

**ABUSE IN CARE ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY
LAKE ALICE CHILD AND ADOLESCENT UNIT 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)
Ali'imuamua Sandra Alofivae
Mr Paul Gibson

Counsel: Mr Simon Mount QC, Ms Kerryn Beaton, Mr Andrew Molloy,
Ms Ruth Thomas, Ms Finlayson-Davis, for the Royal
Commission
Ms Karen Feint QC, Ms Julia White and Ms Jane Maltby
for the Crown
Mrs Frances Joychild QC, Ms Alana Thomas and Tracey Hu
for the Survivors
Ms Moira Green for the Citizens Commission on Human
Rights
Ms Susan Hughes QC for Mr Malcolm Burgess and Mr
Lawrence Reid
Mr Michael Heron QC for Dr Janice Wilson
Ms Frances Everard for the New Zealand Human Rights
Commission
Mr Hayden Rattray for Mr Selwyn Leeks
Mr Eric Forster for Victor Soeterik
Mr Lester Cordwell for Mr Brian Stabb and Ms Gloria Barr
Mr Scott Brickell for Denis Hesseltine
Ms Anita Miller for the Medical Council

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

Date: 17 June 2021

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

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Hearing opens with waiata and karakia tīmatanga by Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei

1
2 **[9.35 am]**

3 **CHAIR:** Ata mārie, tēnā tātou katoa. Nau mai hāere mai ki ēnei Hui TūmatanuiMōrena
4 Mr Molloy.

5 **MR MOLLOY:** Mōrena. Ma'am, we have four witnesses you will hear from today. All are led
6 by Ms Joychild or Ms Thomas, and I'm going to hand over to them now.

7 **CHAIR:** Ki a koe Ms Thomas.

8 **MS A THOMAS:** Hei te Kaiwhakawā tēnā koe. Otirā, koutou katoa ngā Kaikōmihana e nā noho
9 mai ki te taumata e mihi ana ki ā koutou. I runga anō i te mōhio ko tēnei te wahanga
10 tuātahi o te rā, ka mutu, ko te kaikōrero tuātahi. E tika ana ki a mihiā koutou, e tika ana ki a
11 mihiā tātou katoa kua tatū mai nei, mai i tēnei ra, i rukua whakarauika mai i tēnei rā. I
12 runga anō i te mōhio, e whakapono ana tēnei hunga, ki tēnei nohoanga o tātou me ngā
13 whāinga kei mua tonu i te aroaro. No reira, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā tatou katoa.

14 **CHAIR:** Tēnā koe.

15 **DONALD DANIEL KU**

16 **MS A THOMAS:** It is my privilege today to introduce Donald Ku. So the Commissioners are
17 aware as to how we will present Donald's evidence today. Donald would like to introduce
18 himself after the affirmation. There's a correction he wants to make with his name, which
19 we thought it would be appropriate that he addresses right at the beginning before we get
20 into his evidence.

21 Kia ora Donald.

22 A. Kia ora.

23 **Q.** Have you got your mic on?

24 A. Yeah.

25 **Q.** Yeah, ka pai. So like we spoke about, you'll take the affirmation with the Commissioners
26 and then I'll give it over to you to introduce yourself. Ka pai?

27 A. Ka pai.

28 **CHAIR:** How would you like me to call you Donald? Are you Donald or Don?

29 A. Donald.

30 **Q.** Donald. Kia ora?

31 A. Kia ora.

32 **Q.** Ngā mihi atu ki a koe. I'll give you the affirmation so that we can get started. Just to ask
33 you -- okay?

34 A. What information?

- 1 **Q.** Not information, affirmation, it's just asking you to tell the truth, okay?
- 2 **A.** Oh yeah.
- 3 **Q.** Happy with that?
- 4 **A.** Yeah.
- 5 **Q.** Okay. Do you solemnly, sincerely, and truly declare and affirm that the evidence you'll
6 give before this Commission will be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?
- 7 **A.** Yes.
- 8 **Q.** Thank you very much. I'll leave you now with Alana.
- 9 **QUESTIONING BY MS A THOMAS:** Kia ora Donald. Would you like to introduce yourself
10 now?
- 11 **A.** My name is Donald Daniel Ku. My dad told me my name is Ku, it's K-U, not K-I-U.
- 12 **CHAIR:** Then we will change all our documents to make sure we get that right, thank you.
- 13 **QUESTIONING BY MS A THOMAS CONTINUED:** Kia ora Donald. So I just wanted to start
14 by saying thank you so much for coming here today. I know it was a long journey up from
15 Whanganui.
- 16 **A.** Yeah.
- 17 **Q.** And also to say thank you to Marlene and Rana(?), for coming with you as well ne. So
18 we're just going to have a kōrero, ne, just like we have before.
- 19 **A.** Yeah.
- 20 **Q.** And we'll just talk about some of those issues that we did. Now before I start, I know that
21 you like to use some kupu when we're having a kōrero, Māori kupu. So I thought we
22 would have a look at those words so you can tell the Commissioners what your
23 understanding of those are first.
- 24 **A.** Oh yeah.
- 25 **Q.** So the first one I think that you hold dear to you is pēpē, eh; what does that mean?
- 26 **A.** To me it means it's a body and it's a form of a pēpē, but a pēpē not a baby but a body.
- 27 **Q.** Kia ora I think that's important for the kōrero we're about to have, eh?
- 28 **A.** Yeah.
- 29 **Q.** Another one of those kupu, those words were Io.
- 30 **A.** Io, pēpē and toa.
- 31 **Q.** What does Io mean to you Donald?
- 32 **A.** Our God, our God. He means a lot to me, found my way and learning how to talk to people
33 properly, yeah.
- 34 **Q.** When you say "our God" do you mean Māori ?

- 1 A. All of ours.
- 2 Q. All of ours, kia ora.
- 3 A. On this land.
- 4 Q. And the other kupu or word was toa.
- 5 A. Toa. Which is what we become after pēpē, we become toa, so we are toa to the land.
- 6 Q. Kia ora, I think that's very important for our kōrero to have those words pēpē, Io and toa,
7 because you really believe in those understandings, eh?
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. Kia ora Donald, thank you for that. Okay, so we're going to get into the kōrero that we've
10 had before.
- 11 A. Yeah.
- 12 Q. So I'm going to ask you some questions and you just answer it in the best way that you can.
- 13 A. Okay.
- 14 Q. And like I said, if you need to take a break, or anything like that, you do that, and we can
15 come back and continue on with your kōrero, ka pai?
- 16 A. Ka pai.
- 17 Q. Now I might be speaking a little bit slowly, that's just because we have people typing out
18 what we say and we also have sign language people over there, so that's why I might be
19 speaking a bit slower. So Donald where were you born?
- 20 A. In Raetihi, that's where I was born, yeah.
- 21 Q. And you say you are Ngāti Maniapoto and Tūwharetoa, is that right?
- 22 A. Yeah, yeah.
- 23 Q. From your mother's side and your father's side?
- 24 A. My father's side, my father's Maniapoto and my mum's Tūwharetoa.
- 25 Q. Kia ora. So when you were in Raetihi.
- 26 A. Raetihi.
- 27 Q. You were living with your mother?
- 28 A. Yeah.
- 29 Q. And your whānau?
- 30 A. And my whānau, yeah, I was. Wasn't much going on there either.
- 31 Q. How many siblings do you have, Donald?
- 32 A. I have one sister and seven brothers. They're all in the same situation as I'm in. Their kids
33 are going through the jail system, all of that and my children.
- 34 Q. And you told me that in your first few years you actually spent some time living with your

- 1 grandmother, is that right?
- 2 A. Yeah, when I was a pēpē I was.
- 3 Q. When you were a pēpē?
- 4 A. Yeah.
- 5 Q. What was that like living with your grandmother, Donald?
- 6 A. It was awesome, it was awesome, she told me a lot, taught me how to cook, wash clothes,
7 hang clothes up and all that, dig the garden, yeah.
- 8 Q. But you didn't keep living with your grandmother, what happened?
- 9 A. CYFS got involved, or Social Welfare, they got involved, my nanny was asking for me but
10 CYFS wouldn't let me go.
- 11 Q. So she wanted you to stay with her and you wanted to stay with her?
- 12 A. Yeah.
- 13 Q. How old was your mum when you were born?
- 14 A. 16.
- 15 Q. Just very young.
- 16 A. Yeah.
- 17 Q. So talking about then being taken by CYFS, where did you go, Donald?
- 18 A. Into a house in Whanganui and it was **GRO-B** Street and I was staying with some people
19 called the **GRO-B**, and they treated me cruelly. They put me on the table and --
- 20 Q. Kia kaha, kia kaha.
- 21 A. They put me on the table, they're called the **GRO-B** and they put me on the table and put a
22 towel in my mouth and I think they were drowning me but I don't know.
- 23 Q. How old were you, Donald?
- 24 A. About 5 or 6, 5 or 6. 5 or 6.
- 25 **CHAIR:** E tatari ana. Kia ora whaea.
- 26 **MS A THOMAS:** Do you want **GRO-B** to come and sit with you Donald? Ka pai. This is
27 Marlene who's been a long supporter of Donald.
- 28 **CHAIR:** Nau mai haere mai, **GRO-B**. You're most welcome to come and sit. Thank you.
- 29 **QUESTIONING BY MS A THOMAS CONTINUED:** You were with that whānau for about six
30 months, is that right, Donald?
- 31 A. Yeah. And they split us up from there and they sent me to Lake Alice. My brother stayed
32 at the **GRO-B** house, Social Welfare house, my brother stayed there, they split us up. And
33 my dad didn't want to split us up, they treated my brother cruel too. My brother had sex

- 1 with the GRO-B. They were about 40 odd, 38, something like that, and they made my
2 brother have sex with them.
- 3 **Q.** Did you go straight from the GRO-B whānau into Lake Alice?
- 4 **A.** I think I did, yeah.
- 5 **Q.** Do you know why you were put into Lake Alice, Donald?
- 6 **A.** No-one wanted me, just my nanny.
- 7 **Q.** Is that what they told you?
- 8 **A.** Yeah.
- 9 **Q.** Do you remember how old you were when you went to Lake Alice?
- 10 **A.** 5, about 5.
- 11 **Q.** Still very, very young.
- 12 **A.** Yeah.
- 13 **Q.** When you first went to Lake Alice, do you remember what the buildings, what the whare
14 were like?
- 15 **A.** Yeah. They had villas, a villa and there was about 30 odd men in the villa and they put us
16 in villa 7 and it was with adults and grown up and old people, and that's where I met
17 Howard Lawrence. Howard Lawrence was a nurse for Lake Alice, and one day he asked
18 me to go for a walk in the forest area and he took some people and I had to stay by the
19 power lines and he pissed all over me.
- 20 **Q.** This was one of the nurses at Lake Alice?
- 21 **A.** Lake Alice, pissed all over me. He kicked me and stomped on me and he told me to go
22 back to the villa. And he came up the stairs and Mana and Tane was at the back. And he
23 came up the stairs and turned me up against the wall like that and he was undoing his belt.
24 But I don't know what he was doing but I think we're going to have sex, I think. We did,
25 we did have sex.
- 26 **Q.** I know this is really hard to talk about, Donald, so I'm going to take you slowly through it.
27 I just want to go back to when you said you guys were going for a walk in the woods.
- 28 **A.** Yeah, in the forest.
- 29 **Q.** Is that what Nurse Howard would do?
- 30 **A.** Yeah, take us for walks and -- yeah, he took us for walks and took us into where they make
31 beer crates and I had to make beer crates and he was holding a nail and I banged his finger.
32 Man he gave me a good hiding.
- 33 **Q.** Who was "we", was it you and the other --

- 1 A. Howard Lawrence.
- 2 Q. -- tamariki that he took for a walk in the woods?
- 3 A. Oh tamarikis, there was only four tamarikis and all the rest were adult, 20 year olds or 25,
4 were adults.
- 5 Q. And why did he -- what did he tell you for why you were going for a walk in the woods?
- 6 A. He just come, said "You come for a walk and whoever wants to come for a walk can go".
- 7 Q. And then he urinated on you?
- 8 A. Yeah, urinated on me, kicked me to the ground first and -- because I attacked him, trying to
9 bite his -- trying to bite it, but he put the boot in and kicked me to the ground.
- 10 Q. Did he do anything else to you at that time, Donald?
- 11 A. That's when he took me back to the villa and threw me up the wall like that. And another
12 time he did it was when I was in the bath, I was having a bath and all the kids were cleared
13 from the bathroom area and I was in the bath and he -- I come like that and he come and
14 just grabbed me by the throat like that and pulled me up there and just threw me on the
15 ground.
- 16 Q. Were other people around, Donald?
- 17 A. Two nurses. But I think one was Rocky and the other one was GRO-B.
- 18 Q. What happened after that?
- 19 A. Tane and Mana came in, Tane and Mana said "You stop doing that to our" -- to me,
20 because Howard Lawrence said "This is my fuck'n land", that's what Howard Lawrence
21 said to me, "You just behave on my fuck'n land." I didn't know what to do because I got
22 the treatment from him just about every day I was there. I was only in Lake Alice for two
23 days and next minute he was doing cruel things to me.
- 24 Q. Do you know why you think he treated you that way, Donald?
- 25 A. I had no ears. I had no ears, I didn't listen to him. And I think he was getting the sack
26 because the building was closing down at the time, yeah.
- 27 Q. If you don't mind I'm just going to read something that you told me and I wrote down in
28 your statement, is that okay?
- 29 A. Yeah.
- 30 Q. You said, "A number of nurses, and especially Nurse Howard, would walk past me and
31 kick me and slap me just because they wanted to and just because they could. Nurse
32 Howard would do this to all the Māori boys."
- 33 A. Yeah.

- 1 **Q.** "And I think it was because he was racist."
- 2 **A.** I don't know if he was racist but he didn't do it to any Pākehā boys, the Pākehā adolescent
3 children. When I left from villa 7 I went to villa 16 and villa 16 is all adolescent people
4 and they threw me in there when I was 7 or 8, 68 I was in there and -- can you read that bit
5 again?
- 6 **Q.** Yes. You said "He would walk past me and kick me and slap me just because they wanted
7 to." So this happened quite often, is that right, Donald?
- 8 **A.** Yeah, while I was there.
- 9 **Q.** And you would see that happening to other Māori boys?
- 10 **A.** Yeah.
- 11 **Q.** And there was no reason for it?
- 12 **A.** I believed there wasn't any reason for it.
- 13 **Q.** You also say in your statement "He would grab the Māori boys by the neck and shake
14 them."
- 15 **A.** Yeah.
- 16 **Q.** "This happened until the other nurses, like Sandra Puke --
- 17 **A.** Yeah.
- 18 **Q.** -- would come and stop him. He wasn't a big man but he was much bigger than us boys
19 and the authority he had made him think he was a big man."
- 20 **A.** Yeah.
- 21 **Q.** Just continuing to talk about Nurse Howard, because that's who it sounds like in your
22 kōrero treated you --
- 23 **A.** Badly.
- 24 **Q.** -- badly the most ne. It was him that you said gave you shock treatment, is that right?
- 25 **A.** He put me on the bed and two nurses holding me down and just put wires to my head. I
26 don't know what shock treatment is but it makes you go like that, yeah.
- 27 **Q.** What led to him doing that, do you remember, Donald? Was it that time in the woods or
28 was it a different time?
- 29 **A.** It was a different time, but I just had no ears, I just wouldn't listen to them.
- 30 **Q.** So it was for punishment?
- 31 **A.** I think so, yeah.
- 32 **Q.** Can you tell us a little bit more about that first time that you got shock treatment, who was
33 in the room, how they gave it to you?
- 34 **A.** They put me on the bed. I can't remember a nurse but Howard Lawrence was there and

1 there was two nurses by the maximum block, because that's where they gave me the
2 injection, in maximum block. They took me over to maximum and Howard Lawrence
3 came to the bedroom where I was and two other nurses, they were holding me down and all
4 of a sudden I was just throwing tantrums, that's what I was throwing, but they reached
5 around and just put two wires on my head. I didn't know what they were but they make me
6 go like that, yeah.

7 **Q.** So they took you from a room that you were in and you weren't doing anything, they just
8 came and grabbed you?

9 **A.** **[Nods].**

10 **Q.** Took you into another room?

11 **A.** Yeah.

12 **Q.** And put pads on your head was it?

13 **A.** Yeah, wire, I don't know.

14 **Q.** Wires?

15 **A.** I was struggling and I was really playing up.

16 **Q.** Did anybody have to hold you down, Donald?

17 **A.** Yeah, two nurses, I don't know their names. Mana and Tane, they came on the second one,
18 Mana and Tane told them to "Stop that, he doesn't need that what you're doing to him", and
19 Mana and Tane took me back to the unit I was in and Mana and Tane got changed to
20 another unit because Howard Lawrence was in the unit that I was in and Howard Lawrence
21 didn't want me there.

