

**Witness Name:** Alan Robert Nixon

**Statement No.:** [WITN0716001]

**Exhibits:** [WITN0716002]- [WITN0716022]

**Dated:** 8TH OCTOBER. 2021

## ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO ABUSE IN CARE

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### WITNESS STATEMENT OF ALAN ROBERT NIXON

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I, Alan Robert Nixon, state: -

#### INTRODUCTION

1. My full name is Alan Robert Nixon. I was born in Blenheim on **GRO-B** 1961. I identify as New Zealand Caucasian.
2. My mother's name is **GRO-B** she is Welsh. My father's name was **GRO-B** **GRO-B**. He died in 2000. He was Scottish.
3. I am the middle child of three sons. My older brother is **GRO-B** born on **GRO-B** **GRO-B** and my younger brother is **GRO-B** born on **GRO-B**. I am not sure if my brothers were in Social Welfare care like I was – **GRO-B** might have been. I also have two step-sisters on my father's side, from after my parents divorced.

4. My father worked as a chef on ships and was away at sea most of the time. When he was home he drank a lot, but he was not violent.
5. Before I was in care, I grew up in Blenheim. My mother had trouble controlling me and keeping me at home. I wandered around a lot, broke into the neighbouring houses and cars and took things.
6. My Child Welfare/Department of Social Welfare file shows that I was placed under preventive supervision by Child Welfare in January 1966. I had apparently entered a property with another boy and we took a number of items.
7. In June 1966, when I was four years old, my mother reported to the police that I had been missing for over 4 hours. The police found me at Blenheim Railway Station. According to my records, I had a bottle of beer under each arm, from which I had been drinking, a tin of tobacco, and a number of other items that I had taken from cars. As a result, I was taken on warrant by the police and put in a foster home. [WITN0716002]

#### **GRO-B FOSTER HOME**

8. I stayed at this foster home, with Mr and Mrs [GRO-B], on and off over two years.
9. I remember wetting the bed here, which I did until I was about 17. I wet my bed so much as a child because I was too afraid to get out of it and go anywhere, in case I got beaten.
10. Because of my bed wetting, Mr and Mrs [GRO-B] used to only give me one glass of water with each meal – which was sometimes only a piece of bread with butter and jam - and that was all I was allowed for the day. The taps were turned off and I had to get water from the toilet when I was thirsty. When I did that, Mr [GRO-B] would often be waiting outside and would then cuff me across the ear. Apparently there is a record of a Child Welfare Officer telling Mrs [GRO-B] that a good box in the ear would do me the world of good.

11. During my time at the **GRO-B** foster home, I was sent to Braemar Hospital Short Stay Unit, where I lived for a month over Christmas 1966. I was five years old and they heavily drugged me up on Phenobarbitone, Valium and Tofrinal, which made me constantly tired. I believe that the reasons they gave for this treatment was because I had the same symptoms as people suffering from schizophrenia and because I wet the bed. I was addicted to Valium for decades after this admission to Braemar.
  
12. Child Welfare thought that my disturbed behaviour was due to my mother's "ineffectiveness" and my father's total lack of interest in me, which was demonstrated by the "immense affection which he displays for almost any older male." Similar comments were made by others, including a Braemar Hospital psychiatrist, and a psychologist who noted that I was particularly excited by male authority figures such as policemen, traffic officers and Air Force men.  
**[WITN0716003 and WITN0716004]**
  
13. On 24 January 1967, I became a State Ward, which continued until 19 June 1978. My social worker took me back to the **GRO-B** foster home, even though I screamed and cried and told her I did not want to go back there.
  
14. In about September 1968, I was returned back home to my mother because she wanted me back, and she thought she would be able to cope with me better than before. However, before long I was running away and taking things from people's houses again, so I was only there for a few months.

#### **ADMISSION TO MIRAMAR GIRLS HOME ['MIRAMAR']**

15. On 18 December 1968, I was placed at the Miramar Girls' Home, where I lived until 13 June 1969. I believe I was too young to be sent to a Boys' Home. I had just turned seven years old and I was the only boy there, which was confusing, traumatic and distressing.

