaming like a child animal all the time.
24 She was denied pain relief and the staff refused to
25 call an ambulance or even call a doctor. I am a
26 qualified nurse and because there was so much
27 haemorrhaging during the labour, I believe Alison had
28 placenta previa, where the placenta blocks all or part
29 of the cervix and then tears easy during birth. This
30 leads to blood loss and is fatal very quickly if not
31 dealt with. I believe the pain Alison was in would be
32 indescribable. We tried to get someone to help her,
33 but no staff member would. We didn't give up until
34 someone came to see her. One of the girls went to the

1 nursery sister and then went to Matron's cottage on the
2 grounds and then an ambulance was called.

3 I think she would have been taken to National
4 Women's. When the ambulance came, the girls were
5 threatened by Matron not to tell anyone ever about this
6 and we never saw her again. We were told she died and
7 the twins too. In her death notice it said Alison and
8 twins, and I still have the cutting. I will never get
9 overhearing her and seeing her in so much pain and
10 fear.

11 My Little Red Diary has the New Zealand Herald
12 clipping of Alison's death. When Alison died we had
13 not yet had our babies so we were all terrified. The
14 staff deliberately kept us apart from girls who had
15 given birth. We could have helped each other by
16 talking about what to expect but the staff did not want
17 that. They wanted to keep us in complete ignorance and
18 fear.

19 Once I had had my first baby I was not allowed to
20 speak to the new girls on the next visit. It is
21 strange to think I was given weekly examinations by a
22 doctor but never any medical support for birth, even
23 though I was only 15.

24 My babies were 9 pound 1 and 7 pound 12. It would
25 have helped to know what was coming.

26 One of the really upsetting things I have never been
27 able to forget is the cruelty to the children in the
28 orphanage section, where I was working prior to my
29 son's birth. I had worked for a couple of days in the
30 laundry and then one of the laundry workers from
31 outside brought us some lollies. Well, Matron found
32 out about this and we were told we couldn't work there
33 again. I wanted to work in the orphanage section
34 anyway because I really loved children and I already
35 knew I wanted to be a nurse.

1 The only care we were allowed to give the children
2 was very basic. Working there was very distressing
3 because the children were never hugged and if any of us
4 girls tried to hug any of them, we were punished and
5 beaten by Matron. I am still upset at the memory of
6 the little ones with their arms out to be picked up and
7 cuddled and being forbidden to comfort them. I do not
8 understand how a supposedly Christian institution could
9 be so barbaric to children.

10 Q. Are you okay to carry on, Mrs D, or would you like a
11 break?

12 A. No, I'll keep going.

13 Q. Okay.

14 **CHAIR:** Mrs D, just know this, the Commissioners have a
15 copy of your brief of evidence which we have read
16 carefully already. So, if there are parts that you
17 find just too difficult to read, I am quite happy for
18 you to skip over, knowing that we understand what's in
19 them.

20 A. Okay.

21 **CHAIR:** So, you choose. If you want to leave something
22 out, please know that we do know about it.

23 A. Okay, thank you. I remember there was an outbreak of
24 dysentery in the home. I remember a little Maori boy
25 who was about three years old was forced to sit on a
26 wooden fixed potty for literally days at a time with
27 vomiting and diarrhoea. He wasn't getting better and
28 could not keep any food down. He also had rickets and
29 was often in pain. He constantly cried for want of
30 affection and the girls were not allowed to comfort
31 him. It haunts me to this very day.

32 **MS MACDONALD:**

33 Q. So, as well as working in the laundry and the
34 orphanage, Mrs D, was there other work that you were
35 made to do?

1 A. Yes. Along with the other girls I was forced to do
2 demeaning and unnecessary work, cleaning outside
3 corridor floors with liquorice like thread on a wooden
4 ramp in the winter. Each groove of the matting had to
5 be cleaned with a brush, like a toothbrush. Even as I
6 suffered from hyperemesis, I was on my hands and knees
7 outside trying to scrub a floor with a toothpaste.

8 Q. Can I confirm for the non-medical people, what you are
9 talking about is you had very, very extreme morning
10 sickness, what's called morning sickness?

11 A. Yes. At the time we were not allowed to wear
12 underwear. We were told this was because they might
13 harm the baby. I now know that there is no medical
14 justification for this and that it was done to demean
15 and humiliate us.

16 The girls were verbally abused by the nuns and the
17 Matron—told they were worthless, fallen and useless.

18 Q. We're going to go on to talk about, if you're okay to
19 go on, I'm going to ask you if it you can talk about
20 what the effects on you were of what you of what you
21 experienced but if you want to take a wee break, we can
22 do that.