22 **Q.** So Mana and Tane were nurses as well?

23 **A.** Yeah.

24 **Q.** How long did they -- if you remember, Donald, if you don't that's fine -- how long did they
25 shock you for?

26 **A.** Felt like an hour but I think it was only about 5 or 10 minutes.

27 **Q.** I'd suggest that's quite a long time.

28 **A.** Yeah.

29 **Q.** What did it feel like?

30 **A.** My mouth going dry, it felt ugly.

31 **Q.** How did you feel afterwards?

32 **A.** Drugged up, lazy, can't walk, couldn't walk.

33 **Q.** And you say in your statement you could have even passed out, is that right?

34 **A.** Yeah.

- 1 **Q.** Where did you go after that happened, did they take you back to your room?
- 2 **A.** They took me back to the room and I think they sent me to Kimberley. I don't know how
3 long I was in Lake Alice for, right up to the time I left. They sent me to Kimberley and
4 then they put my brother in Lake Alice.
- 5 **Q.** And you mentioned just before about "maximum". What's that, can you tell us about what
6 "maximum" is?
- 7 **A.** Maximum block is where all the mad people go, all the bad people go, people that bite the
8 nurses. They all had beards and there was heaps in there having beards and that, knocking
9 on my door, banging on my door. They were making me scared and I think that's what
10 Howard Lawrence wanted me to be, be scared. It worked.
- 11 **Q.** So maximum were adults?
- 12 **A.** Yeah, for adults, yeah.
- 13 **Q.** And so they threatened you with maximum?
- 14 **A.** Yeah.
- 15 **Q.** Is that right?
- 16 **A.** [Nods].
- 17 **Q.** Did you go into maximum?
- 18 **A.** Yeah, yeah.
- 19 **Q.** How long would you stay in there for, Donald?
- 20 **A.** About two days, two to three days. I was asleep because they put an injection in me and it
21 knocked me out and when I came out of the maximum, then they took me back to the villa
22 and I didn't even know where I was.
- 23 **Q.** So just talking about the drugs there.
- 24 **A.** Drugs.
- 25 **Q.** You just said you got an injection or drugs?
- 26 **A.** Yeah, Largactil, it was Largactil, yeah.
- 27 **Q.** When were you given those drugs?
- 28 **A.** When I was in -- when I went back to the villas. That's what Howard Lawrence said, "You
29 drink this" and they got it in an injection form.
- 30 **Q.** Were you on any medication or drugs before you went into Lake Alice?
- 31 **A.** Just aspirins, aspirins or disprins.
- 32 **Q.** And you've told me in our conversations before that you would receive drugs every
33 morning?
- 34 **A.** Yeah.

- 1 **Q.** Is that right, what were those --
- 2 **A.** Largactil.
- 3 **Q.** Can you describe what it was like?
- 4 **A.** They made me drowsy, made me drugged up, I felt drugged up and felt lazy, didn't want to
5 move, didn't want to listen, yeah.
- 6 **Q.** Did they tell you why they were giving it to you?
- 7 **A.** To calm me down, to calm me down because I was throwing some high tantrums.
- 8 **Q.** Would you tell them at all that you didn't want it?
- 9 **A.** I did, yeah, "I don't want it", and Howard Lawrence put me to the ground and put on my
10 throat and made my head turn and just poured it in my mouth.
- 11 **Q.** After you told them "I don't want to take it" and they poured it down your throat?
- 12 **A.** Yeah.
- 13 **Q.** What were you like after you would have the liquid, after you would take the drink, what
14 was the effect?
- 15 **A.** Howard stayed in the medical room and I had to stay by Howard Lawrence, I just slept
16 outside the medical room, that's what I was doing.
- 17 **Q.** So you were just sleepy?
- 18 **A.** Yeah.
- 19 **Q.** How else did it make you feel afterwards?
- 20 **A.** Walking around drugged up, dazy, dizzy; dizzy, I was dizzy.
- 21 **Q.** And you said you would get that every morning?
- 22 **A.** Yeah.
- 23 **Q.** And I might just read out another --
- 24 **A.** Yeah.
- 25 **Q.** -- line that you said to me. "When this happened -- when you would say you didn't want
26 the orange liquid -- they would hold me down and stand on me to stop me. What was
27 interesting was that they would say I was just having a tantrum."
- 28 **A.** Yeah.
- 29 **Q.** "But if a Pākehā boy did the same he was just playing around --
- 30 **A.** Yeah.
- 31 **Q.** -- and wasn't treated the same way."
- 32 **A.** He wasn't treated the same, they were just playing around doing their own thing. What
33 they were doing, what the Pākehā boys were doing, they were picking on the old Māori
34 people and my boys went and attacked him, that's when Howard Lawrence came and -- not

- 1 Howard Lawrence, one of the nurses, I think it was GRO-B, come in with a cue stick
2 going like this, poking me under the table.
- 3 **Q.** You told me about that, so we'll talk about that now eh. Because you said to me that all the
4 kids were quite supportive of each other.
- 5 **A.** Yeah.
- 6 **Q.** Is that right --
- 7 **A.** Yeah.
- 8 **Q.** -- in Lake Alice? And that incident you just talked about was because you were trying to
9 protect another one of the boys, is that right?
- 10 **A.** Yeah, yeah.
- 11 **Q.** Can you tell us what happened there, Donald?
- 12 **A.** One of the boys, he got kicked by one of the nurses, and me and five boys went and
13 attacked that nurse. And we were just kicking him and biting him, and then he yelled out
14 for back-up to get the other nurses out, and the other nurses pulled us up and that's when
15 I went diving under the table because I knew they were going to come and get me, throw
16 me in maximum block. I didn't want to go there.
- 17 **Q.** You were just trying to protect each other ne?
- 18 **A.** Yeah.
- 19 **Q.** What did happen to all of you after that?
- 20 **A.** He separated us, put us in different wings or villas.
- 21 **Q.** Did you go back into maximum or just into a --
- 22 **A.** I went into villa 7.
- 23 **Q.** Villa 7 after that. Did you have any type of schooling while you were there, Donald?
- 24 **A.** No, no schooling.
- 25 **Q.** So what did you do in the daytime?
- 26 **A.** Play Housie or just go play at the canteen shop. We were all around there playing and
27 buying lollies. I had money to buy lollies and we shared our lollies.
- 28 **Q.** Played Housie did you say?
- 29 **A.** Yeah, playing Housie.
- 30 **Q.** So I want to go back to, because you talked a little bit about the sexual abuse. I know this
31 is hard to talk about, Donald, but I think it's important that you tell your story, ne, the way
32 that you've told me before. Who was it that sexually abused you in Lake Alice, Donald?
- 33 **A.** Howard Lawrence, I don't know what a piece means(?), but Howard Lawrence put me up

- 1 on the wall and he got his belt undone and he pulled his pants down and he dropped me to
2 the floor and I think he was going to -- I think he was going to shove it in my mouth and
3 I bit him.
- 4 **Q.** How did that end?
- 5 **A.** How did that end?
- 6 **Q.** After that happened, did somebody come in and stop it, did he let you run away?
- 7 **A.** Tane and Mana stopped a lot of things, Tane and Mana stopped it and I think -- I don't
8 know if he was going to have sex with me or not but he did, but I just don't know how he
9 did.
- 10 **Q.** At that time or a different time?
- 11 **A.** At that time.
- 12 **Q.** And you said that Nurse Howard would always come and threaten you and act in that way?
- 13 **A.** Yeah.
- 14 **Q.** How often would that happen, Donald?
- 15 **A.** When he got refused for what he wanted, he came back and got me and started picking on
16 me, attacked us, he kicks me.
- 17 **Q.** And you say, you've told me if you don't mind me reading out this section again, you said
18 "He would make regular sexual advances towards me --
- 19 **A.** Yeah.
- 20 **Q.** -- and made me stimulate his penis by hand or by mouth."
- 21 **A.** Yeah.
- 22 **Q.** "And this happened a few times."
- 23 **A.** He did.
- 24 **Q.** And that was just Nurse Howard?
- 25 **A.** Yeah, just Nurse Howard. I knew some other nurses were doing it but not to me, to the
26 other boys.
- 27 **Q.** So you would see that to the other boys in Lake Alice?
- 28 **A.** Yeah.
- 29 **Q.** Is there anything else you want to say on the sexual abuse kōrero?
- 30 **A.** No.
- 31 **Q.** Ka pai. One of the important things you kept talking to me about was Te Ao Māori and
32 Lake Alice totally disregarding any part of your culture.
- 33 **A.** Yeah.
- 34 **Q.** Do you want to talk a little bit about that? Maybe I can read what you told me and there's

- 1 anything you can add on to that?
- 2 A. [Nods].
- 3 Q. "I did not have access to any Māori cultural learning as a child there. Cultural values and
4 beliefs are very important to me." And that's what we've talked about at the start of our
5 kōrero. "And having none of that when I was growing up had a huge effect on my
6 well-being. I felt like I didn't belong anywhere."
- 7 A. Yeah, exactly.
- 8 Q. Is that right?
- 9 A. Yeah.
- 10 Q. And I think it's important to read out this comment that you made to me as well, Donald.
11 "Lake Alice was supposed to look after tamariki."
- 12 A. Yeah.
- 13 Q. "If we look at the word tama --
- 14 A. Yeah.
- 15 Q. -- means boy and ariki means chief. So they should be looking after us boys like ariki, but
16 they weren't, they didn't care about us at all."
- 17 A. Yeah.
- 18 Q. And that must have been even worse when you saw that Māori tamariki were being treated
19 even worse, ne, then Pākehā?
- 20 A. Yeah, it was.
- 21 Q. Did you get to see any of your whānau while you were in Lake Alice?
- 22 A. Only one, my uncle, my Auntie [GRO-B] and [GRO-B], they were the ones who came to
23 see me. They took me out for the day, me and my cousin were looking for an empty packet
24 of smokes so we could make things with it, they did, yeah.
- 25 Q. Then they took you back again?
- 26 A. Yeah.
- 27 Q. That was the only visit you had?
- 28 A. Yeah.
- 29 Q. Did you have any other communications with whānau?
- 30 A. No.
- 31 Q. Do you think anybody knew what was happening to you in there, Donald?
- 32 A. No.
- 33 Q. Did you tell them about it?

- 1 A. No, it's embarrassing.
- 2 Q. Whakamā?
- 3 A. Yeah.
- 4 Q. Do you remember how you left Lake Alice?
- 5 A. When I got put in Kimberley, they put me in Kimberley and what they did to me in
6 Kimberley, they tied me to the ceiling. They tied me to the ceiling and I asked the nurse,
7 they thought I was being clever, and I asked the nurse if I can go to the toilet. She went and
8 asked the male nurse and her name was -- his name was GRO-B, and he told her to come
9 and kick me in the stomach, and she came back and kicked me in the stomach and I got
10 winded or something like that and I just felt like an ugly pain, yeah.
- 11 Q. So you just went from one place where they were treating you horribly to another place
12 where it was the same kind of --
- 13 A. Yeah.
- 14 Q. -- mahi eh? So what was life like for you after you got out of State care going through all
15 of this horrible tūkinotanga?
- 16 A. How my life went, I'm sort of repeating myself. What I mean by repeating, well I'm
17 narking. I narked on some people back then and I'm narking now.
- 18 Q. I'd say you're telling your truth and what happened to you, Donald, pai ana tēnā. So you
19 got into crime, a bit of crime?
- 20 A. Crime. Not bad crime, but just taking the rap for people. When I broke into the car and the
21 cops saw me with the camera and that fella took off, he took off and left me there with the
22 camera. And when I got in the car the cops hit me and they took me back to Lake Alice
23 and they looked for another couple of weeks for me to go back to the welfare homes,
24 because no welfare home would take me.
- 25 Q. You were actually taken back another time to Lake Alice, weren't you, for a few days on
26 remand?
- 27 A. Yeah.
- 28 Q. Where were you held then?
- 29 A. Villa 16, in villa 16, the adolescent people, and that's where I saw Howard Lawrence again
30 in villa 16. But he was pretty high up then, pretty high up.
- 31 Q. Do you think he remembered you, Donald?
- 32 A. Yeah, he did. But he had a different attitude then. I was old enough to give him a hiding.
- 33 Q. And you spent about two or three days in Lake Alice that time?

- 1 A. Yeah, and they put me back in the welfare homes.
- 2 Q. Is there anything else you want to say about Lake Alice before I move on to talking about
3 your whānau and a little bit now, is there anything else you want to say about Lake Alice
4 specifically?
- 5 A. Not really.
- 6 Q. Thank you for sharing that with us. So you talked a lot to me about when you got married
7 and your tamariki.
- 8 A. My son, yeah.
- 9 Q. Yeah. What's been your experience then with State care and your son?
- 10 A. They're doing it to me, they took my son off me when I was(sic) six years old, only because
11 I was trying to control my wife and they put me in jail and my Mrs lost my son to CYFS.
12 And I tried to fight for my son back, but they said "No, you're too bad with children". I've
13 never been a father until the age of 40. That's when my son came into my life. Now I'm
14 glad I'm here speaking on behalf of my son. I'm sort of glad I'm here, yeah.
- 15 Q. We're glad you're here, Donald. Do you mind if I read this --
- 16 A. Yeah.
- 17 Q. -- this sentence that you told me? "After he was taken away -- so you're talking about your
18 son -- I left his mother and tried really hard to prove to the Social Welfare system that
19 I could be a good dad."
- 20 A. Yeah.
- 21 Q. "I would follow their process and everything they told me to do. I did three parenting
22 programmes, but it was like they were out to get me from the beginning. They said I failed
23 every course and that they would not give my son back."
- 24 A. Yeah.
- 25 Q. "The whole process traumatised me. How could they stop me from seeing my son? I just
26 wanted to show him love." So you were doing your best you could --
- 27 A. Yeah.
- 28 Q. -- to get your son back and show that you could be a good dad?
- 29 A. Yeah.
- 30 Q. Did you ever get him back, Donald?
- 31 A. No. But he's 17 now and he should come back. I think he's ready to come back. I've got a
32 daughter in Australia. She was sent by the judges to go to Australia. And I wanted my
33 daughter back but because I wasn't ready for what was happening so I didn't know what to
34 do.

- 1 **Q.** That's had a huge impact, the separation --
- 2 **A.** Yeah.
- 3 **Q.** -- from your children?
- 4 **A.** Yeah.
- 5 **Q.** What does that feel like, Donald?
- 6 **A.** Suicidal, yeah, didn't want to be around.
- 7 **Q.** Do you have any contact with them now?
- 8 **A.** Yeah. Except for my daughter.
- 9 **Q.** And I might just read this bit again if you don't mind, Donald. "There have been so many
10 bad effects that have come from my time in Lake Alice and from the State care system.
11 The biggest effect, which hurts me every day, are that my children were taken away from
12 me because of my past, which they themselves created and their ideas that I wouldn't be a
13 good father, they decided to take my children away from me, their dad, and put them into a
14 white system that was designed to tame them and take them away from me and from their
15 Māori culture."
- 16 **A.** Yeah.
- 17 **Q.** "Their childhood is something we will never be able to get back and the Social Welfare
18 system did that to us."
- 19 **A.** Yeah.
- 20 **Q.** Ka aroha hoki ki a koutou. You also talked about to me the anger and the sorrow that you
21 feel and you have to fight with every single day. What's been -- can you describe to us that
22 struggle, Donald, how you have to deal with the emotions and the anger you feel?
- 23 **A.** The only way I can explain it is I was just a pēpē, I was just a pēpē, I don't know.
- 24 **Q.** From there you've been having to deal with it --
- 25 **A.** Yeah.
- 26 **Q.** -- every day. Do you see any of your other siblings?
- 27 **A.** Yeah, yeah. But we're sort of distant, we're not that close, but I know I've got some
28 brothers out there, but they're called GRO-B.
- 29 **Q.** And you're GRO-B.
- 30 **A.** Yeah.
- 31 **Q.** You said you had a twin?
- 32 **A.** Yeah.
- 33 **Q.** And you were separated when you were 6, 7?