16. I remember that there was not much in the way of boys' clothing at Miramar Girls' Home, so I was made to wear girls' clothing, like girls' underwear and jumpers. The matron would also make me wear girls' togs when we went swimming at Freyberg Swimming Pool. I would make myself sick so that I would not have to go to the pool.
17. While I was at Miramar, several much older, very disturbed girls, who I think were about 17 or 18, made me have sex with them. These girls would also grab my hand and force me to masturbate them.
18. The Principal of Miramar, Mr Ryan, wrote a memorandum dated 21 January 1969 to Child Welfare Head Office. Mr Ryan wrote that I was not having a good time at Miramar and that my problems stemmed from the lack of a good foster father. Mr Ryan said that the best thing would be for me to go to Epuni Boys' Home "immediately". I was left at the Girls' Home for nearly five more months after this. **[WITN0716005]**
19. In a report in February 1969, Mr Ryan repeated his recommendation that I was not appropriately placed in Miramar. In the same report, the matron's assistant recorded: "Alan wants greatly to be loved by adults. He will greet any stranger who passes him, particularly if it is a man. He would easily be led off by any stranger." The report noted that I badly needed a fatherly image, one who would be firm, but at the same time very loving. **[WITN0716006]**
20. Yet again, in March 1969 Mr Ryan repeated his concerns and said that my need for a new placement was now urgent. Mr Ryan noted that while my Child Welfare Officer had recognised on admission to Miramar that I needed a stable male role model, I had still been allowed to remain in "this institution for disturbed girls with an almost solely female staff."

## **ADMISSION TO MASTERTON FAMILY HOME**

21. On 13 June 1969, aged 7, I was moved to the Masterton Family Home, where I lived for nearly four months.
22. By this time, my behaviour was becoming exceptionally disturbed, including violence towards animals, destruction of property, soiling and wetting myself, indecently exposing myself in class and compulsively eating. I was given Valium four times a day, to control my behaviour. It was felt that I was in need of specialist treatment as well as special education, and that I could not receive this in a foster or family home setting.

## **ADMISSIONS TO EPUNI BOYS' HOME ['EPUNI']**

23. I was then placed at Epuni Boys' Home, for the first time, on 9 October 1969, aged seven. I was there for about seven months. I am aware from my records that on admission, I was 4 feet and 2 inches tall, and 5 stone 1 pound (about 32 kilograms).
24. When I arrived at Epuni Boys' Home, I was given an initiation beating by some of the other boys. This involved having a blanket thrown over me, so I am not sure how many other boys were involved or who they were. Once I had the blanket over me, I was punched in the head a couple of times. The other boys would give me stompings like this a lot during my placements at Epuni.
25. I was bullied and stood over by other boys at Epuni for being a wimp during this admission, and also when I was older, during my short term placements there in 1975 and 1976. My records show that staff knew I was being bullied a lot at Epuni during this admission. I was still wetting the bed and was being called names such as "baby wetter", "cry baby" and "sissy" by other boys, and also by some staff members, including Mr Bartle.

26. Staff made me fight other boys in the gym, we all had to fight. The staff would often put the stronger boys against the weaker boys on purpose.
27. One day in the gym, I had to climb up the rope. I had quite a strong fear of heights so I was going slowly. A male Pakeha staff member threw a medicine ball at my stomach in order to hurry me up.
28. My mother came and visited me at Epuni sometimes, but I felt rejected by my family as I had been sent away. Because of this and the way I was being treated at Epuni, I started running away. When I was brought back, I would be put into the secure unit.
29. The secure unit was made up of about 6 or 7 rooms. Each room was a cell and had a bed, concrete block walls and holes in the window. There was a toilet in there. I would be put in there for spells of several days at a time, maybe a whole week.
30. I was hit over the ear and punched in the stomach by staff members while I was in the secure unit. Mr Bartle was one of them. He liked his power, he had the attitude of "I'm in charge here. How dare you run away on my shift?"
31. Apart from the violence, there are some things that all the Boys Homes I went to had in common: a culture of 'not narking'.
32. Also, the education I got in all of those homes was poor. The main thing we learned was how to commit crimes better, like theft and burglary. Staff didn't care if we all talked about these things, they didn't teach us why we shouldn't commit crimes, or any life skills like that.
33. In February 1970, a psychologist reported that I really needed to be placed in a special school like Marylands and I was unsuited to Epuni Boys' Home. The psychologist wrote that I needed a placement that would offer long-term stability and that, because of my below-average intelligence and specific learning

disabilities, my educational needs would more appropriately be met in a special class for backward children.