23 A. No, I'm fine.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. One of the effects of the sexual abuse by the doctors
26 when I was so young and at my most vulnerable, and the
27 fact that men saw it was happening at St Mary's to me
28 and others and did nothing, is that I cannot trust men.
29 I have been married twice and neither has worked out.
30 At least one was very abusive. He put me in hospital
31 and I had to leave my hometown in secret.

32 Despite everything that has happened to me, I was
33 able to be a good Mum for my daughter. She was a good
34 and beautiful baby and I have never understood why the
35 adoptive family came close to killing her. And I've

1 never understood why CYFS did not involve the Police
2 and instead protected the abusers.

3 For decades I lived with the effects of being shamed
4 and humiliated and abused and violated as a teenager.

5 Q. Mrs D, if you want, we can go to paragraph 70 and you
6 can talk about going to the Turning Point Trust.

7 A. It was not until getting out of the hospital that I
8 went to a place called Turning Point Trust in Tauranga.
9 It took a holistic approach to mental illness which
10 includes art therapy for example. I had an amazing
11 counsellor psychologist who introduced me to cognitive
12 behavioural therapy. I went twice a week. It was very
13 intense, but it helped me a lot to stop blaming myself
14 for what had been done to me by others and should have
15 cared for me. I think funding for this therapy was cut
16 after that which is a shame.

17 After that, I went to Outward Bound. I found it
18 really challenging but I got a lot out of it. I found
19 myself helping and being relied on to support and a
20 listening ear for all the younger people. I didn't say
21 anything to them but inside I sort of wished I could
22 share my experience. After Outward Bound, I applied to
23 start nursing.

24 Q. Thank you. Now, you described earlier how after you
25 got your daughter back you tried going to the Police?

26 A. Yeah.

27 Q. So, can you talk about what you decided to do much
28 later on, when you decided to go back and try and get
29 some sort of redress?

30 A. Much later I decided I felt strong enough to try to get
31 some answers and potentially an apology or other
32 redress for the disastrous effect the treatment of me
33 by the Anglican Church had had. It wasn't just what
34 had happened to me but the memories of what I had seen
35 done to others. It would not leave me.

1 I had read about three women who had received an
2 apology from the Bishop of Auckland in 2005 for their
3 treatment at St Mary's and the article said the Church
4 was discussing compensation.

5 In September 2012 I wrote to CYFS asking for names
6 and documentation relating to the family my baby
7 daughter was first sent to. I also wanted to find the
8 second foster family who had been so kind and so upset
9 at the brutality to my baby. I wanted to let the
10 second family know we were still a family and to thank
11 them. I received a response from Paula Gill.

12 Q. So, in terms of that response, we don't have to go
13 through it in detail.

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. Basically, she told you that the files had been
16 requested today from recall?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. And a lady called Lynley Brophy would contact you to
19 let you know what information there was relating to the
20 foster placement?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. And then she also gave you a number for the Auckland
23 Anglican Diocese office?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. And then after that you got a response from the lady at
26 CYFS, is that right?

27 A. Yes.

28 Q. And that was on 16 November 2012. I'm just going to
29 get that document put up on the screen, so that's
30 document 3, please. And it should be visible to you as
31 well, can you see that? We're going to zoom in on it
32 but you've got a copy of it with you?

33 A. Yes.

34 Q. If you could pull out the first bit of highlighting but
35 do the entire paragraph, the entire first paragraph?

1 A. "Our records indicate".

2 Q. I can read this if you like or you can read it if you
3 prefer.

4 A. You can read it, Lorraine.

5 Q. "Our records indicate that your daughter, born in 1971,
6 was placed for the purpose of adoption with a couple.
7 This placement was facilitated by St Mary's. This
8 placement was abandoned because of your daughter's
9 darker skin colouring and Maori features. The couple
10 felt that this was too different to the fairer
11 colouring of their son and they were concerned about
12 the impact of this difference on the children. Our
13 records note that your daughter was then placed in
14 temporary foster care. Our records indicate that your
15 daughter was subsequently returned to your care.
16 Neither our adoption nor Care and Protection records
17 contain any information about your daughter being
18 physically abused during the course of these
19 placements".