- 1 A. Yeah.
- 2 Q. When did you reconnect again?
- 3 A. Ten years ago, ten years ago. He had diabetes and he was living in **GRO-B**. They gave
4 him diabetes and the rest at **GRO-B**, they all got diabetes. So it was the medication that
5 gave my brother the diabetes and kidney failure.
- 6 Q. So most of you, your siblings, you were separated when you were very young?
- 7 A. Yeah.
- 8 Q. But you've managed to reconnect again as adults?
- 9 A. We haven't connected but we know who we are, though, yeah.
- 10 Q. And you talked to me about the memory loss you also suffer from. What's that like,
11 Donald, can you explain that to us?
- 12 A. I get in trouble, I get in trouble if I try and explain it. I can't explain it.
- 13 Q. You just have issues remembering?
- 14 A. Yeah.
- 15 Q. Now and then?
- 16 A. **[Nods]**.
- 17 Q. And do you think that's from what you went through at Lake Alice?
- 18 A. Yeah.
- 19 Q. And the last thing that you talked to me about in our last conversation was just your
20 disconnection to your Māori culture and that you wish you had just been kept with your
21 grandmother right from the beginning?
- 22 A. Yeah, yeah.
- 23 Q. Do you think it would have been different if they had let you stay with your grandmother?
- 24 A. Yes.
- 25 Q. The last thing I want to talk to you about, Donald, is what you are wanting from the Royal
26 Commission, from being here today. What are you looking for?
- 27 A. Some ears. All I'm thinking about is why are the people picking on the pēpēs, that's all I
28 can think about them. When I was a young child, they were damaging right up to the age
29 of 14, and from the age of 14 I was still getting picked on by the system, and the system's
30 called the authorities. They put me in some situations with authorities because they're
31 allowed to do it, because we sign our babies over to them. They're allowed to do those sort
32 of things. I don't know but that's what's been happening.
- 33 Q. That was one of the main things you kept talking to me about, ne, is the change in these

1 systems so that our tamariki are looked after, our pēpē are looked after right from the
2 beginning, like they should be ne?

3 A. [Nods].

4 Q. Kua mutu ta tāua kōrero. Thank you for sharing your kōrero with us today. You're very
5 courageous and brave to go into the detail and description of what happened to you in these
6 places, Donald. I really appreciate you sharing your connection with Te Ao Māori for all of
7 us and understanding that's very, very important for Māori tamariki.

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. If you just wait there our Commissioners might have some pātai for you.

10 CHAIR: Tēnā koe Donald. Ka aroha -- tino nui ki ā koe mo to kōrero. Thank you, thank you for
11 your kōrero. I have no questions, but my colleague here, Paul, is going to speak to you.

12 COMMISSION GIBSON: No questions, Donald, just acknowledgment, Ko Io te Atua,
13 acknowledging Atua the parentless, watching over us, helping us keep us safe today.
14 Acknowledging your maunga , your awa, maunga and awa of Maniapoto, Tūwharetoa, the
15 tears that fall on Tūwharetoa that flow down the Whangnui River past where you are today.
16 It's a lot of work, a lot of courage is required to share your journey, your journey from pēpē
17 to protector to toa. You've demonstrated that to us today, that that's what you are today.
18 You are that protector, you are the rangatira.

19 Thank you for sharing your hard experiences of violence, of torture, of abuse and of
20 racism. We acknowledge this today. And a particular thanks also, I know you are working
21 with the Inquiry on other investigations in other parts of your journey through care. Kia
22 ora, thank you so much for your time.

23 CHAIR: Tēnā koe e te whaea, kia ora. So kua mutu?

24 MS A THOMAS: Āe, kua kehe tēnei taha. Thank you, Donald, you are free to go.

25 CHAIR: I think we will all go and take a break before our next witness.

26 **Adjournment from 10.20 am to 10.52 am**

27 CHAIR: Tēnā koe ano Ms Thomas.

28 MS A THOMAS: E mihi ana ki ā tātou kua hoki mai anō ki roto i tō tātou whare. The kaikōrero
29 or witness we have now, ma'am, is Alan Hendricks. It is also my privilege to introduce
30 Douglas Matthews beside Mr Hendricks who is also a survivor of Lake Alice. And we
31 wanted to introduce these two men today with the following information, that
32 Mr Hendricks -- I'm just trying to find my dates my apologies -- Mr Hendricks was in Lake
33 Alice from 8 May 1974 to 29 January 1975. Doug Matthews was in Lake Alice from 26
34 February 1974 and was discharged on the same day as Alan Hendricks on 29 January 1975.

1 They've only just recently found each other again and have found a lot of support in that
2 connection that they have made. They tell me they talk about four times a day in the lead
3 up to this Inquiry. So it's my privilege to introduce both of them today.

4 In terms of how we will proceed, Mr Alan Hendricks will be providing the
5 substantive kōrero today and he'll be reading to his statement he's prepared. Mr Matthews,
6 Doug Matthews will close their session with a 10 to 15 minute kōrero that he's prepared.
7 But just so Your Honour and the Commissioners are aware, Mr Matthews' statement that he
8 provided is reference 325001 and that is with the Commissioners now.

9 **CHAIR:** Thank you. So I think, probably out of an excess of caution, I should get them both to
10 do an affirmation. Would you agree with that?

11 **MS A THOMAS:** Yes, your Honour.

12 **ALAN ARTHUR HENDRICKS**

13 **DOUGLAS JOHN MATTHEWS**

14 **CHAIR:** All right thank you. Good morning gentlemen.

15 A. Good morning.

16 **Q.** Thank you both for coming. I must say it's good to see you're getting support,
17 Mr Hendricks, and thank you for coming along, Mr Matthews. I'll ask you both if you'll
18 take the affirmation so it covers whatever either of you has to say, okay, are you okay with
19 that?

20 **MR MATTHEWS:** Yeah.

21 **MR HENDRICKS:** Yeah.

22 **CHAIR:** Mr Hendricks, Mr Matthews, do you solemnly and sincerely and truly declare and affirm
23 that the evidence you'll give today to the Commission will be the truth, the whole truth and
24 nothing but the truth?

25 **MR MATTHEWS:** Yes.

26 **MR HENDRICKS:** Correct.

27 **CHAIR:** Thank you. I'll leave with you Ms Thomas.

28 **QUESTIONING BY MS A THOMAS:** Tēnā koe. So, Alan, we'll start with you, if you just
29 wanted to introduce yourself?

30 **MR HENDRICKS:** My name is Alan Arthur Hendricks. I was Alan Arthur GRO-B. My father
31 was a nurse in the adolescent unit of Lake Alice until I was admitted there. First of all I'd
32 like to thank Alana, Frances, Doug, Abbey and Rachel. You've all helped me and your
33 support's been great.

1 I spent nine months in Lake Alice and what a horrible place. I wonder why I'm here
2 talking to you guys when the perpetrators are still out there, you know, it's a pretty hard
3 thing to live with. I was in part of Grant Cameron's inquiry, if you like, and I didn't get
4 anything that, you know -- what's the word I'm looking for -- closure. To him it was all
5 about money. I can't understand, I've been questioned by the FBI, why has it taken 47
6 years, you know, to get to this stage again? I was hoping that I'd buried it years ago, but
7 I haven't.

8 **MS A THOMAS:** Thank you for those introductory comments, Alan. Would you like to
9 introduce yourself Doug?

10 **MR MATTHEWS:** Hi, I'm Douglas John Matthews. I've come here today to be a support for
11 Alan and since I turned 60 I've hidden it for 46 years.

12 **MS A THOMAS:** Thank you Doug. I think it's really important you're here supporting Alan
13 today, so mihi ana ki a kōrua.

14 So if we just start at paragraph 3, Alan, and just take your time reading through your
15 statement and take any breaks that you need to when you need to.

16 **CHAIR:** Can I just say, Alan, and both of you, we have read your brief of evidence, so if there are
17 parts that you don't want to read out you can skip over things, we have read it all so we are
18 very familiar with it. So it's up to you what you want to -- how you want to manage this.

19 **MR HENDRICKS:** All right. I was born in [GRO-B]. My father is [GRO-B] and my mother is
20 [GRO-B]. I don't know if [GRO-B] is still alive. It doesn't really worry me whether he is or
21 not. He had no clear conscience, that's obvious. How can you put your own child into a
22 place that you worked at knowing full-well what was going on? You know, in those nine
23 months that I was there, I used to see him drive past quite often, you know, and I'd wave
24 and he just ignored me. I wasn't even there. So, yeah, that was pretty hard.

25 **CHAIR:** Alan, can I clarify something? He was a nurse there, but I think did you say right at the
26 beginning that he was a nurse up until the time you went in there?

27 **MR HENDRICKS:** He was a staff member of the adolescent unit to where I was admitted and --

28 **CHAIR:** And he was -- sorry.

29 **MR HENDRICKS:** When I got admitted he was transferred elsewhere at Lake Alice to another
30 villa.

31 **CHAIR:** So he remained working at Lake Alice?

32 **MR HENDRICKS:** Yes, that's correct.

33 **CHAIR:** But not in the unit where you were?

1 **MR HENDRICKS:** No, no.

2 **CHAIR:** Thanks for clarifying that.

3 **MR HENDRICKS:** Like I said, I saw him quite often drive past coming to or going home, but
4 didn't acknowledge me. So yeah.

5 **MS A THOMAS:** Return to paragraph 4 Alan. Because I think it's important this background to
6 your admission into Lake Alice.

7 **MR HENDRICKS:** In 1967 my parents divorced. My father remarried. My sister and myself
8 stayed with GRO-B and his new wife GRO-B. My home life was not a happy one. My
9 stepmother and I just didn't seem to get on, you know, I'd get home from school and the
10 jobs I had to do were horrendous jobs for a young kid, you know, half an acre of lawn to
11 mow, gardens to dig, hedges to cut, I'd be there until dark, you know, and everybody else
12 would be inside watching TV and that. I must admit, I did get defiant. She'd hit me across
13 the face and I'd just turn the other cheek.

14 **MS A THOMAS:** Paragraph 6.

15 **MR HENDRICKS:** In 1972 and 73 I started having counselling sessions with Selwyn Leeks. I
16 was admitted to the Manawaroa for about three weeks. The first impression I had of
17 Selwyn Leeks was that he was a nice guy. But that was just a front, he was actually a snake
18 sitting in the grass eh, he was a bastard.

19 **MS A THOMAS:** Continue on to 7 thank you Alan.

20 **MR HENDRICKS:** I remember the night that I was taken out to Lake Alice by my father. I was
21 in my bedroom and I was rolling up a cigarette out of newspaper. Both my parents smoked
22 and I thought it was cool. I was 12 at the time. Now I was blowing the smoke out the
23 window and being a dumb-ass I could still smell it in my room so I opened up the room that
24 goes into the kitchen off my bedroom and I fanned the smoke out. Well, they smelt it.

25 My dad thought I was trying to light a fire. Well, he put me in the car and he said
26 "That's it, you're out of here." Now on the way to Lake Alice I tried to explain that I was
27 just smoking cigarettes. He didn't listen. He had an object in mind and -- or objective,
28 sorry, and that was to put me in Lake Alice. To me I thought it was either me to go or his
29 wife to go and well, he wasn't going to have either that, so that's when I was taken to Lake
30 Alice Hospital.

31 **MS A THOMAS:** And keep going on to paragraph 8 thanks Alan.

32 **MR HENDRICKS:** As I explained, I was taken to Lake Alice by my father the same evening.

33 It's my understanding that my father told them I had behavioural and become increasingly

1 bizarre and that I had tried to light a fire in my room. As I said above, that's not what
2 happened. Social report has got this documented for 1 July 1975.

3 **MS A THOMAS:** And you wanted to set this out to show the relationship that your father and
4 Leeks had prior to and your belief that they had --

5 **MR HENDRICKS:** Well, I couldn't understand how can I go from a house to an institution
6 within half an hour. Who had the right to incarcerate me? You know, was that legal?

7 **MS A THOMAS:** And if we could actually bring up Alan's Exhibit 5316005. This document is a
8 Department of Social Welfare letter by RD Kean dated 25 July 1975. This document talked
9 about the fact that the director RD Kean of Department of Social Welfare didn't think you
10 had an actual disorder to be admitted to Lake Alice either. And it will come up on the
11 screen soon, paragraph 2. Perhaps I'll just read that out.

12 **CHAIR:** Here it is I think we're getting there now.

13 **MS A THOMAS:** If we could highlight paragraph 2. "Mr -- that would be your dad's name there
14 -- a nurse at Lake Alice Hospital had admitted his son to that hospital supposedly suffering
15 from an acute psychiatric disorder and they say no actual disorder was recognised."

16 And so the admission just came from that evening that you talked about and the
17 relationship that Leeks and your father had, and what you say your idea that your father just
18 wanted you out of the house?

19 **MR HENDRICKS:** That's correct.

20 **MS A THOMAS:** And I think that's very important for you to make clear to the Commission as
21 well, thank you Alan.

22 So if I could take you back to your statement. Paragraph 11, admission to Lake
23 Alice. If you could just continue to read from there, Alan.

24 **MR HENDRICKS:** I was admitted to Lake Alice on 8 May 1974. I was 13 years old. I was
25 discharged on 29 January 75 after spending nine months locked up there for no reason.
26 Lake Alice discharge notes dated 29 January 1975 and Dr Leeks discharge letter dated 17
27 February 1975. I think I was in villa 9 or 11.

28 **MS A THOMAS:** Keep going.

29 **MR HENDRICKS:** I do not believe that I should have been admitted to Lake Alice. I was a
30 physically and mentally well 12 year old when I was admitted. A report obtained from my
31 school at the time, which was Rangitikei Intermediate -- they've got Rangitikei College
32 here, which is incorrect, it was Rangitikei Intermediate -- indicated that until my removal
33 from Lake Alice -- removal to Lake Alice, I was cooperative, helpful, no trouble at all. The
34 principal of Rangitikei College dated 10 November 1974.

1 I had always done my schoolwork and tried hard to please. I had liked games and
2 always played with good sportsmanship. I was described as having an outgoing personality
3 and that most children liked me. I was also described as generally clean and tidy. The
4 principal recorded that my father had been to school prior and the principal even said to
5 him that he had not noticed any change in my behaviour or attitude at school and that I was
6 a pleasant and helpful child. Despite that, I was removed from school and sent to Lake
7 Alice as I mentioned above.

8 **MS A THOMAS:** And paragraph 14.

9 **MR HENDRICKS:** I think that this shows that my father had been thinking about putting me into
10 Lake Alice for a while. It wasn't just the one smoking incident in my bedroom. He wanted
11 to get rid of me and Leeks was quite happy to have another child to torture.

12 **MS A THOMAS:** Just before we go into being at Lake Alice, do you think your – GRO-B was
13 aware of the situation he'd be putting knew, what was happening at Lake Alice?

14 **MR HENDRICKS:** Absolutely, he knew bloody well. He used to tell me before I was even
15 admitted, you know, "I should take you out there and, yeah, you wouldn't like it" and he
16 mentioned ECT, he mentioned Paraldehyde. And there was always those threats, so --

17 **MS A THOMAS:** So whenever you misbehaved, he would threaten you with putting you in Lake
18 Alice?

19 **MR HENDRICKS:** Yeah, yeah. Other times it was just a hiding and then chucked in my room or
20 whatever, yeah.

21 **MS A THOMAS:** If I could take you back to your statement at paragraph 16, Alan, in your own
22 time.

23 **MR HENDRICKS:** I was placed in a villa with other kids who were clearly extremely unwell.
24 My sleep would be interrupted by people talking to themselves, screaming, fighting with
25 other children, some having epileptic fits. I understand that there were a number of
26 schizophrenic children at the hospital. It was a very scary place for me. And no doubt
27 others.

28 **MS A THOMAS:** The next paragraph you start to talk about punishment. Could you read on
29 from there, Alan?

30 **MR HENDRICKS:** Saturday mornings Selwyn Leeks would turn up in his van and it was a
31 Volkswagon Combi. We all knew it, we all feared it, Saturday mornings anyway. The
32 lounge door would be locked, the staff would meet with him and they'd have a meeting
33 looking through the glass window at us in the lounge. You know, you could have heard a

1 pin drop eh, everybody was shit scared.

2 There would be constant fear on Saturday mornings as everyone sat around looking
3 at each other thinking sure, I've been a good boy this week. If they said you'd been bad
4 then you were taken for ECT or you could be punished by being given drugs as I will
5 describe below. Excuse me.

6 **MS A THOMAS:** So that terror was there every Saturday morning, every time you saw his van
7 come up?

8 **MR HENDRICKS:** That was the extreme time, but there was terror always, 24/7. It didn't matter
9 whether it was Saturday specifically because it didn't matter on days. If you were selected,
10 you were punished. And -- yeah.

11 **MS A THOMAS:** I just want to talk to you a little bit about what that punishment was. So in
12 paragraph 18 you start to talk about ECT. Can you read from there please, Alan.

13 **MR HENDRICKS:** Thankfully I did not get ECT. My records from Social Welfare show that
14 I did not cause much trouble at all at Lake Alice. I tended to keep to myself. Even Selwyn
15 Leeks said I was a delightful child to have around. There was a good reason for that. I was
16 terrified of the punishment that I had seen given to other kids. ECT was really used as
17 punishment. The ECT machine would be wheeled into the dining room to scare us into
18 being quiet or being good. As soon as we saw the machine everybody stopped talking and
19 we would be silent. The only reason for the presence of the ECT machine was as a threat
20 of punishment.