### **ADMISSION TO MARYLANDS SCHOOL ['MARYLANDS']**

34. I was placed at Marylands School, on Nash Road in Christchurch, on 23 May 1970. I was eight years old. I lived there until 19 July 1976, when I was aged 14.
35. I remember that Marylands was a school for special needs children. It taught children from about 6 years old onwards. Many students would stay there up until the age of 16. It was run by the St John of God Catholic Brothers from Australia. My understanding was that I was put there because I was a State Ward and they had nowhere else to put me, because I was wandering away from places and I think I had ADHD or something like that. I was still taking the medication that I had been prescribed earlier.
36. Apparently, Child Welfare did not bother to ask my parents about putting me in Marylands.
37. The education I received at Marylands was basic. I was not taught very much there at all.
38. I played soccer (goalie) and was on a swimming team while I was at Marylands School, those are good memories for me. I was a very talented swimmer and I being was coached by seven time Olympic world champion Mark Spitz. I was hoping to swim in the 1974 Commonwealth Games, which were held in Christchurch. However this never happened because I was too young and because before long, I started running away from Marylands due to the sexual abuse.

39. Marylands was set out in different coloured sections. There was the Red Section for 6-9 year old boys, the Green Section for 10-12 year old boys, the Brown Section for 12-13 year old boys and the Purple Section for boys from the age of 14. There was also the Yellow Section on the other side of the Purple Section. This was for boys with really special needs and they were taught in a different part of the school.
40. Marylands was run by Brother Moloney, who was the Prior. Each of the sections was run by one Brother each. When I arrived at Marylands, I was put into the Red Section. This section, at that time, was run by Brother Celcius Griffin. A few months after I arrived, another Brother moved in and ran Red Section. His name was Brother Bernard McGrath.
41. When I was about 10 years old, I moved to the Green Section, which was run by Brother Sebastian Locke, an older man with glasses. I then moved to the Brown Section when I was about 12 years old, it was run by Brother Raymond Garchow, whose sister was a nun working at another institution. When I was 14 years old, I moved on to the Purple Section, which was run by Brother Donnellan.

### ***Sexual abuse***

42. Brother Bernard McGrath would come into the dormitory in the Red Section at night. He would come into the rooms and talk to a few boys, then he would lead one of them to his room. His room was at the end of the corridor. Most nights he took away a boy called **GRO-B**, who was about a year younger than me.
43. There was another boy called **GRO-B** that Brother Bernard McGrath would also take into his room. I always knew that when I came out of his room, another boy like **GRO-B** or Steven Long would be taken in. I knew exactly what was going to happen to them, because of what he did to me in his room.
44. I was 8 or 9 years old and in the Red Section when I was first sexually abused at Marylands. I remember waking up one night with a hand going into my pants,



it was Brother Bernard McGrath. He told me to follow him to his room and I did. When we were in his room, he told me to sit on the bed. He went into the bathroom and when he came out, he was naked. I looked at him and I was so scared that I started crying. Because it was the first time Brother McGrath had taken me to his room, I did not know what was going to happen. He sat on the bed next to me and started playing with me. I was still crying at that time.

45. He then told me to lie down on the bed and he was standing up in front of me. I was facing towards him and he had his penis in my mouth. At that time, I was even more scared, I was crying and did not know what to do. He made me get undressed and once I was naked, I lay down on the bed. He still had his penis in my mouth and I can remember him telling me to "suck, suck, suck". I also remember him saying to me "all young fellas like you deserve a good pounding". I remember these words well.
46. At some point, I fell asleep in Brother McGrath's room and I can remember waking up with a really sharp pain around my bottom. I did not know what it was, but I felt him close to me. I was in such pain and all I can remember is him moving and moving against me. He said to me "it will be over soon". By that stage, I was yelling so loud that he actually had to put his hand over my mouth and nose, so that I would not yell out so much. When it was over, I fell asleep in his room again. When I woke up in the morning, I was in my own bed.
47. This sexual abuse from Brother McGrath happened on a number of occasions. On some nights, I would be facing the wall towards the bathroom. He was always behind me and not in front, unless he was making me suck his penis. Most of the time though, he was behind me. I recall finding a bit of blood on my bottom, but I did not realise where it had come from. After an episode in Brother McGrath's room, I would be sore for about a month. I would be really slow doing things and was unable to run or go to swimming practice. I told no-one about the abuse because I was too scared and I had nowhere else to go.