20 And if you could highlight the final paragraph on
21 that page, from halfway down, just that bit, yeah.

22 "Please note that you have a right to complain to
23 the Ombudsman in order to seek an investigation and
24 review of our decision to withhold this information".
25 And that's related to the names of the people involved.
26 "Section 10 Adult Adoption Information Act 1985 enables
27 our service to approach adoptive parents on behalf of a
28 birth parent. However this provision cannot be
29 utilised as your daughter's adoption was not finalised,
30 and it is therefore beyond the scope of our role to
31 make the approaches that you have requested".

32 So, if you go to paragraph 76 of your statement.

33 A. None of this makes any sense because the only reason
34 they contacted me was because she'd been badly beaten.
35 How could there be no record of it?

1 Q. So then you try to contact the Anglican Church, is that
2 correct, Mrs D?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Just carry on from there.

5 A. Around the same time in September 2012, I called the
6 Anglican Church to ask who to contact about my
7 experiences at St Mary's. I was directed to Kevin
8 Third, the Diocesan manager, I wrote to him in 2012
9 outlining my experiences at St Mary's, including things
10 I had witnessed happen to others.

11 Q. Can I call up Exhibit 5, please, and if you could pull
12 up the highlighted section. What I'm going to do,
13 Mrs D, I'm not going to read through all of it. I just
14 want to point out that you told them in 2012 quite a
15 lot of the same details that you've told the Commission
16 today. You didn't hold back on the details of what
17 you'd experienced, would that be fair to say?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. So, you told them that you were beaten in child birth,
20 which is the first bullet point there?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. You told them that you were sexually abused?

23 A. Yep.

24 Q. You told them that you weren't allowed to wear
25 underwear and that you had to work very long hours
26 cleaning on your hands and knees when you had
27 Hyperemesis?

28 A. Yes.

29 Q. You told them about what you witnessed in the
30 orphanage, the distressing evidence that you told us
31 earlier about the way the children were treated? And
32 you told them about the girl that subsequently died?

33 A. Yep.

34 Q. And that you told of being threatened if you tried to
35 run away, where your babies would end up?

- 1 A. Yeah.
- 2 Q. And you also told him about some of the personal
3 effects on you?
- 4 A. Yep.
- 5 Q. So then if you go to paragraph 78, you met with
6 Mr Third, is that correct?
- 7 A. Yes. I met with Mr Third in October 2012 and a meeting
8 was arranged with the Bishop. I remember Mr Third
9 saying "it was a different time". That immediately
10 made me very angry because the things that were done to
11 me and my daughter were illegal then as much as now. I
12 really felt I wanted vengeance for myself and my
13 daughter.
- 14 Q. So, who did you meet with next?
- 15 A. I had a meeting with the Bishop of Auckland, Ross Bay,
16 on 14 December, attended by Diocesan manager Kevin
17 Third and Jane Hanley from the Auckland Trust for Women
18 and Children which had taken over the running of St
19 Mary's. At the meeting I remember Bishop Bay saying
20 there would be no continuation of this discussion and
21 if there was an apology, the apology had to be
22 accepted.
- 23 Q. I am just going to ask you a question about that. In
24 terms of what the Bishop said to you in the meeting,
25 are you clear that that was exactly what he said and
26 what he meant? Is it possible that you misunderstood
27 what he was saying about the apology having to be
28 accepted?
- 29 A. No, that was my total understanding of what was said.
- 30 Q. And you don't think it was—he wasn't saying it was up
31 to you whether or not you accepted the apology?
- 32 A. No.
- 33 Q. So then, did you receive a written apology?

1 A. Yes. I received a written apology from the Anglican
2 Church via the Bishop of Auckland Ross Bay on the 21st
3 of December 2012.

4 Q. Could we call up number 6, please? If it's okay, I'll
5 read some of this but if you want to read it yourself,
6 you can.

7 A. No, you can read it, thanks.

8 Q. Okay. If you could pull up the first bit that's
9 highlighted, please? "I wish to reiterate some of the
10 things which I said to you at our meeting. I very much
11 regret and apologise for the decisions that were made
12 on your behalf by the staff at St Mary's in arranging
13 for the adoption of your daughter without your
14 permission. This should not have happened". And then
15 he apologises for the lack of care placing your
16 daughter with a family that was not appropriate and who
17 ultimately treated your daughter badly and he was sorry
18 for the treatment that you received as a resident of St
19 Mary's. Sorry, I've gone further than you are. If you
20 just highlight, no, that's fine.

21 He apologised for the treatment you received at St
22 Mary's, for the abusive environment in which you found
23 yourself and for the actions of the Matron and the
24 doctors in that regard. And he accepts that this has
25 cast a significant shadow over your life these last
26 40 years.