21 **MS A THOMAS:** And what would happen after that? They didn't just bring it out and keep it
22 there, did they then take children away? What would happen after that, Alan?

23 **MR HENDRICKS:** No, no, no, it would stay there until we'd finished dinner, yeah. Now there
24 didn't have to be certain times, eh, that they electrocuted kids. You know, I don't know
25 how they decided who or what or when they were going to get it. But you heard the
26 screams, you heard the cries, yeah. Yeah, it was horrible.

27 **MS A THOMAS:** And just the presence of the machine was enough?

28 **MR HENDRICKS:** The presence of the machine brought instant silence, yeah. I remember on
29 Friday essential when we had fish and chips for tea; everybody likes fish and chips,
30 everybody was happy, one time everybody's happy. And as soon as it got too noisy, out
31 would come the machine, well, yeah, yeah.

32 **MS A THOMAS:** Then at paragraph 20 you start to talk about what you would see and hear.
33 Could you read that for us in your own time, Alan?

34 **MR HENDRICKS:** From the dormitory where I was placed you could hear the screams of the

1 boys being given shock treatment. I regularly saw people or kids getting dragged into the
2 surgery. I'm quite sure it was a punishment and not part of the treatment. I wasn't stupid
3 and I could put two and two together. I saw people misbehave, saw them threatened with
4 the punishment, saw them dragged away, heard their screams. You could see the heat
5 marks on their legs after they'd been tortured. Yeah.

6 I remember a guy GRO-B and he was just a naughty kid, not bad naughty, just
7 naughty, you know, quite defiant. He used to get it quite a lot. Same as GRO-B. We call
8 him -- we called him Roadrunner, because that's all he did, the first opportunity he could
9 he'd run away. They always got him. He'd be back, he'd get ECT on his legs and the next
10 day he's gone again. Now that was defiance. What a brave guy.

11 **MS A THOMAS:** You also talk about drugs given as punishment from paragraph 23. Could you
12 read that, Alan?

13 **MR HENDRICKS:** I might not have been given ECT for punishment but I did get drug injections
14 for punishment. I remember one time I was punished for misbehaving but I was just being
15 a normal 13 year old boy running around being noisy. Me and a group of boys were taken
16 back to the villa and told to wait outside the surgery. I remember the deathly silence, there
17 were six of us. The screams, the line getting shorter and you couldn't go anywhere, you
18 had nowhere to go, you just knew your number was coming up because I was number 6 in
19 line, yeah. And when my turn came I was given Paraldehyde. Yeah.

20 **MS A THOMAS:** And paragraph 24 you talk about how that was given to you. Could you read
21 that too please, Alan?

22 **MR HENDRICKS:** Yeah. When it was my turn I was taken into the surgery and held down by a
23 nurse, GRO-B, while another nurse, Steve Hunt injected me with Paraldehyde. I can't
24 explain the pain. It's like someone putting boiling water on your arm. Paraldehyde had a
25 distinctive smell eh, I could smell it today if I saw it. I don't know what it is designed for
26 eh, but torture was certainly a good bloody use for it, that's for real.

27 **MS A THOMAS:** You say yourself at paragraph 25 that you've had two hips replaced and spinal
28 surgery but that pain, the pain of Paraldehyde was even more than those?

29 **MR HENDRICKS:** That's correct. I've had both hips replaced, I've had two spinal surgeries.
30 Yeah, that was painful, I had Sciatica. But Paraldehyde, that takes the list for pain, yeah,
31 yeah, horrible.

32 **MS A THOMAS:** You say you only received it one time, but that was enough?

33 **MR HENDRICKS:** I learned my lesson and that's when I began keeping to myself. I was lucky I

1 had my friend here, Douglas. And we sort of hit it off and kept to ourselves, you know, we
2 weren't running around noisy and, yeah, yeah, survival I think you'd call it, yeah.

3 **MS A THOMAS:** Would you start reading from paragraph 27 thank you.

4 **MR HENDRICKS:** I was also given a drug that we called the "truth drug". I don't know the
5 name of it, but someone here will. It was different from Paraldehyde. You'd be given -- I
6 was given it by Selwyn Leeks. Like I said, I don't know what it was called. But he would
7 give it to us and then you would start to feel wasted, out of it. Felt like you were asleep but
8 you weren't, you could still talk. I could -- I would wake up in a padded cell, all alone. It
9 was completely dark and the windows were shaded. Yeah. I only received this the one
10 time as soon after I was given that drug, whatever I said must have triggered alarm bells
11 because I was released from Lake Alice Hospital.

12 **MS A THOMAS:** Can you start reading from paragraph 30.

13 **MR HENDRICKS:** As I said, Dr Leeks ran the adolescent unit. My father worked in the
14 adolescent unit until I was admitted and then they moved him to somewhere else. Like
15 I said, I'd see him now and again passing but that's it.

16 I had a few meetings with Selwyn Leeks. He was placid to talk to, but you couldn't
17 go against him. He was the boss. The less you had to do with him the better. It wasn't
18 good to have him around. You know, he just brought consistent fear. And I suppose that
19 was his strategy, I don't know.

20 **MS A THOMAS:** Can you start reading from paragraph 33.

21 **MR HENDRICKS:** I went to school in Lake Alice with about a dozen other boys. It wasn't every
22 day. It was just now and then. I don't remember how often and I don't remember what we
23 learned. There's not really much more to say about school. I remember we would be
24 having breaks sitting on the steps outside. There would be some of the other patients, adult
25 patients who were also at Lake Alice walking past by. If they had wanted to, it would have
26 been easy for them to do anything they wanted to us. Luckily it didn't happen to me. I just
27 kept to myself and I didn't communicate with them.

28 **MS A THOMAS:** When you say some of the adults, what adults are you talking about there?

29 **MR HENDRICKS:** Patients of Lake Alice. Grown people, walking along picking up cigarette
30 butts. Unwashed. Street people I suppose you'd call them, yeah.

31 **MS A THOMAS:** So they had access to the children, or you at that time?

32 **MR HENDRICKS:** Well, yes, they could have, yeah, yeah. Like they were just walking by, you
33 know? Like I said, I was never physically abused in a sexual way. But I certainly was
34 mentally abused.

- 1 **MS A THOMAS:** That's the terror that you talk about every day being in Lake Alice?
- 2 **MR HENDRICKS:** That's correct. You know, you live in a place for nine months and every now
3 and then you'd have a laugh. Dennis Hesselstine and Terry Conlan, they befriended me.
4 Now Dennis Hesselstine used to play us music, he'd organise games for us and you could
5 have a laugh with him, you know, which was a pretty rare commodity in Lake Alice.
6 He took me home for the one Christmas and, yeah, it felt like I was in a family, you
7 know, sitting around a table laughing and being normal. Terry Conlan, he used to do the
8 same, he'd take me home for a weekend to get me out of Lake Alice. Now these guys were
9 friends with my father, and I use that word father very lightly. But I take my hat off to both
10 of them too, eh, they put a sense of normality in a place that was hell.
- 11 **MS A THOMAS:** And to be clear to all of us in the room, Dennis Hesselstine and Terry Conlan
12 were nurses at Lake Alice?
- 13 **MR HENDRICKS:** Yeah, that's right, Dennis Hesselstine and Terry Conlan, they were nurses in
14 the adolescent unit, yeah, correct.
- 15 **MS A THOMAS:** And just to continue on to paragraph 35 please Alan.
- 16 **MR HENDRICKS:** For seven months I was exposed to the stresses of life in a psychiatric
17 hospital. Dealing with the threat of ECT and drugs as punishment. The actual drug
18 punishment and generally the horror of being locked up as a child against my will.
- 19 **MS A THOMAS:** And at paragraph 37 you note that a psych report was prepared in order for you
20 to be considered for discharge and the report noted that you were above an intellectual scale
21 and the only thing that was affecting you behaviourally was your home life. Would you
22 agree with that?
- 23 **MR HENDRICKS:** I most certainly would.
- 24 **CHAIR:** Can I just stop, I've just had a message, it's just about the photo that you've got there.
25 There's some reasons why it's important that it be kept private. The Commissioners would
26 very much like to see it, but I wonder whether we could just remove it from public view at
27 this stage. Is that all right? We'll certainly have a look at it before your evidence is over,
28 Alan. Is that all right?
- 29 **MR HENDRICKS:** That's fine.
- 30 **CHAIR:** Thank you.
- 31 **MS A THOMAS:** Do you think it would be appropriate for Alan to describe what that photo is?
- 32 **CHAIR:** Whenever you are ready to do that, of course, yes.
- 33 **MS A THOMAS:** If we could go to paragraph 38 when you're ready, Alan. And your evidence in
34 these paragraphs talks about how you were discharged from Lake Alice.

1 **MR HENDRICKS:** In November 1974 I understand that my father approached Social Welfare
2 and requested that a section 12 agreement be prepared for me. He entered into that
3 agreement on 29 January 75.

4 **MS A THOMAS:** And this agreement was to put you into State care was it, to not be returned
5 back to your dad, to GRO-B?

6 **MR HENDRICKS:** I was actually given a choice of going into a Social Welfare home, or going
7 back to my father's. So the choice was easy on that, I went to (inaudible) Ave in
8 Palmerston North, a boys' home.

9 **MS A THOMAS:** If you start reading from paragraph 39.

10 **MR HENDRICKS:** I found out later that my mum didn't know anything about me being admitted
11 to Lake Alice, or my father tried to section 12 me. It actually took her a long time to even
12 find where I was. I understand that when she found out she contacted the doctors so she
13 could get custody of me. My father agreed and the section 12 agreement was terminated.
14 I went to live with my mother.

15 **MS A THOMAS:** Paragraph 40, sorry.

16 **MR HENDRICKS:** In July 1975 I went to live with my mother who had been remarried in a
17 place called Cheviot in the South Island. I was adopted by her husband and took the name
18 of Hendricks, which I've kept to this day.

19 I was glad she found me. After Lake Alice there was no way I wanted to go home
20 to my father. How could he do that to your own kid? To lock me up in Lake Alice
21 knowing what they did to kids there. I remember seeing him on the streets in a caravan
22 park in Whanganui, be 27 years ago. I chased him down, eh, my father and I'd heard that
23 he'd been hassling my sister, I'd heard it through friends.

24 So I confronted him. I approached him, he didn't even recognise me. I just said to
25 him, you know, "How can you live with yourself?" And he said "Oh well you had
26 problems." I said "What, the only problem was, was you." And I said "You've been
27 hassling my sister. Now if you hassle her anymore I'm going to come and sort you out."
28 He looked at me and he says "Don't you threaten me", I said "Look I'm not threatening you,
29 I'm telling you." I walked away from there and the adrenaline was just pumping eh, but
30 I won that fight.

31 **MS A THOMAS:** That was the last time you saw him?

32 **MR HENDRICKS:** That's the last time, yeah.

33 **MS A THOMAS:** If I could take you back to paragraph 42 please, Alan. And here you talk about

1 complaints and the Grant Cameron proceedings you went through. Could you read those
2 two paragraphs for me please?

3 **MR HENDRICKS:** I am not sure how I originally got involved in the Grant Cameron
4 proceedings. It could have been through watching the 60 Minutes programme that I was
5 involved with. He contacted me that way. I can't remember. I don't know if I was in the
6 first group or the second group. The whole process was all -- yeah, to me it was all about
7 Grant Cameron really, that's all I can say about that. There was no closure. I even received
8 a letter from Helen Clark and for an apology. Well, that photo that I had out here was the
9 last time I was part of a family. And I haven't seen them since.

10 **MS A THOMAS:** That was your siblings in that photo was it, Alan?

11 **MR HENDRICKS:** That's correct.

12 **MS A THOMAS:** When was the last time that you saw them?

13 **MR HENDRICKS:** I saw my brother when my son was 2. So that's 28 years. Now my sister up
14 from me, I haven't seen her since I was admitted to Lake Alice, and my other two sisters, I
15 don't know where they are, I don't know if they're alive.

16 **MS A THOMAS:** So the last time you were all together was before Lake Alice and after you
17 were separated?

18 **MR HENDRICKS:** Yeah, yeah. Yeah, this photo here, eh, I must be about, I don't know, 5,
19 I suppose, so, yeah, seven years maybe before I was admitted to Lake Alice. That's 50 odd
20 years that I haven't seen my family.

21 **CHAIR:** Would you like the registrar to bring it up? We'd like to look at the photo if you'd like
22 us to see it.

23 **MR HENDRICKS:** Yeah, sure.

24 **MS A THOMAS:** Alan is the baby.

25 **CHAIR:** You're the baby.

26 **MS A THOMAS:** I know this was important for you to bring today, wasn't it Alan, because one
27 of the biggest impacts you've told me that Lake Alice and State care's had has been the
28 separation within your family and the effect it's had on your family.

29 **MR HENDRICKS:** What can you say about that? You know, I wouldn't recognise them if
30 I walked down the street and past them. You know, that's my right, that's my family. Now
31 my brother there is a lot older than me and my sisters and my two older sisters are older
32 than me. You know, if Selwyn Leeks was there to help people, why couldn't have he
33 contacted them for me to go and stay, you know? I'll never get that back. Ever.

34 **MS A THOMAS:** Thank you for bringing that photo in to show us, Alan. I want to speak a little

1 bit more with you about the effects of Lake Alice and State care on your life. So if we
2 could go back to paragraph 44 when you're ready.

3 **MR HENDRICKS:** As soon as I was able to start working and earning money, I made a
4 commitment to myself that I would not let Lake Alice to affect my ability to provide a life
5 for myself. The best way to do that was to stay out of jail and keep constant employment.
6 I've worked in gold mines in Australia. I've driven heavy machinery. I've driven graders
7 underground.

8 I'm now a security officer and have been so for the last three years. I've brought my
9 boy up, eh, with the ethics you work hard. He's got a terrific job, he's earning excellent
10 money. He's got 15 people under him, he's got a company vehicle. So I -- what's the word
11 I'm looking for. I instilled some good ethics in my son and I'm very proud of him.

12 **MS A THOMAS:** I know you talked about always having employment, but you also say in your
13 statement "I fought hard with my demons inside so that I could just keep a job and people
14 wouldn't look down on me." Getting dizzy spells -- you also got dizzy spells as well. So
15 you might have had employment but you were always struggling. Is that right?

16 **MR HENDRICKS:** Yeah, well to a certain degree, you know, with my hips being done and two
17 spinal surgeries. But even the stigma of Lake Alice, it just stays there. You know, last
18 couple of weeks it's just been yuck. But we're getting there, me and my friend here. I told
19 him from the beginning you know we'd ride this wave together, and that's what we're going
20 to do.

21 **MS A THOMAS:** And you're very lucky to have found each other in the lead up to this Inquiry
22 and once again thank you guys for both being here.

23 **MR HENDRICKS:** I haven't laughed so much since we've been in touch. Sometimes four times
24 a day. Brothers from another mother.

25 **MS A THOMAS:** If I could just take you back to the statement, Alan, paragraph 46. If you could
26 read from there please.

27 **MR HENDRICKS:** For years after Lake Alice, even now, I simply withdraw into myself. I do
28 not communicate with anybody. I certainly don't take fools lightly. I guess I became a
29 robot doing what people told me to do, being where I was supposed to be and saying what
30 I'm supposed to say because that's how I survived in Lake Alice. That fear just doesn't go
31 away because we were released. I've done my best to battle against that fear, but it comes
32 back every now and then and haunts me, yeah.

33 **MS A THOMAS:** Can you keep going to paragraph 47 please, Alan.

34 **MR HENDRICKS:** Although I've done my best to get on with my life, the whole experience at

1 the hands of doctors and nurses and also the authorities in charge of Lake Alice has had a
2 traumatic impact on my life. It has affected my quality of life and the memories of being
3 exposed to pain and hearing others exposed to pain in Lake Alice. Those memories haunt
4 me every day and will be with me forever. When you are 12 and see fear all around you, it
5 is a frightening experience. You can't put words to it really. You know, you're there and
6 there's nothing you can do about it.

7 **MS A THOMAS:** And you've talked about the stigma that you've had to deal with ever since
8 coming out of Lake Alice and I just wanted to read a line that you provided in your
9 statement.

10 "I have always had considerable guilt and embarrassment regarding my time in
11 Lake Alice and in particular the fact that people might find out and brand me as having a
12 mental disorder. I do not and never did, but people don't know that and they don't know my
13 story."

14 And that's what you have to live with all the time isn't that right, Alan?

15 **MR HENDRICKS:** That's correct.

16 **MS A THOMAS:** Have you told much people about you being in Lake Alice?

17 **MR HENDRICKS:** My son, his mother, and a couple of close friends and that's it. Like when I
18 was asked to come to this hearing and I had to take time off work and I explained I had to
19 go to a hearing and they said "What's that all about?" I just said "Look I can't tell you, eh,
20 it's involved the CIB, sorry", so yeah.

21 **MS A THOMAS:** I just want to take you back to -- we're nearly at the end and thank you, Alan,
22 for taking your time to take us through this -- paragraph 51 of your statement.

23 **MR HENDRICKS:** I now have a family and am employed in GRO-B. When my son was born
24 I made a commitment that I would love him and treat him like a father should, not like the
25 way I was treated. The cycle needed to be broken and I'm happy to say that I have a loving
26 relationship with my son, he lives in Tauranga now. He's given me three mokopunas who
27 I love dearly and we get on great, how a father and son should be. I didn't certainly learn it
28 from my father.

29 **MS A THOMAS:** Just paragraph 52.

30 **MR HENDRICKS:** To get to that stage has been very difficult, though. I have had great
31 difficulty in forming and maintaining relationships as I do not express myself but tend to
32 bottle up my feelings. As I said, that is behaviour I learned in Lake Alice, a coping
33 mechanism and that feeling will never go away.

1 **MS A THOMAS:** I just want to conclude with your statement, for you to read the sections of
2 what you want from the Royal Commission at paragraph 53, Alan.

3 **MR HENDRICKS:** The main thing I want from the Commission is for someone to step up and
4 take accountability and responsibility for what happened to us, all the kids really, all of
5 them. This needs to be individuals like Selwyn Leeks, GRO-B, Steve Hunt, and most
6 certainly my father GRO-B.

7 But also those who were in charge in Government at the time who turned a blind
8 eye to everything that was going on. They let this happen and no-one owned up to it.
9 I want a public apology. There's no point in Government letters. It doesn't mean anything.
10 Everyone in New Zealand needs to hear that apology and why they are apologising.

11 **MS A THOMAS:** And it's important as well that you say that some sort of appreciation should be
12 given to those who were trying to help you in there at the time?

13 **MR HENDRICKS:** Most definitely, Dennis Hesseltine and Terry Conlan. They had their hearts
14 in the right place and they tried to make a flower out of a weed, I suppose. Yeah. At least
15 you could get a laugh out of them. We didn't laugh often, that's for sure. But they did help
16 us.

17 **MS A THOMAS:** Thank you for taking us through your statement, Alan. We really appreciate
18 you sharing your story. Is there anything else you'd like to say before Doug makes a short
19 statement himself?

20 **MR HENDRICKS:** I've tried to take my own life. I lost my family when I was a kid. I walked
21 out of my house, I was nearly freehold when that Grant Cameron fiasco carried on. But I
22 was getting verbal with my partner, my son's mother, so I moved out and I knew my boy
23 was safe. Thank you everybody.

24 **MS A THOMAS:** Thank you, Alan. Doug, would you like to speak to the statement that you've
25 prepared?

26 **MR MATTHEWS:** I didn't know I was going to be saying anything today, but I come as a
27 support person for Alan. So I just wanted a little thing, but I don't think I can read it. Can
28 I get someone to read it for me?

29 **MS A THOMAS:** Did you want me to read it?

30 **MR MATTHEWS:** Yes please.

31 **MS A THOMAS:** So this is the statement that Doug has prepared in summary of his evidence that
32 has already been provided to the Royal Commission.

33 "My name is Douglas John Matthews. I am 60 years old and I am a survivor from

1 Lake Alice Hospital. I think all survivors from Lake Alice will have a mental and
2 physical -- will have, sorry, mental and physical abuse from their time there. I have hidden
3 Lake Alice from family and friends for 46 years and have only opened up about it since I
4 turned 60 years old and reconnected with Alan Hendricks who was at Lake Alice at the
5 same time.

6 What I would like to see at this Inquiry is that all survivors get proper justice from
7 this. I want to see accountability, decent compensation and full closure for all the survivors
8 of Lake Alice. I can't actually see this happening for me as all of my Lake Alice files have
9 been wiped. But I hope all survivors have some kind of closure. I hope that will be the
10 case. All Lake Alice survivors received life sentences. Life sentences from the mental and
11 physical abuse while those accountable were able to roam the country and the world free of
12 pain and living normal lives with no remorse."

13 And that's the statement that has been prepared by Doug. Did you want to add
14 anything Doug?

15 **MR MATTHEWS:** No, that's all thank you.

16 **CHAIR:** Thank you for reading that, Ms Thomas. Commissioner Gibson would like to ask you a
17 question.

18 **COMMISSIONER GIBSON:** Thanks so much Alan. First an acknowledgment of the father you
19 have been, the proud father you've been and the role that you have -- that you've broken a
20 cycle there. Talking about some of the conversations you had with your father, it seemed
21 like he was threatening and was well aware that Lake Alice was a place of punishment
22 rather than therapy. Is that how you would describe it?

23 **MS A THOMAS:** I couldn't have said it better myself. He knew bloody well what was going on
24 there, he was part of it.

25 **COMMISSIONER GIBSON:** And you think that was the same of most of the nurses, we've
26 focused previously a lot of on Leeks but the nurses, or staff were aware that what was going
27 on there is punishment, or is that the right word, definitely not therapy?

28 **MR HENDRICKS:** Certainly wasn't therapy.

29 **COMMISSIONER GIBSON:** And that's how the other nurses would have understand it do you
30 think?

31 **MR HENDRICKS:** They worked as a team. Now I don't know how they got their ideas and that,
32 but like I said, Dennis Hesseltine, Terry Conlan were two guys that were in the right job
33 because that's -- they knew what they were doing. But the rest of it was pain and torture.
34 That's correct.

1 **COMMISSIONER GIBSON:** Thanks Alan.

2 **CHAIR:** The only question I have for both of you is whether -- I understand, Alan, you've had
3 lots of medical interventions through your physical things, have you ever had any
4 counselling or support or help with the trauma that you suffered as a result of Lake Alice?

5 **MR HENDRICKS:** No.

6 **CHAIR:** And you, Doug, have you ever had anything?

7 **MR MATTHEWS:** I think my family tried to get me some when I moved to Auckland.

8 **CHAIR:** So you've both buried and had to try and cope with this, what you've called a life
9 sentence on your own without any assistance.

10 **MR MATTHEWS:** I've never smoked but I like a beer. I think a lot of them tend to turn to drugs
11 or alcohol to hide it all.

12 **CHAIR:** Yes, okay. So I just want to say that, and I hope -- I think you're already being
13 supported by our well-being staff here.

14 **MR MATTHEWS:** Yeah.

15 **CHAIR:** Do take advantage of anything that they can offer you. It's a small but important thing
16 because I think, as Alan said, while he's been preparing for this, life's become hellish again
17 because it's brought it all to the surface, and we don't want you to suffer anymore harm than
18 is possibly necessary.

19 And that brings me to my second point. We've heard from many survivors already,
20 and will hear from more; many of them raised these issues early, tried to get resolution and
21 have in some way dealt more or less with what happened to them. But both of you men
22 have held it in the whole time and have kept it to yourselves and that makes your coming
23 forward and making your witness statements public in the way you have even more
24 remarkable. So your courage and bravery in doing that is something that we recognise and
25 applaud. I think, Alan, you'd say you're doing it for the greater good, would that be right?

26 **MR HENDRICKS:** That's correct.

27 **CHAIR:** Yeah. So the people of Aotearoa New Zealand must be very grateful to you that you're
28 prepared to expose this deep hurt and shame which you've described like that.

29 **MR HENDRICKS:** But there were probably hundreds of kids, you know?

30 **CHAIR:** Yes. And you are their voice.

31 **MR HENDRICKS:** I hope it works.

32 **CHAIR:** Yes, it's worked, we've heard you and we'll be taking this into account. The last thing
33 I want to do is, in the back of your brief of evidence there are some documents which are
34 nursing notes and all the rest of it. And you say that you live with the stigma, and so

1 because this is public I want to just say what DG Page, a district psychologist, said of you
2 when he assessed you at some stage on 11 December 1974. And he said this, and this is not
3 disputed anywhere in your records:

4 "Alan is a highly intelligent adolescent who has not been able to function anywhere
5 near this ability due to a severe break-down within his family."

6 **MR HENDRICKS:** Thank you.

7 **CHAIR:** You had no mental illness whatsoever. That's quite plain from your records and I think
8 it needs to be put in the public domain that you never had any illness whatsoever.

9 **MR HENDRICKS:** Yes please.

10 **CHAIR:** It's right there now and people are watching and listening. So thank you both, sincerely,
11 please go away, rest and take whatever help he can offer you. Thank you. **[Applause]**.

12 **Lunch adjournment from 11.55 am to 1.35 pm**

13 **CHAIR:** Ms Thomas again. Nau mai hoki mai.

14 **FREDERICK TERENCE RAWIRI**

15 **MS A THOMAS:** Kia ora. Tēnā koe Fred.

16 A. Kia ora koe Alana.

17 **Q.** I mua i tā tāua kōrero . I runga anō i te mōhio, kā tahi ano tō tuākana kā hoki ki te kōpu o
18 te whenua, e tika ana kia mihi ia, e tika ana kia mihi a rātou, kua taka kei tuā o Nukutaurua
19 e kore ā muri e hokia. Kia rātou, kua wheturangitia kē tia kua iri rā ki tō tātau rangi, hāere,
20 hāere, hāere atu ra. Tau ārai o te pā kia rātou titoko o te āo mārama ki a tatou. Tihei
21 Mauriora. Tēnā koe Fred.

22 I thought it was appropriate to recognise the very recent passing of your elder
23 brother in these last couple of weeks.

24 A. Thank you.

25 **Q.** I know it's really hard for you to be here today and even more harder. I te mea noho ana
26 koutou i te kapua pouri. Nō reira, kia koutou te whānau Rawiri e mihi ana ki a koutou.

27 So Fred just before I pass it over to introduce yourself, our chair of the
28 Commission Coral Shaw will do an affirmation with you for your evidence and then we'll
29 leave it to you to introduce yourself how you wish to. Kei te pai tēnā?

30 A. Okay, kia ora, thank you.

31 **CHAIR:** Would you like the affirmation to be in Te Reo Pākehā or Te Reo Māori ?

32 A. Pākehā will do thank you.

33 **Q.** Pākehā will do, all right, Pākehā it is. Fred, do you solemnly, sincerely and truly declare
34 and affirm that the evidence that you'll give before this Commission will be the truth, the

1 whole truth and nothing but the truth?

2 A. Yes, I do.

3 **Q.** Alana has already noted it is a sad time for you and we don't want to add to that. If at any
4 stage you feel you need a break please let us know, just say can we just take a break and
5 we'd be very happy to give you some time, all right?

6 A. Thank you.

7 **Q.** Ki a koe te tikanga. Thank you Alana.

8 **QUESTIONINGN BY MS A THOMAS:** Would you like to introduce yourself Fred?

9 A. Me hōnore ki tō tātou matua nui i te rangi, nāna hoki te tīmatanga, me te whakamutunga .
10 Te Kingi Tūheitia, Pōtatau te Wherowhero tuawhitu e noho mai ra I te ahurewa tapu o āna
11 mātua tipuna. Kā mihi ki ngā mate mo te tau, o inānahi me ngā mahi o tēnei ra, moe mai,
12 moe mai ra. Āpiti hono, tātai hono te hunga mate ki te hunga mate. Āpiti hono tātai hono te
13 hunga ora ki te hunga ora. Nō reira, e ngā waka, e ngā mana, e ngā iwi, e ngā whānau, e
14 ngā reo. Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, kia ora huihui mai ana koutou katoa.

15 Good afternoon friends and family back there in Aotearoa. My name is Fred
16 Rawiri. I was born on GRO-B 1960, I am 60 years old and currently reside in Australia. I
17 am a survivor of Lake Alice.

18 **Q.** Tenā koe Fred. E mihi ana i erā kupu hei tuāpapa mō tā tāua kōrero . Thank you for that
19 introduction, Fred. So how we'll go through your statement is I'll just take you to the
20 paragraphs and you read those statements and if you wish to add any kōrero on to what
21 you've already provided, please feel free do that as well, kei te pai?

22 A. Kei te pai.

23 **Q.** So we'll start at paragraph 3, your early life.

24 A. I was born in Te Kuiti and raised in Melville which is a suburb of Hamilton. My mother's
25 name was GRO-B My father's name was GRO-B. I came from a
26 family of 15, although a couple of my siblings had passed away before I was born. I am the
27 fourth youngest. Growing up and around large families was pretty common for us Māori
28 whānau.

29 We lived in a four -bedroom house. My older siblings had moved out but there
30 were still seven of us children living there. Mum would be working up in the gardens while
31 dad was away on the Railways. It was pretty hard back in those days for us as a big
32 whānau. Our life may have seemed impossible to others but our parents coped. We
33 weren't alone and would take Māori bread to school wrapped up in newspaper, no butter,

1 just some bread and go to school in bare feet, rain, hail and shine. There were many other
2 Māori whānau that were like us back in those days. We would walk to school every day
3 not fearing any stranger danger happening to us. All of my siblings attended Melville
4 Primary, Melville Intermediate and Melville High School.

5 **Q.** Can I just stop you there for a moment, Fred. Just because sometimes it's a little bit
6 mumbled and I know we Māori talk like this ne, so if you just keep closer to the mic so we
7 can hear your kōrero properly. Thank you Fred, tēnā koe. So paragraph --

8 **A.** My dad was -- āe, 6. When my dad was at home he drunk heavily. My files say that I had
9 a deprived and neglected upbringing and that my parents were irresponsible.

10 Recommendation report to be admitted to Hokio dated 24 February 1972. I don't agree
11 with that comment, it was a hard upbringing but I think they were doing the best they
12 could. We were always clothed and had food on our table.

13 I would get into trouble a bit when I was young. It was always only small things
14 like hanging around outside shops, taking milk money so me and my mates could buy food.
15 When I was 10 I appeared in court for burglary. From then I was known to Police and
16 Social Welfare. It actually felt like they were just following me and waiting for me to do
17 something bad again. Once they charged me with the burglary of a key that was valued at
18 60 cents. I had taken the master key for our school and used it to sneak into school after
19 hours.

20 All this type of behaviour was just me acting out as a young boy. I don't think I
21 had any mental issues. I just needed some guidance and some help from people who
22 wanted to actually help me not just to lock me away.

23 On December 1971 I appeared before the court on my third burglary charge dated
24 10 December 1971. At the hearing my aunty and uncle came down from Auckland to ask
25 the court to place me into their care rather than sending me off to a boys' home. They were
26 both employed and had two of my cousins living at their home at the time. While this
27 request was said to have been sent off for investigation, my file notes say that the memo
28 was never sent as they could not place me with people who were known to Social Welfare
29 and who can't look after their own children. I can't help but think that the rest of my
30 childhood would have turned out differently if I had been allowed to go and live with that
31 family.

32 **Q.** Can I just pause you there for a moment, Fred. So before this court appearance, you
33 weren't in State care yet, is that right?

34 **A.** That's correct.

1 **Q.** And so you had whānau there that wanted to take you and look after you instead of being
2 put into State care, is that right?

3 **A.** That's correct, yes.

4 **Q.** But the courts or Social Welfare officer wouldn't allow that, that's what happened?

5 **A.** Mmm-hmm, yeah, I wasn't aware of that(?), yeah. Paragraph 11. Instead I was committed
6 to the care of Social Welfare and placed in Hamilton's Boys' Home until they found me a
7 permanent placement. This home was close to my family home in Melville. I stayed at the
8 Hamilton Boys' Home for 13 months.

9 Mum visited me once in that time. Again, it makes me angry to see my files that
10 say my family didn't come to see me. Why they don't say is that my mum was almost a
11 solo mum and she took a lot to look after a huge family. She did the best she could with
12 dad being away all the time for mahi. I missed my parents and my siblings so much when I
13 was sent away. I was only 10 years old so you can understand what I was going through.

14 **Q.** Can I just pause you again there, Fred. Sorry. Just pause you there again. So I think it's
15 important here because when you read those notes and saw that they were saying your mum
16 didn't want to visit you at all, the background of that is she had 14 other children to look
17 after, essentially solo. So for her the ability to actually travel to come and see you was
18 hard, wasn't it?

19 **A.** Yeah, that's true, yes, yes, it was, yeah. Just going back on December 1971 like how we
20 spoke that I had not been in State care yet, but this one, paragraph 12 is telling me that I
21 was 10 years old when I was sent away, so obviously I was already part of the Social
22 Welfare, Department of Social Welfare.