27 And the last part of the lowest paragraph, "It is to
28 our shame that we must acknowledge the period in its
29 history when this was not so, when people were not
30 treated compassionately". I am referring to a
31 paragraph above "and when you and others who were there
32 with you experienced such poor and cruel treatment".

33 And then if you can scroll down to the next page.
34 "I hope that the actions that you have been taking to
35 try to resolve this period of your life are bringing

1 about some sense of healing for you. The blame clearly
2 lies with others. However, you may now be able to feel
3 that you have done what you are able to draw these
4 matters to the attention of the Church authorities so
5 as to be sure that we may learn from them" and he
6 finishes the letter saying, "If there are any further
7 matters which you would like to discuss or raise with
8 me, I hope that you feel able to make contact".

9 So, it would seem that they have acknowledged a lot
10 of the things that you have complained about? There's
11 no suggestion that they don't accept what you say
12 happened?

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. So, if you go to paragraph 81?

15 A. Jane Hanley got involved again. She insisted it would
16 help my healing for me to revisit St Mary's. I am not
17 sure what her qualification to say that was but when I
18 agreed to go, it ended up being absolutely horrific. I
19 suffered a panic attack just being there. I think she
20 wanted to show me there wasn't a woodbox with dead
21 babies in it behind the chapel but that was no comfort.
22 I still shudder to think who or what might be under the
23 ground at that place.

24 I sat with this for a year before deciding that an
25 apology was not enough to compensate me and my family
26 for the devastating effect of what was done to me and
27 my children under the Church's auspices. I wrote to
28 Bishop Bay on 14 February 2014 acknowledging the
29 apology and seeking monetary compensation for the
30 criminal acts that were committed on me. And I refer
31 to a copy of the letter.

32 Q. So, if it we can pull up 7, please, Exhibit 7, and if
33 you pull out the highlighted section, please?

34 So, in the letter you acknowledge the apology that
35 was made to you but you also say, "I have now come to

1 the decision that your apologies are not sufficient
2 recompense for the actions of the Church and this
3 letter seeks monetary compensation for the treatment I
4 suffered".

5 And then the next paragraph down, please? "As I
6 communicated to you during our meeting, in addition to
7 my son being adopted without my informed consent and my
8 daughter being taken from me without my permission and
9 placed in the care of people who mistreated her, I
10 consider the treatment I endured at the hands of the
11 staff at St Mary's was no less than criminal."

12 And then in this letter you also again specifically
13 to the Bishop, you outline the treatment that you
14 received. So, on page 2 of the letter, you talk about
15 being beaten in child birth, you talk about being left
16 alone to labour and giving birth on your side and you
17 talk about the effects of this on your life. And at
18 the bottom of page 2 of the letter, if you could just
19 pull up that, "Since our meeting and your letter of
20 2012 I have had time to consider the apologies and
21 admissions you communicated to me. Although I
22 appreciate the acknowledgment of past actions I do not
23 feel they constitute a significant recognition of the
24 loss I suffered. St Mary's altered the course of my
25 life and left me a stranger to one of my children. I
26 know that other women in similar situations have
27 received monetary compensation and I am willing to
28 engage a lawyer if this cannot be settled without legal
29 action. At this stage, for the reasons outlined above
30 I believe that compensation is appropriate"

31 So, if you go to paragraph 83 and tell the
32 Commission what the result of that was?

33 A. The Bishop wrote back on 24 February 2014 saying, "We
34 are willing to discuss this matter with you. In the
35 first instance it requires the involvement of the

1 Diocesan Manager Kevin Third. He is on leave at
2 present and returns to the office next week. Once he
3 is back and I have been able to talk with him about
4 this, we have make contact again as soon as possible".

5 Q. And then did you receive a letter from Kevin Third?

6 A. Yes, a letter on the 29th of April came from Kevin
7 Third stating responsibility for any compensation was
8 with the Anglican Trust for women and children.

9 Q. Can you pull up Exhibit 9, please, and the highlighted
10 section, please. In this letter it states, "As you
11 will recall from our earlier meetings, the historical
12 issues around St Mary's home come under the oversight
13 of the Anglican Trust for Women and Children, ATWC.
14 ATWC are responsible for all residual assets and
15 finances of the home. In order to progress this
16 matter, it is necessary to involve the board of ATWC.
17 I have brought your correspondence to the attention of
18 the Board Chair and ATWC will make contact with you
19 regarding next steps".