23 Paragraph 13, on January 1973 on the recommendation of psychiatrists I was
24 admitted to Hokio Beach School. This place had a bit more freedom and had a pool table,
25 beaches, swimming pool and outings. However, that meant nothing to me because I was
26 further away from our family and it just made my loneliness worse. I knew I wouldn't see
27 my mum if I was that far away from home. As a result I became withdrawn and isolated
28 while I was at Hokio. And so I was told I had to get a psychiatric assessment done. My
29 notes say I was examined by Dr Leeks at Hokio on 27 June 1973, but I don't remember ever
30 going there and talking to him.

31 On 5 April 1973 and 2 May 1973, Dr Leeks wrote to the principal of my school
32 noting that he had taken an EEG that showed I was within normal limits of a child of my
33 age. He recommended I go to Lake Alice and put me on the waiting list suggesting that
34 I might have a schizoid personality disorder. Dr Leeks' letters to Hokio principal dated 5

1 April 1973 and 2 May 1973. As far as I was concerned that was rubbish. I was young and
2 I was lonely. Of course I was lonely, I hadn't seen my family for three years and for them
3 to say these were symptoms of a mental disorder was ridiculous.

4 **Q.** Thank you for that Fred. That was important to hear that background to show that Leeks is
5 saying you had this personality disorder and what you've shown to us is you were just
6 lonely and missing your whānau ne?

7 **A.** Mmm, correct.

8 **Q.** So if you could carry on to paragraph 15 please, Fred.

9 **A.** On 12 September 1973, I was admitted to Lake Alice and put in villa 11. Lake Alice
10 admission notes dated 12 September 1973. I was 13. I cannot remember this day at all.
11 I do not remember anyone telling me why I was going to Lake Alice, and as far as I am
12 aware, my family were never told I was going there and my parents' consent was never
13 asked for.

14 **Q.** Can I just stop you there, Fred. Did you know about Lake Alice at all when you were this
15 age?

16 **A.** No. No. I was discharged on 18 December 1973, Lake Alice discharge notes dated 18
17 December 1973, after spending over three months at Lake Alice and sent straight back to
18 Hokio. Carry on?

19 **Q.** Haere tonu, kia ora.

20 **A.** I never knew anything about ECT or shock treatment before I went to Lake Alice. But
21 I did afterwards. It was usually a Wednesday or Thursday when everybody would
22 assemble in the lounge room of the villa. If your name was called, then you would be
23 escorted upstairs. When my name was called I would follow them upstairs to one of the
24 bedrooms where there was a single bed. Then I would be asked to lie down.

25 Leeks would be standing at the head of the bed and then he would put some
26 electrodes on my head that were like headphones. He would then ask me -- put a
27 mouthguard into my mouth and then he would administer the ECT turning the dial while
28 the staff held me down. They had to physically hold me down because I was kicking the
29 whole time and trying to get free. I would be biting into the mouthguard while this was
30 happening. The shocks would start off mild and then get stronger and stronger. It felt like
31 an eternity.

32 One of the times I was given ECT on my genitals. This shock wasn't as long as
33 the shocks I would get on my temples but was much more painful. I remember that when it
34 was over I went back into the lounge area. I was embarrassed, I remember crying in front

1 of other children who were just staring at me. I wasn't given any anaesthetic when I was
2 shocked. Every time I got shocked I defecated in my pants.

3 ECT was used regularly to punish the children at Lake Alice. The first time I got
4 ECT was because a staff member told me to stop eating a packet of chips. Because you
5 know how you eat chips and it makes a bit of a crunchy sort of a sound, well that way.

6 My nurse's notes say I received ECT for the first time on 30 September 1973, on
7 various dates between September and December 1973. On 27 October my notes say I had
8 an interview with Leeks and then ECT followed. On 15 November my nurse's notes say
9 that ECT was required. There are no other comments about side effects or anything about
10 how they administered the shock treatment.

11 Dr Leeks mentions in his notes that other methods seemed called for and I suspect
12 he meant child abuse in the way described above. Dr Leeks' letter to Hokio principal dated
13 31 December 1973. By November both Leeks' and the nurse's notes say that I was making
14 good progress and was helpful around the villa. Of course I was. I didn't want to get
15 shocked again.

16 **Q.** Can I just pause you there, Fred. Do you remember how many times you would have
17 received shock treatment?

18 **A.** According to my paperwork I got it four times. I can't personally remember, but going
19 back on my notes I make it ought to be four.

20 **Q.** Before we move on to the next paragraph of your statement about drugs, is there anything
21 else you wanted to say about ECT or shock treatment?

22 **A.** No, I think it's all for the guys that have appeared before me, they've said it all.

23 **Q.** Ka pai.

24 **A.** I just haven't got the how to put it in words if you know what I mean.

25 **CHAIR:** And there's no need for you to repeat it, Fred. You're right, we've heard it. If there's
26 anything different you wanted to add, of course, but otherwise we accept that.

27 **A.** Okay, thank you. Moving on to paragraph 24?

28 **QUESTIONING BY MS A THOMAS CONTINUED:** Āe.

29 **A.** I was given Paraldehyde while I was in Lake Alice. One of the nurses injected me in my
30 backside. This was given to me as a punishment for misbehaving. My notes say that I was
31 given the drugs after a kicking incident that I was involved in. The drugs made me think
32 really slowly. I was spaced out after being given them and sometimes I would hallucinate,
33 I was in another world. This feeling would last for hours.

34 Apart from Leeks, I don't remember any particular staff member, they all just

1 seemed to me like they were walking around like they were above the law.

2 Life after Lake Alice. After Lake Alice I was returned to Hokio where I stayed
3 until November 74 then I moved home and went back to Melville High school. I tried
4 really hard not to think about what had happened because at the end of the day no-one was
5 going to believe me. Even if I wanted to, how was I supposed to make a complaint? How
6 was I going to tell? As far as I was concerned they were all the same people and a part of
7 the system that had ripped me away from my family and abused me. There was no way I
8 was then going to trust them.

9 Despite me trying to forget, it was hard, I was struggling after being released from
10 Lake Alice and Hokio. I would misbehave at school and appeared a few times in court on
11 small charges like stealing moneys, \$30, \$60. Nothing ever too serious but still getting into
12 trouble. This was the start of me turning to crime and to gangs for security and then being
13 locked up in prison. I was in and out of prison for the next 20 years for offences like theft,
14 burglary and driving offences.

15 **Q.** Just pause you there for a moment, Fred. During this time did you ever receive any help for
16 what you went through in State care, any counselling or anything like that?

17 **A.** No, no. Not so far as I can remember, but I'm pretty 110% no, I received nothing at all.

18 **Q.** Ka pai, thank you.

19 **A.** Onwards and upwards?

20 **Q.** Haere tonu.

21 **A.** Paragraph 31. In 2017 I instructed Cooper Legal to help me make a claim for had what
22 happened to me at Lake Alice. In December of last year I was offered 59,000 from the
23 Government for what I went through at Lake Alice. Ministry of Health letter of offer to
24 Fred Rawiri dated 2 December 2020. I have not yet accepted this offer and do not know
25 what I want to do. It's not just about the money, we need to be able to tell our story and get
26 some sort of closure for what had happened to us. This won't happen if we are just paid off,
27 silenced and forgotten. I remember saying back in the day when we do right nobody
28 remembers, but when we do wrong, nobody forgets.

29 **Q.** And we are -- sorry, Fred, we heard evidence on Tuesday of one of the survivors who made
30 a similar comment to you when he would appear in court the summary that was prepared
31 only had a list of all his crimes or his wrongs, his failures?

32 **A.** Yeah.

33 **Q.** And he asked why wasn't there a list of what -- the wrongs that were done to him.

34 **A.** To him, yeah.

1 **Q.** So you had a similar kind of experience?

2 **A.** Yes, yeah. Yeah. Paragraph 33. For those who went to Lake Alice and survived, life
3 afterwards was rough. It was a road of loneliness, a road of feeling betrayal and a road of
4 continued inhumane treatment.

5 Emotional trauma. The effects Lake Alice has had on me largely have been
6 emotional. That doesn't mean that they have been any easier to overcome. I have battled
7 with depression my whole life and constantly feel overwhelmed by my emotions.

8 I have suffered from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and social anxiety disorder. I
9 have a fear of being watched and judged which affects my every day life.

10 I have flashbacks and nightmares of being in Lake Alice and seeing Leeks. You
11 see the fear of being put back in Lake Alice and the memories of what happened do not just
12 go away because we have been let out. It is something we have to live with now.

13 I worry constantly that my children and grandchildren will be put in a place like
14 that and suffer like I did. This needs to stop.

15 Overall, what I went through at Lake Alice has affected the quality of my life and
16 my ability to just enjoy every day and be happy.

17 Employment. Like I said above, I turned to gangs and to crime. This was the
18 easiest way to make money because I couldn't hold down a 9 to 5 job due to the emotional
19 trauma I was constantly battling. I had no money and finding work in New Zealand
20 because of my gang affiliations was hard. Having a criminal record. That is one of the
21 many reasons I moved to Australia (inaudible) a better life.

22 I have always been embarrassed that I was in Lake Alice and in particular I've
23 been afraid that people would find out and think I'm mentally ill. It doesn't matter that I'm
24 not mentally ill, people just hear Lake Alice and think everyone who went there had mental
25 problems. But I never did. But people don't know that and they don't know my story. That
26 whole stigma around Lake Alice is real and it has followed me around my whole life.

27 My current situation. You could say that my life has been a roller coaster due to
28 the trauma I received at Lake Alice. As I moved into the latter years of life and finally got
29 out of the gang and crime life, it's still been a struggle.

30 I'd like to think that I am doing better though. I'm over 60 years old and I am
31 living abroad. I have lived in Australia for the past 25 years and have been working in the
32 construction industry. However, I am on a Centrelink payment at the moment due to
33 Covid-19.

34 I have finally settled down and have children of my own to take care of. They

1 look up to me and believe in me for who I am not who I was. They are my priority.

2 What I want from the Royal Commission. I would like a formal apology,
3 someone to publicly take responsibility for what happened, proper compensation, the
4 survivors' voices to be heard so that we can get closure, for you to make Leeks come back
5 to New Zealand and pay for what he did to us all.

6 This statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and was made by me
7 knowing that it may be used as evidence by the Royal Commission of Inquiry into abuse in
8 care. Kia ora. Ngā mihi.

9 **Q.** Kia ora Fred. E mihi ana ki ā koe I ēnā kupu. Before I pass it back to our Chair the
10 Commissioners may have some questions for you. Is there anything else you wanted to
11 say?

12 **A.** No, no. I'll go back and do my thing. No, I'm just shaking at the moment.

13 **Q.** Ka pai, kia ora.

14 **CHAIR:** So we won't hold you up for much longer, Fred. I'll just check with my fellow

15 Commissioners. Fred I have a quick question. Were you brought up in Te Reo Māori ?

16 **A.** No, I wasn't. My mum and dad would speak Māori but they wouldn't speak Māori to us
17 because at that time, you know, we couldn't learn Māori only because if you went to school
18 and spoke Māori , you know what would happen.

19 **Q.** Yeah, I know what would happen. So you were deprived of your reo and of course the
20 culture that went with it because you weren't allowed to speak at school.

21 **A.** That's correct.

22 **Q.** And so when you were at Hamilton Boys' Home for example, was there any recognition of
23 your culture there, of your Māori ness at Hamilton Boys?

24 **A.** Absolutely not. No. No. Just another child.

25 **Q.** Were there many other Māori boys and girls there, or boys there?

26 **A.** Yes, there were. Some of them have appeared before me at the RCI.

27 **Q.** Yes. You recognise some of them?

28 **A.** I do.

29 **Q.** And then it hardly needs asking, but Hokio Beach, same thing?

30 **A.** Yeah, same thing.

31 **Q.** A lot of Māori children there?

32 **A.** A lot of Māori children there.

33 **Q.** Any recognition of your Māori culture there?

34 **A.** No, absolutely not. That was another English speaking boys' home.

- 1 **Q.** Yeah.
- 2 **A.** There were probably more Māori than Pākehā children there and -- oh what was I going to
3 say? You know, for me to be selected out of all of those children, would have been over 50
4 easy. I'm absolutely baffled.
- 5 **Q.** And then just to carry on and finish that bit, again it almost goes without saying, I take it
6 that at Lake Alice similarly, no recognition of your Māori ness, of your culture, of your
7 whakapapa?
- 8 **A.** No, no absolutely not. There were Māori children there as well.
- 9 **Q.** And the very sad part of your story concerns the break-up of your family, the loss of your
10 huge family. Did any of your other brothers or sisters go into care?
- 11 **A.** No, no.
- 12 **Q.** Just you?
- 13 **A.** Just me unfortunately.
- 14 **Q.** Have you been able to reconnect with your whānau or has it always been difficult since that
15 time?
- 16 **A.** Yes, I've managed to reconnect with my siblings who are a bit older than me now and,
17 yeah, we have a good relationship.
- 18 **Q.** That's good to hear anyway. Thank you for answering my questions, Fred. I'm just going
19 to leave you now with Commissioner Gibson.
- 20 **A.** You're welcome, thank you.
- 21 **Q.** Ngā mihi atu.
- 22 **COMMISSIONER GIBSON:** Kia ora Fred. Just following on from that, some witnesses, some
23 Māori witnesses have reported that they were specifically targeted for violence within Lake
24 Alice. Did you have any experiences like that? For being Māori ?
- 25 **A.** No, look it's been so long ago and I really -- no, I really can't recollect eh, I'm sorry, I can't
26 answer that, it's too long ago.
- 27 **Q.** Yeah, thanks Fred. I think it's up to me now to have the privilege of thanking you,
28 acknowledging you. Tainui waka tēnā koe, ngā maunga me ngā, awa, ngā taniwhā o
29 Tainui, tēnā koutou te taniwha o te waka o te awa. Tēnā koe.
- 30 Picking out some of the things that you said, after Lake Alice a road of loneliness,
31 a road of continual betrayal, a road of continual inhumane treatment. It's very articulate in
32 the follow-up and the legacy of the impact of Lake Alice on many survivors we need to
33 acknowledge and how long it's taken for us to really get to the heart of this and get it
34 exposed.

1 I also acknowledge your line about your children, you're a father, you're a
2 grandfather and your children, you acknowledge they now see you for who you are not who
3 you were. And that's fantastic, you are the rangatira, kaumatua and that they are your
4 priority.

5 If there is a -- I hope when you talk about those roads that this event, your gift to
6 us, can be a turn in the road, a bend in the river and the gift you say your children are your
7 priority, that we can recognise in Aotearoa that this should be our priority as a nation, our
8 tamariki. Fred, kia ora and thank you for your contribution.

9 A. Thank you.

10 **CHAIR:** Thank you so much. We'll bid you goodbye.

11 **MS A THOMAS:** Hei tapiri noa a Fred, hei tapiri noa i terā kōrero Hiahia ana ahau ki te tuku
12 mihi atu ki a koe anō hoki, kei te rongō au i o tupuna, e noho ana kei muri i a koe hei
13 taituarā mou, e mōhio ana āu e hara i te mea he mea ngāwari tēnei huarahi; he huarahi roa,
14 he huarahi uaua, i takahia ai e koe, e koutou katoa ngā mōrehu o Lake Alice. (Waiata).
15 Tēnā koe.

16 A. Kia ora Alana. Thank you.

17 **CHAIR:** We will adjourn before the next witness. Thank you.

18 **Adjournment from 2.11 pm to 2.59 pm**

19 **CHAIR:** Welcome back Ms Joychild.

20 **MS JOYCHILD:** Good afternoon Commissioners. Ms CC who, for the purposes of today, we're
21 going to call Donna, because she has name suppression, is going to speak about her
22 experience being married to her husband who was a survivor of Lake Alice. Donna's
23 husband was 13 years old when he first went in and then 14. He was there for nearly two
24 years -- sorry, 14 months he was there, Lake Alice.

25 **MS CC**

26 **CHAIR:** So before she starts I'll just get her to say the affirmation. Do you mind if I call you
27 Donna?

28 A. I don't mind if you call me Donna.

29 **Q.** That's good. So welcome, thank you for coming and thank you for providing your brief of
30 evidence. Just to let you know that we have read it already. So if you take the affirmation
31 please. Do you solemnly, sincerely, truly declare and affirm that the evidence you'll give
32 today will be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

33 A. I do.

34 **Q.** Thank you.

1 **QUESTIONING BY MS JOYCHILD:** Donna, could you start at paragraph 1. We know your
2 name and that you work as a carer and you're a subcontractor. But now if you can start at
3 that sentence on the second line "I am the widow".

4 A. So I am the widow of my husband, and he was a survivor of the Lake Alice Hospital. He
5 died of emphysema in 2016 just three months short of our 30th wedding anniversary. He
6 started in the first group represented by Grant Cameron but ended up in the second group
7 that was paid out by the Government.

8 **Q.** Then if we leave the next paragraph which is just a reference to the documents and read
9 again from paragraph 4.

10 A. My husband was born in June 1958 to a Samoan father and a Rarotongan mother. They
11 were unmarried and his birth mother couldn't care for him. When he was 4 months old his
12 mother's cousin's family took him on as a whāngai child. At that time they had four
13 children and after him they had another six. The family spoke Rarotongan and Māori and
14 he had very poor English when he started school so he was considered a slow learner.

15 My husband was severely beaten and neglected by his whāngai mother in
16 particular. He told me, and the records show, that he often had cauliflower ears from
17 beatings and ear pullings. His records show a teacher complaining about bruises and cuts
18 when he was 5 years old, letter dated 6 August 1969 from G Schmidt from Department of
19 Social Welfare.

20 **Q.** Yes, you don't need to read those ones in brackets.

21 A. Sorry.

22 **Q.** That's all right, go on at paragraph 6.

23 A. In 1969 there was another complaint from a teacher when my husband had just turned 11.
24 It was recorded that he had a swollen eye, hair missing, new scratch marks and a
25 cauliflower ear. He was also difficult to manage at school and he was removed from his
26 family at that time and placed in Ōwairaka Boys' Home in 1969.

27 **Q.** Then up to paragraph 7.

28 A. After an unsuccessful return home where he got into trouble due to violence, he was placed
29 at Hokio Boys School for close to two years. Then when he was around 11 to 13 -- from
30 around 11 to 13. The records show that he was sexually assaulted over a period of time at
31 Hokio by a teacher who was convicted of sexual assaults on several other boys at Hokio.

32 He was then moved to Kohitere for six months. After he had assaulted boys there
33 he was moved to Lake Alice.

34 **Q.** Paragraph 9.

1 A. Yeah. My husband spent 14 months in Lake Alice from 1974. He was admitted aged 14
2 and left aged 15. On 16 June 1973 he was diagnosed by Dr Leeks as suffering from
3 aggressive character disorder, apparently based on his history of violence.

4 In paragraph 28 of his statement he says that not long after he was admitted John
5 Blackmore, one of the nurses, started taking him to his place in Marton on the weekends.
6 When he did so he forced him to do sexual favours on him. He sodomised my husband on
7 several occasions and then he would simply bring him back to Lake Alice as if nothing had
8 happened.

9 **Q.** That's from your husband's statement which he made to Grant Cameron, isn't it?

10 A. Correct.

11 **Q.** And then could you -- or do you want me to read paragraph 29 and 30 from his statement?

12 A. Yeah, you can if you like.

13 **Q.** Okay, this is what your husband says. "I brought -- this is the abuse -- I brought it up with
14 another staff member, Steve Hunt, but nothing seemed to happen. I was still allowed to go
15 home with Blackmore in the weekend. John Blackmore would sexually abuse me all
16 weekend and then during the week I would simply be rejected by him as though nothing
17 had happened.

18 I was so angry with what had happened that about three months into this I started
19 taking my anger out on the other boys by physically and sexually abusing them. Sexual
20 gratification became a real need for me and John Blackmore's abuse of me was the
21 beginning of the problems I had at Lake Alice."

22 Now if we go to paragraph 12 where you're talking about ECT.

23 A. My husband was subjected to a horrific level of ECT and a lot of time in seclusion because
24 of his sexual assaults on other boys. He describes his first experience of electric shocks this
25 way.

26 "The first time I experienced electric shock I was led upstairs where the treatment
27 was being administered. I had no idea what to expect as I was a pretty tough guy at the
28 time and could not see what everyone was afraid of. I didn't believe the others' fear
29 thinking they were just wimps.

30 Upstairs in a seclusion room I was laid out on a bed. One nurse put a rubber gag
31 in my mouth and the others were restraining me, physically holding me down on the bed.
32 Tongs were dipped into a bowl of water and then placed on my temples. While this was
33 happening, psychiatrist Selwyn Leeks said 'You've been quite naughty. Some of the other
34 patients have been complaining that you've been bullying them.' I tried to deny this but

1 I couldn't because of what was happening to me. A little silver box was just to the side of
2 the bed. I didn't know what was happening, merely curious. I then saw Leeks turn the dial
3 on the silver box.

4 A flash of bright light went through my head with intense pain and I could not see.
5 Leeks kept turning the knob talking quietly in between, making it very difficult to hear
6 what he was saying. The pain went through me around nine or ten times and although I am
7 not sure of the exact time, the whole session seemed to last 30 minutes in total. This
8 seemed to be the length of time most people were subjected to this cruelty. This was my
9 introduction to ECT; short shocks then long ones. Leeks regulated them, speaking to me
10 after each shock and saying I was bad and naughty.

11 I was totally shattered afterwards and withdrew into myself. I felt half drugged
12 and had to be assisted down the stairs and put into an armchair. I couldn't eat dinner that
13 night. I felt lost, totally dazed and could not care for myself. I was in bed by around 5.30
14 pm and it took me a few days to get over the treatment. I soon realised that this was no
15 holiday camp."

16 My husband says that after the first time there were many more. He fought all the
17 way upstairs after the first one. His second shock was a lot longer and more drawn out. It
18 was more intense and harsher than the first but thankfully for him only 5 minutes long.
19 Anything anyone did that was unacceptable to the staff was put in the day book and brought
20 up weekly when the weekly ECT happened.

21 My husband described being herded into the day room and waiting for names to be
22 called. Staff had put names down during the week for misbehaviour. He describes terror,
23 sweaty palms, pacing and changing chairs while waiting for his name to be called.

24 He describes having to watch other children being dragged, screaming and crying
25 out of the room and up the stairs to get ECT. They had to listen to the sounds of people
26 screaming, crying and yelling.

27 My husband said he thought he was going to die in villa 11. He could not trust
28 anyone at Lake Alice except the other boys. After two months he ran away. He was caught
29 and brought back and put into seclusion. He described what happened to him in this way.

30 "Leeks saw me and said 'You're in for it now'. There was a mattress on the floor
31 and the ECT machine was brought in. Leeks would say things like 'Why did you run
32 away?' Zap. Leeks asked several questions of me and then zapped me before I had a
33 chance to answer. All I could do was scream and cry until they went away. I think I was in
34 seclusion for three days and I cried all the time."

1 My husband described having therapy sessions with Dr Leeks in this way.

2 "After I had been in solitary confinement for running away, Dr Leeks started
3 giving me more electric shocks, but this time it was different. Leeks started putting the
4 electrodes on other parts of my body. I was taken to the medical block where the medicines
5 were stored. Here prongs were put on to my legs and around my knees and again I was
6 asked questions and then given short sharp shocks. This occurred while I was sitting down
7 and the shocks were enough to make me leap out of the chair uncontrollably. One knee
8 was done after the other.

9 Also, during the sessions in the medical block I was shocked on my hands as well.
10 The sessions would last around 20 minutes and there would be approximately 15 shocks on
11 each limb. At times Leeks would move the electrodes up each leg from my knee. If the
12 prongs came off, Leeks made me pick them up and put them back on my leg. Each shock
13 would leave red marks on my limbs and I had to keep moving the electrodes higher each
14 time. Sometimes Leeks would also hold on to the top of the electrodes when they were on
15 my hands and shock me.

16 Leeks would call these my therapy sessions and these would occur three times a
17 week on Mondays, Wednesday and Fridays. These therapy sessions lasted approximately
18 three to four weeks and to my knowledge I was the only one getting this type of treatment.
19 I felt like I was being punished. While receiving the treatments on my limbs some of the
20 other patients were brought into the medical block and were asked to shock me."

21 **CHAIR:** Take your time, take a breath.

22 A. My husband believes that GRO-B did an experimental sleep treatment on him.

23 "On another occasion I was taken up the stairs again to have the shock treatment
24 but this time it was different. I was given an injection and informed that I was going to be
25 put to sleep. Sometime later I came to calling my sisters' names and crying heavily. Two
26 of the other guys there were sitting beside my bed trying to comfort me because they were
27 fearful for my life. To this day I had no knowledge of what the doctor did to me while I
28 was injected to sleep. I have heard of some children being given Deep Sleep Therapy and
29 I wonder whether I was given some version of this."

30 My husband described one incident where the doctor physically attacked him
31 while he was locked in a cell in seclusion. It was after he had sexually abused boys in villa
32 11 and the doctor was upset at having to explain to the parents what had happened to their
33 boys because of him.

1 "At one point I was transferred to the adults unit, villa 8. I was locked up in the
2 seclusion room but this was different to the adolescent unit. There was nothing in the
3 room, it was like a holding pen. The doctor visited me there and physically assaulted me.
4 He came into the room by himself and started swearing at me. He punched me in the head
5 several times and pulled my hair and while I was on the floor he kicked me a couple of
6 times as well."

7 **QUESTIONING BY MS JOYCHILD CONTINUED:** I'm going to pause you there, GRO-B,
8 and could we put up exhibit 007, because your husband has given a statement to the
9 Citizens Commission of Human Rights which is quite a detailed statement of this incident.
10 And I thought -- would you like me to read this? Okay.

11 "So when the doctor came to see me he came into the room by himself and started
12 swearing at me. He was upset it happened" -- so you've said to explain to the parents.

13 **CHAIR:** Ms Joychild, are you putting it on the screen? Just wait for it to come up.

14 **MS JOYCHILD:** Sure.

15 **CHAIR:** Just before it's put up, I believe, from signals afar, that Donna's name might be
16 mentioned in this document. Shall we just hold it for a moment and double-check.
17 Because if it was --

18 **MS JOYCHILD:** It's not in document 007.

19 **CHAIR:** Hang on, I'll just ask Rachel, what is the situation? Find out from Rachel please.

20 **MS JOYCHILD:** I wonder if the people doing the live stream could redact a name that I said, that
21 I just said.

22 **CHAIR:** And they have. Three thumbs went up in the air at the back.

23 **MS JOYCHILD:** I thought they'd be on to it.

24 **CHAIR:** They are absolutely on to it, thank you. Just so that you understand what's going on,
25 Donna -- take a breath, you are allowed to breathe. The live streaming is some minutes
26 behind us, so if something like that happens accidentally, the very clever people at the back
27 of the room know and they take out the bit that shouldn't have been said so it's not
28 broadcast. Does that reassure you? Thumbs up from you too, excellent. And thumbs up
29 from the back as well. This is good news.

30 **MS JOYCHILD:** And I've also noticed here that there are redactions that need to happen in this
31 document.

32 **CHAIR:** So shall we not put it up?

33 **MS JOYCHILD:** Perhaps not.

1 **CHAIR:** I think it's probably wiser if we don't show it and you just read the relevant parts, Ms
2 Joychild.

3 **MS JOYCHILD:** So Donna read paragraph 1, which was about how he came into the room and
4 punched, pulled his hair, and when he was on the floor he kicked him. This is what the
5 doctor did. And Donna's husband said that he seemed to have totally lost control, which
6 was unusual because he was always usually so cool about everything. So this is day 2 of
7 Donna's husband's time in seclusion.

8 "When the doctor came to see me he brings the ECT machine and he set the ECT
9 machine up. There were other staff there that came in with him. I think there were at least
10 two other staff. I was very scared at this time as he came to see me with the machine
11 instead of me coming into a room where the machine was already in the room.

12 At that time I was restrained by the other staff. I was lying down and he starts to
13 shock me. The level of pain was a lot more than what I had received on other occasions. I
14 was shocked on my arms, legs and body. I was moving around trying to get away. I was
15 yelling out in pain and terror. It was higher than an electric fence. He would alter the
16 amount of jolt I would get."

17 **CHAIR:** Stop, sorry. I'm not sure if this is to do with redactions or whether it's to do with
18 technicalities.

19 **MS JOYCHILD:** Hopefully it's technicalities.

20 **CHAIR:** I'm being asked if we could take a break, I think it's best if we stop, get it right. You can
21 have a quiet time for a moment. We'll get all these technical problems sorted out and then
22 we'll come back so we don't get interrupted again. We'll just take a brief adjournment
23 thank you.

24 **Adjournment from 3.20 pm to 3.30 pm**

25 **MS JOYCHILD:** Donna, could you please read from where I last left off.

26 A. "The doctor would alter the amount of jolt I would get so I wouldn't be expecting it.
27 Sometimes it could be a small jolt then he would give it a big one. The dial would be
28 turned up for 3 to 4 seconds then back down, then turned right up for some period. My
29 body would tense right up and the pain and the effect would stay with me for around 20
30 seconds, then shock again. I think it would have been about two shocks per minute,
31 approximately five to seven times on each leg or hand before moving on to the next. At
32 one point I was cowering in the corner. He had turned the dial up and was pushing the
33 prongs on parts of my body. I thought I was going to die. I remember the cool, blue eyes
34 looking through me.

1 Day 3. On this day the doctor came in first. I was spooked because of what
2 happened the day before. The doctor brought the ECT machine and two other staff. I was
3 in shirt and trousers to start with and was lying on the mattress. I got a glimpse of other
4 boys outside the room. The ECT box was on a trolley, the prongs had a long cord and I
5 was given about 12 shocks by Dr Leeks on the arms, legs, etc.

6 Then the boys were asked to come in one at a time. Dr Leeks rubbed his hands
7 together and said 'You know who these boys are'. I can remember and Leeks got them to
8 turn the -- sorry, the doctor got them to turn the dial in turns. Some turned it longer than
9 others. I was so traumatised, it felt like forever possibly, I could not escape.

10 I remember that I was finally knocked out with the special button that can be
11 pushed to knock you right out. The next thing I knew was that I was alone in the room and
12 that I was very dry around my mouth. I was taken to maximum security at Lake Alice the
13 next day."

14 **Q.** Thank you, Donna, now we're up to paragraph 22.

15 **A.** My husband was also shocked with ECT by Dr Leeks when he was placed in maximum
16 security. He said Dr Leeks used the knock-out button and that was the last time he had
17 ECT or saw Dr Leeks.

18 My husband talked about his time in seclusion in villa 11 and described the room
19 etc. He spent three periods of time in seclusion there when he first arrived after he ran
20 away and after he had sexually assaulted other boys. He was also in seclusion in villa 8.
21 He spent the last six to eight weeks of his stay in Lake Alice in the maximum security block
22 where hardened adult criminals were kept. He was in solitary confinement for the first two
23 or three weeks of that time, but after that allowed to mix with the others, many of whom
24 were lifers who would never be released.

25 My husband did not receive Paraldehyde but did observe another boy receiving it.
26 He would see the boys were in pain after receiving it from the way they walked or tried to
27 walk. They also told him it was very painful and smelled bad. He was put on Mellaril
28 when he was in the secure block.

29 My husband told me about Dr Leeks pretty much as soon as we met and we
30 continued to talk about it during our marriage, especially when it came on the news. His
31 primary focus during our marriage was bringing the doctor to justice and making public
32 what had happened to him as a young person in Lake Alice and other boys' homes.

33 He told me he had been sexually abused by one of the male nurses at Lake Alice
34 and that such behaviour didn't seem unusual there. He told me about how one of the nurses

1 would regularly get into bed with the oldest boy in the hospital. I see from his notes that it
2 is recorded that he was also sexually abused by a staff member at Hokio Boys School. That
3 man was later convicted of several offences in relation to boys at Hokio.

4 My husband also told me he was taken to a photo studio when he was around 11
5 or 12 and living at Hokio and filmed in sexualised photos with nothing but underpants on.
6 These photos are part of the evidence in his statement in relation to abuse in residences. I
7 believe this photography is part of the sexual grooming to which he was being subjected
8 while in the boys' home.

9 My husband told me that in such a sexual environment he, in turn, began to
10 sexually abuse other boys. He was caught by Dr Leeks asking -- asked after -- sorry; he
11 was caught. Dr Leeks asked some other boys if they wanted to give him ECT as pay-back.
12 Some of the boys did. They gave him ECT on his genitals. They didn't use any
13 anaesthetic. The whole point was just to inflict terrible pain. My husband told me it was
14 horrifically painful.

15 There are many aspects of the notes that are available that concern me. For
16 example, on 2 May 1973 a staff member at Hokio would --

17 **Q.** I'll pause you there, Donna, and just correct that. It should be Kohitere, not Hokio. That's
18 not your mistake.

19 **CHAIR:** That's in paragraph 29?

20 **QUESTIONING BY MS JOYCHILD CONTINUED:** Yes. Sorry, continue after --

21 A. A staff member at Kohitere would not give details of sexual abuse at Kohitere to his social
22 worker and tried to absolve the school from any liability on the basis that my husband had
23 misbehaved prior.

24 **Q.** To Hokio?

25 A. To Hokio.

26 **Q.** So we're now going to put up document 009 which is a senior counsellor from Kohitere
27 reporting on your husband. So your husband's social worker was called a Mr Schmidt and
28 this is a record of a conversation between Mr Schmidt and the counsellor at Kohitere. And
29 he noted that Mr Schmidt had, in visiting the Auckland office, had spoken about your
30 husband. Have you got that document?