20 And that's the letter, finished.

21 So, did anybody contact you, as the letter said?

22 A. No. It appears nothing was done and nearly a year
23 later in February 2015 I wrote to Kevin Brewer, the
24 ATWC Board Chairperson seeking financial compensation
25 for the criminal treatment I received under the guise
26 of the Anglican Church. I said that I had made phone
27 calls to ATWC, Philip Bielby, he was the CEO at the
28 time, and was told they had had no brief from anyone
29 about my case. In May 2015 I received a letter from
30 Christina Bryant, a partner at Hesketh Henry on behalf
31 of the Anglican Trust for Women and Children denying
32 any legal liability.

33 Q. Can you call up Exhibit 11, please? Are you happy for
34 me to read from parts of this letter?

35 A. Yes, thank you.

1 Q. If you could pull out just the paragraph with the
2 highlighting, so that's paragraph 3, please, but the
3 whole paragraph?" Institutions such as St Mary's home
4 no longer exist. They were a reflection of their time,
5 when attitudes towards teenage pregnancy and adoption
6 and the social support available to young mothers were
7 very different".

8 And then the final sentence, "It is with sadness and
9 regress that the Church acknowledges the pain
10 experienced by women who felt pressured or compelled by
11 circumstances to give up their children for adoption".

12 And then if you could pull out the next highlighted
13 section, please, down to the bottom of the page?

14 "You have asked for financial compensation from the
15 trust for your experiences at St Mary's home and
16 afterwards. The focus of the trust is on the current
17 needs of at risk families, and the trustees have a
18 responsibility to use the trust's resources best to
19 meet those needs.

20 We are the trust's legal advisers. We have advised
21 the trust that it is not liable at law to pay
22 compensation. We recommend you obtain your own legal
23 advice on this issue. Putting legal liability to one
24 side, the trust is very willing to continue a process
25 of reconciliation and healing and is willing to discuss
26 options with you or your lawyer to assist that process.
27 The trust has an excellent counselling service, which
28 can be made available if that is an option you wish to
29 explore".

30 What's your reaction then and now to that letter?

31 A. The first paragraph of the letter still to this day
32 makes me angry. I did not give up my children for
33 adoption willingly.

34 Q. And was that really the last that you heard from
35 anybody in the Anglican Church or the trust?

1 A. Yes. I looked into taking legal action through Cooper
2 Legal which was a firm that did that kind of work. I
3 was told because I worked full-time I was not eligible
4 for Legal Aid, but I could not afford private legal
5 representation on my nurse's salary. Although I'd
6 worked all my life, I am forced to work full-time and
7 although I love my work, at 67 it is exhausting. Money
8 is definitely a barrier to me being able to do things I
9 want to do.

10 Q. Now we've come to the end of your statement and I just
11 want to ask whether there's anything else that you want
12 to say. And if you do, you can say whatever you like.
13 And if you don't, I will, if it's okay with you I will
14 ask the Commissioners if they have any questions for
15 you, especially it would be questions about the redress
16 process.

17 A. I just would like to add that, to add insult to all my
18 injury, I got a call from the Royal Commission media
19 liaison officer explaining how she would liaise with
20 media questions and I categorically stated no to all
21 media queries. I do not want to sensationalise my
22 experience in newspapers or the news.

23 Also, she said she had read my statement and under
24 the guise of her journo hat felt that my story would
25 benefit Oranga Tamariki today of uplifting of children.
26 I was and am still very hurt and angry at this. I have
27 had it explained to me about what happened and that it
28 shouldn't have happened, and I understand this
29 Commission is all new but I just would take it as a
30 learning for everybody for the future.

31 **MS MACDONALD:** Thank you. And are you okay to take
32 questions?

33 A. Yes.

34 **MS MACDONALD:** Thank you.

1 **CHAIR:** Mrs D, before I ask my colleagues if they want
2 to ask any questions, can I most humbly apologise to
3 you for what happened to you in relation to that. It
4 was clearly a breakdown in our processes.

5 A. Yeah.

6 **CHAIR:** We aim not to do any harm and clearly we have
7 harmed you on this occasion, and so I unreservedly
8 apologise to you for that. It is something you should
9 not have gone through.

10 A. Yep.

11 **CHAIR:** When you have so graciously agreed to assist
12 us.

13 A. Yep.

14 **CHAIR:** Again, I am very sorry about that. I am going
15 to check with my colleagues if there are any questions
16 about the redress processes?