31 A. It's on the screen.

32 **Q.** Do you want to read paragraph 2?

33 **CHAIR:** We can make it bigger for you.

34 A. "Mr Schmidt was concerned about some comments in my husband's progress report that

1 were not elaborated on in the report, nor in any subsequent correspondence. From his
2 limited knowledge of the situation gained from when he escorted my husband to Kohitere,
3 he suspected that the reference related to sexual offences committed on my husband by a
4 staff member at Hokio when the boy had been in residence there."

5 **Q.** Then paragraph 3.

6 **A.** "I indicated to Mr Schmidt that we had no details of the effect of the offence in respect to
7 my husband, and that the ex-staff member had been prosecuted for offences on several
8 boys."

9 **Q.** And then we'll go to paragraph 5.

10 **A.** "The latest movements concerning my husband and his admission to Lake Alice Hospital,
11 which are the subject of a separate memo, indicate the seriousness of his problems in this
12 area. I think it could be acknowledged that the incidents at Hokio were just a continuation
13 of the problem rather than perhaps being the precipitant factor in my husband's incidents of
14 sexual misbehaviour on his discharge from Hokio, or following his admission here to
15 Kohitere. The problems seem to be much more basic than could be attributed to being
16 exposed to the opportunity in Hokio."

17 **Q.** Okay, then if you read paragraph 30.

18 **A.** There is no acceptance by Dr Leeks that a temporary housemaster having sex with a
19 12-14 year old boy in the care of the State was sexual abuse of that boy. Dr Leeks
20 described it as my husband being involved in homosexual activity. To me that is an
21 unbelievable attitude. My husband was being abused in the care of the State.

22 **Q.** Now I'd like you to pause there and we'll put up document 5. This is a note from your
23 social worker whose obviously seen an article in the newspaper about your husband's
24 sexual offending in 1978 and your husband was obviously before the courts. And this is
25 what -- have you got that document? Would you like to read that document?

26 **A.** "I am unable to locate my husband's personal file. It was over nine years ago when I took
27 my husband on warrant. Ears were black, swollen, soft from recent injury, patches of hair
28 were missing from his scalp and he had a contusion of the eye.

29 Several years ago I can recall being ordered late one Friday afternoon to escort my
30 husband to Kohitere. We arrived at Kohitere after 11 pm and the following Saturday
31 morning I made some inquiries regarding the reason and urgency for the visit. I learned
32 that my husband had been sexually assaulted over a period of time by a housemaster at
33 Hokio Beach School.

34 If he had in fact experienced sodomy with a housemaster at Hokio Beach School,

1 then it would appear that all the blame cannot be attributable to his adoptive parents, as was
2 stated by Mr Justice Chilwell in the Auckland Supreme Court in 1978." That's from the
3 social worker.

4 **Q.** Thank you. Now we go to paragraph 31.

5 **A.** The records show that my husband was charged with sexual abuse in relation to his assaults
6 on those other Lake Alice boys while he was still at Lake Alice. I note that in a letter dated
7 10 June 1974 Dr Pugmire wrote to the Magistrates Court and recommended that my
8 husband be dealt with as a delinquent rather than as a case of a psychiatric disorder and that
9 he be transferred to a Justice Department institution. This was after Dr Leeks had been
10 giving my husband excruciatingly painful ECT treatments without an anaesthetic or muscle
11 relaxant for 14 months. There was no justification for it as he did not have a mental illness.

12 **Q.** Now we'll pause you there and put up another document, document 0112. This is a letter
13 from Dr Pugmire to the presiding Magistrate of the Magistrates Court in Whanganui. This
14 is in 10 June 1974 when your husband is being charged with the sexual assault on other
15 boys at Lake Alice. Have you got that now, so we'll now go to --

16 **A.** On the screen.

17 **Q.** Can we go to the second paragraph and highlight the second to last line. And then the next
18 page after that. So can you read that Donna, beginning with "He came"?

19 **A.** "He came to Lake Alice 73 and at the beginning of 74, unknown to the staff, he secretly
20 practiced bullying and by..."

21 **Q.** Yeah, then they're just going to bring up the next page. Yeah. You can read that page.

22 **A.** "...threatening to kill other little boys he forced half a dozen of them to submit to acts of
23 sodomy. In due course they complained to their parents and when the offences came into
24 the open he tried to protect himself by making wild allegations of being the victim of
25 similar behaviour by Lake Alice staff. These allegations were immediately investigated by
26 the local Police who established they were a complete fabrication. Research into this boy's
27 background established he had made similar false allegations against staff in other
28 institutions. Since these offences he has been temporarily held in the security villa but his
29 presence there is strictly unauthorised and cannot continue. His false allegations have
30 aroused such antagonism among staff and patients on the open side of the hospital that he
31 cannot be housed there. In any case, the diagnosis of aggressive character disorder does not
32 indicate any treatable mental illness which would justify his further detention in a
33 psychiatric hospital. His IQ is 70 and is quite low, but he would not be welcomed by the
34 intellectually handicapped society who select only well-behaved patients."

1 **Q.** I'll pause you there and then we'll just go to the final paragraph.

2 **A.** "I recommend that he be dealt with as a delinquent rather than a case of psychiatric disorder
3 and that he be transferred to a Justice Department institution. S L Pugmire."

4 **Q.** Thank you Donna. Now go to paragraph 33 of your statement.

5 **A.** "My husband was not lying. It is recognised in his notes that he was abused at Hokio. He
6 always maintained his claims about the sexual abuse of him at Hokio and Lake Alice.

7 After he was discharged from Lake Alice to Waikeria -- he was discharged from
8 Lake Alice to Waikeria borstal after two years. After that, he started associating with
9 gangsters and consuming drugs and alcohol. For the next 10 years he was in and out of
10 prison for violent offending.

11 I met my husband when he was 28 years old. I was living with a girl called...

12 **Q.** Yeah. Just carry on.

13 **A.** ...at the time. Her boyfriend was one of my husband's adoptive brothers and I met him
14 through this connection. I turned out that I actually knew most -- sorry, it turned out that
15 I actually knew most of his family.

16 He went back to prison for two years the day after our marriage for an indecent
17 assault offence he committed before we met. This was his last conviction and jail term.
18 For the remainder of his life he stayed out of trouble. He was a good husband to me and a
19 good father to our two children, who are now 27 and 30.

20 My husband's healing was a process of steps. He described them in his statement.
21 He met his natural mother and aunty. He started doing a lot of work on himself while in
22 maximum security. He started working with a counsellor who helped him -- sorry, a
23 female counsellor who helped him to deal with all the abuse from his past. She helped him
24 come to terms with the abuse and neglect as a child, the abuse in Hokio and from John
25 Blackmore at Lake Alice. He also had to come to terms with the abuse he had perpetrated
26 on others.

27 **Q.** Paragraph 38.

28 **A.** He says that what started him on that process was meeting me. He really wanted to sort
29 himself out. Our wedding was a wonderful day and both sets of parents were present. He
30 started serving his term of imprisonment the next day. He was in solitary confinement in D
31 block for the first ten months. I visited him every week and taught him to read and write.
32 He put it this way to Grant Cameron's statement.

33 "Over the time I spent in prison I was able to look over my life and my
34 relationships and I went through a process of forgiveness and became quite accepting of

1 what had happened and who I was. I really accepted who I am, what I had to go through
2 and what I wanted to do from now on. My adoptive parents were very afraid they would
3 lose me, but I had to reassure them that all was okay.

4 My husband also worked briefly as a labourer from time to time, including at a
5 panelbeaters. However, he had trouble taking instructions. I think all those years of
6 violence and abuse in the system made him incapable of doing that. He relied on cannabis
7 to calm himself down. If he didn't have it he would get very agitated. He wanted to work,
8 but he couldn't because of these issues. I was usually the one working regularly. And
9 sometimes we would have to borrow money from my mother to make ends meet.

10 For over three years he worked at a hospital. He learned to weave cane baskets in
11 prison and he taught his skills to the patients. It kept them calm. They were promised that
12 if they could complete a basket they did not need to have medication. He was always
13 disappointed to return after a week off and find the staff had been medicating patients. It
14 was very important to him to teach people how to weave so as to keep them off medication.

15 Once our son was born my husband stayed home and looked after him, as he
16 developed diabetes as an infant and needed extra attention.

17 My husband had emphysema and eventually died from it. It came from him
18 smoking cigarettes and weed from the age of about 12.

19 I knew him for over three decades. I cannot make this clear enough. While he
20 had issues, such as not being able to take instructions, he did not have any kind of mental
21 disorder, or anything that would justify what was done to him at Lake Alice.

22 When he was alive he was focused on doing everything he could to bring
23 Dr Leeks to justice. I know he talked with a group called CCHR, including Steve Green
24 and Victor Boyd, and they supported him. On 15 March 2002 the CCHR wrote to the New
25 Zealand Police on behalf of my husband. I don't think the Police did anything about this
26 complaint.

27 He took two claims against the Government. The first was about his treatment in
28 Lake Alice and was through a lawyer called Grant Cameron. A claim was part of a class
29 action claim commenced by Grant Cameron in the High Court in Wellington against the --
30 on 20 April 1999 against the Attorney-General.

31 **Q.** Donna, we can pause there, we don't need to read all the parts of the claim. You could go
32 to paragraph 46.

33 **A.** His second claim was for his treatment in care, including the Hokio sexual abuse, and was
34 taken by Sonja Cooper.

1 My husband got settlements for both. I can't remember how much each of them
2 were for. I do remember the first one we got, we used it to pay back my mother the money
3 we owed her and we paid off our car. He then gave the remainder of his adopted -- to his
4 adopted siblings because they had gone to visit him when he was in prison and he'd been a
5 difficult child in the family. I think he felt guilty about that. These settlements did not
6 bring him closure. He wanted Dr Leeks to be held to account. That was the only thing that
7 would bring him closure.

8 In 2006 my husband was one of the people who lobbied through CCHR for the
9 Police to charge Dr Leeks and bring him back to be tried. The Police had agreed to reopen
10 an investigation into charging him and it was widely believed that Dr Leeks was going to
11 be extradited from Australia.

12 Around this time my mother sat down with my husband to write up a story of his
13 life. It was never finished. It contains excerpts from his statement to Grant Cameron and
14 adds others in from what he told her. It contains lots of gaps and questions for my husband.
15 Mum sent it to me in 2019 after my husband had died as a record for his children. This is
16 what he says about accountability.

17 "I feel very strongly about what happened to me and the others in villa 11 at Lake
18 Alice Hospital.

19 Those who received this barbaric treatment will never forget the long-term effects
20 and the harm done to the patients. Part of the healing process will only come about when
21 these details are taken through the courts and real justice is not only done but also seen to
22 be done. The people responsible for the treatment given should be made accountable for
23 their actions and opportunity should be offered to medical staff who were actively involved
24 in the treatment and the administration of the ECT. Some may also feel the need to be part
25 of that healing process by telling their side of the story.

26 The Government and associated departments need to take a long and hard look at
27 the information supplied and to take steps to assist those whose punishment and torture
28 were considered to be treatment therapy. In this way the victims will finally be able to get
29 on with their lives."

30 **Q.** Nearly there Donna. We're at paragraph 50.

31 **A.** Anticipating a prosecution of Dr Leeks, my husband sent me and my children to live in
32 Australia. He didn't want the children to be affected by media attention around what
33 happened to him at Lake Alice and also the sexual abuse carried out upon him and that he
34 carried out. He knew it would be a big thing and he didn't want the children to be bullied at

1 school because of him at the time one was only 10 and the other was only 14 at that point.

2 After two years of the family living apart and nothing had happened, he told me it
3 looked like Dr Leeks was not going to be prosecuted after all and that was a huge let down
4 and disappointment.

5 I then had to save hard for the next two years to afford the airfares to bring the
6 family and our belongings home. My children were adult fares by then. He couldn't come
7 to visit us because of his criminal history and meant he couldn't get a visa to enter
8 Australia. In all we lived in Australia for four years separated from him. Over that time we
9 could only afford to come back to visit him once.

10 It was hard to be separated and it was hard to save for our fares on top of having to
11 pay rent and support the children in Australia and pay the rent back in Auckland. In the
12 end it was for nothing, because the Police never charged Selwyn Leeks. That was such a
13 betrayal.

14 My husband was careful never to tell the kids about his experiences at Lake Alice.
15 However, since he has died the kids have read 'Diary of a Victim' and I have told them
16 things. What happened to my husband still affects me a lot and, though it is very hard to
17 do, I am giving this statement for him. It was wrong what happened to him and he wanted
18 Dr Leeks brought to account and what had happened exposed so everyone would know. I
19 am doing this for him and our children.

20 **Q.** Donna, thank you very much. If you can just sit and wait, Commissioners might have some
21 questions for you.

22 **CHAIR:** Do you mind answering a couple of questions from the Commissioners? Please say if
23 you'd rather just finish now.

24 **A.** I'm okay.

25 **Q.** Are you?

26 **A.** Yeah.

27 **Q.** Okay. Commissioner Gibson wants to ask you a question.

28 **COMMISSIONER GIBSON:** Thanks Donna, I really appreciate it. Just looking, your husband's
29 life, he was a victim of abuse and became an abuser and it was like there was a healing, a
30 redemption. And as he described it, there was a turning point for him which you were part
31 of.

32 **A.** Yes.

33 **Q.** What is it that you, from who you are, your conversations with him that you can teach to
34 others, you can share with others about how to help heal, how to help redeem?

1 A. Thrown me under the bus. I'm not sure I know the answer to that question. I was just there
2 for him, listened to him, believed him. People need to believe about what happened and I
3 think, because I believed in what he was telling me, he was able to work through that
4 process. I hope that's what happened.

5 **Q.** Yeah, thank you, I think that sounds like you do know the answer. Thank you.

6 **CHAIR:** Donna, I've got no questions for you, I'm going to hand you over to Sandra Alofivae our
7 other Commissioner.

8 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Thank you, Donna, just one question if I may. Donna, that
9 was such a powerful story of healing how he put it right with his family, how he recognised
10 the wrongs that he'd done to others because of things that had happened to him, the abuse,
11 the sexual abuse in particular.

12 Do you know if it was in his heart to want to see the victims, the other boys that he
13 perpetrated against?

14 A. He talked about it, but from our family point of view, from his kids' point of view, he was a
15 little bit frightened to do that. He didn't know what the outcome would be. So he didn't
16 talk about it when we were going to Australia. He thought that he would have to face them
17 sooner or later, and he was prepared to do so.

18 **Q.** Donna, I am sure he's looking down right now and --

19 A. Saying "What the hell?"

20 **Q.** And incredibly proud of your bravery for coming forward. Your courage and your strength
21 is not lost on us. It's not easy, it's difficult, in the context of everything that we've heard in
22 this hearing for Lake Alice and other things that we've also heard in our private sessions,
23 but it's certainly a privilege and an honour to be able to thank you on behalf of the
24 Commission.

25 Everything that you've lived and walked through together, the fact that you just
26 consistently loved him, I think was a powerful motivator for him to want to change. And
27 our Chair said that we'd actually -- we've read the whole document, the booklet and the
28 many other appendices, and the lengths that he went to to try to get justice. But also the
29 lengths he went to to protect you and the family and also, as you've just said to us, he
30 wanted an opportunity to, at some point, to put it right with his own victims if the situation
31 had been different and a prosecution had resulted earlier.

32 So can I just thank you for your courage, and I hope that you and your children
33 will find peace and some form of closure moving forward. Thank you for formally putting
34 your husband's side on the record for us. I know it's been done before with other

1 documents in the High Court, but for the Commission it forms a vital part of our story here.

2 So go well and I hope that you'll accept all of the support that we can offer you at
3 this point as well for both you and the children and for others who may need it and your
4 wider whānau.

5 A. Thank you.

6 **CHAIR:** Thank you very much.

7 **MS JOYCHILD:** One more matter, ma'am. Donna, did you want to show the Commissioners a
8 photo of your husband? **[Photo provided]**.

9 **CHAIR:** How old was he in this photo roughly? He looks a very nice fellow.

10 A. Don't get carried away. He was probably just over 50 at that point.

11 **Q.** Yes, young looking.

12 A. That was later in our marriage.

13 **Q.** Right, a young looking 50, very nice.

14 A. He passed away when he was 58, so...

15 **Q.** Thank you. Clearly a man of the Pacific. We'll give that back to you. That is a very nice
16 note to close on, so we'll call for our kaikarakia.

17 **Hearing closes with waiata and karakia mutunga by Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei**

18 **Hearing adjourned at 4.07 pm to Friday, 18 June 2021 at 9.30 am**

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