17 **COMMISSIONER STEENSON:** I did have just one question,
18 if that's all right? Thank you for coming in and
19 sharing your experiences today. I just wanted to
20 understand around when you first went to the Police and
21 they had told you to go back to the Church or St
22 Mary's, after that did you ever approach the Police
23 again or consider that?

24 A. No. We virtually lived in fear because in those days
25 you held the Police Officer in your town high on a
26 pedestal. You expected them to help you.

27 **COMMISSIONER STEENSON:** Thank you.

28 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** I do just have one question, if
29 I may, Mrs D. When you approached the Church in
30 September 2012, did you have any idea in your mind
31 about what you would have wanted in terms of a redress
32 package?

33 A. Yes, I did. I felt that St Mary's under the Anglican
34 Church destroyed and robbed me of my life, my future
35 and my children's future. And I know I would have gone

1 on to higher education. I've always loved children and
2 while I was doing my bachelor degree, I found a passion
3 that I wanted to go on to be a doctor. Everyone said
4 "you should have been a doctor" and I wanted to do
5 haematology and oncology, with an interest in
6 infectious diseases, having had polio.

7 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** And so, just in that first
8 meeting, they didn't offer you a suite of options?

9 A. Nothing.

10 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Nothing about compensation?

11 A. Apology.

12 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Nothing about counselling?

13 A. No.

14 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Okay. But for your
15 persistence, two years later in 2014 you were able to
16 look at this again?

17 A. Yes.

18 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** And made the approach to them?

19 A. Yes.

20 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** And then they come up with a
21 legal argument in 2015?

22 A. Yeah, that it was under the Anglican Trust for Women
23 and Children and out of their scope to deal with.

24 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Thank you. If I could just ask
25 you one more question. You said there were lots of
26 young girls there with you?

27 A. Yes, there was.

28 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** And they were underage? Some
29 of them you felt were underage?

30 A. Yes.

31 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Do you recall how young the
32 youngest might have been, from memory?

33 A. I know there was one girl the same age as me and I
34 think the oldest girl that was there was 17 or 18.

35 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** And girls with disability?

1 A. Yes, there was one girl with a disability.

2 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** And different ethnicities?

3 A. Oh yes, yeah, there was people from overseas that came
4 here to have their babies. Their parents didn't know
5 that they'd had children.

6 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Thank you for that, Mrs D,
7 thank you.

8 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Kia ora, Mrs D. My name is
9 Anaru. I just have some questions about the redress
10 process. I wondered how, it seems that you, when you
11 seek monetary compensation for the redress from the
12 Anglican Church, that you're then redirected back to
13 the trust?

14 A. Yep.

15 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** I wondered how that made you
16 feel?

17 A. Just, once again, worthless.

18 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** And it seems it got to a point
19 there where there's a stand-off with basically the
20 lawyers get involved and then you're unable to do
21 anything under you lawyer up?

22 A. Yep, until I heard that the Royal Commission had been
23 set up and I felt strong enough to actually stand up
24 and actually have my voice heard.

25 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Thank you. Thank you, I
26 appreciate your testimony today. Kia ora.

27 **CHAIR:** Mrs D, I have no questions but an observation.
28 I've lost count, but I think at least three times you
29 have told people your story, your account and your
30 experiences, and there may well be more times that I
31 haven't encountered. It's quite plain that it is a
32 most painful story and each time it costs you dearly to
33 tell. So, for that reason, we truly value your bravery
34 at coming again today. Again, I am sorry that you have
35 been hurt through our process but I hope that you will

1 know that we have not just listened to your account but
2 we have heard it, and that what you have told us today
3 will add to our knowledge and understanding of what
4 went on to young women and girls who were in your
5 circumstance. And so, your story is not just yours but
6 that of your fellow sufferers back there and the
7 adoptive children who suffered as a result. So, we do
8 acknowledge your bravery and your persistence. I think
9 above all for me, what has shone through, that you will
10 not give up. And so, rest assured, your story and your
11 account here today rests with us and we will be taking
12 it fully into account. So, thank you so much. I hope
13 you can now go get some help and some support.

14 A. Yep.

15 **CHAIR:** And be able to recover from what's plainly been
16 a very difficult experience for you.

17 A. Thank you.

18 **CHAIR:** Thank you very much. We are now going to
19 close. We always close with a waiata and some closing
20 words, so I'm going to invite the kaumatua to come. If
21 it you would like to stay there and watch and
22 participate, you are most welcome.

23

24 (Closing waiata and mihi)

25

26 **Hearing adjourned at 4.52 p.m.**