48. I did not want to go back to the dormitory at night times, because I knew what would happen to me. By the time I got used to what was happening to me, I would sometimes just let it happen, but I always cried and was always in pain. I was always too scared to say no, because I was frightened and upset.
49. Brother McGrath also used to abuse me in the classroom, where he was my teacher for a period. Sometimes when I used to go out to the toilet, he would be wandering around out the back. If I tried to hide somewhere, he would follow me. Most times he would catch me and then he would grab my hand and stick it in his pants. He would tell me to play with his penis. He would never penetrate me at these times. He would just say, "play with me" and "you deserve a good pounding".
50. Most of the time, Brother McGrath would target me at school and in the small chapel. On one occasion, he targeted me in the Brothers' Chapel, where they would say their prayers in the mornings. He asked me what I was doing there and then he came up to me and touched me. He touched my bottom and my genitals.
51. I used to be an altar boy a Marylands and I did the readings on Sundays. I would practice my readings in a room in the chapel. Brother McGrath would come in and take me into the area in the chapel where the Father got dressed and where the uniforms were kept. He would pull down his pants and tell me to suck his penis. I was always crying, but I began to get used to it.
52. One night, I just could not take it any more, so I ran away. The Brothers found me and took me back.
53. I remember that once we had to go and get medical treatment. I told them that I was unable to do a 'number two' and I could feel what felt like little round ball bearings around my anus. I did not think much of it at the time and the nurse working there thought that I might have just "squeezed too hard." Brother

Raymond Garchow gave me some cream to put around my anus, and that was the only time that I got medical treatment for it.

54. As I got older, the abuse from Brother McGrath happened less often. Every now and then though, he would come up to me and pinch my bottom. He would sort of smile at me and I just knew that he was targeting the new boys.
55. Prior Moloney was not quite as bad to me as Brother Bernard McGrath. Once he called me into his office. I did not think anything of it at the time. When I went in, he was sitting down and reading something. All I can remember was a hand touching my testicles. I had my pants on and I tried to back away, but Prior Moloney said to me "you like that, you like that, don't you". This happened to me a few times. He never made me take my pants off and he did not make me suck his penis, he just always touched me like that. Sometimes I said no and he would give me a backhander or a beating that was so bad, I would end up on the floor.
56. Prior Moloney also humiliated me in front of the other boys, for instance during assembly time. He would bash me with a hearth brush and pick on me for things that I did not do. I think he picked on me because I would not let him touch me as much as he wanted to.
57. The second time I ran away from Marylands, I took a blanket off another boy's bed in the Yellow Section. I hid in the swimming pool area, but I woke up when I heard the grille to the swimming pool opening. A torch shone on me. I had nowhere to run. Prior Moloney grabbed me. The cover was over the pool, but he managed to shove my head into the water. He held it under the water for what seemed to be a very long time to me. I think this incident is why, for so many years later, I had recurring nightmares of drowning myself on a beach.
58. When he pulled my head out of the water, I stood up and he then punched me in the stomach. He said things to me like "you deserve what you get, you are nothing but a nuisance"; "you get me up at this time of day and you steal

somebody else's blanket"; and "get back to your room, I will deal to you tomorrow morning". He kicked me up the bottom with his hard boots and I went back to my room, sobbing. When I woke up the next morning, I got another beating from Prior Moloney.

59. When I was in Purple Section, I used to sit in the TV room a lot. Brother Donnellan had a favourite chair that I sat in, without knowing. One night when he came in to watch the news, he saw me sitting in his chair. I tried to walk away, but he grabbed me and sat me on his lap. He then put one hand over my shoulder and I felt a movement of something hard in his pants, going up towards my bottom. He never took it out of his pants though. When I felt it, I begged "no more, no more" in my mind, but did not yell out. He put his hand on my legs and slowly moved it into my pants and touched me.
60. He was playing with my penis with one hand and had his other hand around my neck. He rubbed this hand up and down my neck, around my face and around my nose. He just went around and around in circles with his fingers around my mouth. I tried to get off his knee by saying that I needed to go to the toilet, but he just said that I could hang on a little bit longer and to wait until the news was finished.
61. At one stage, I had a single room in the Yellow Section next to Brother Donnellan's room. Over a period of about 8 months, I had to go to his room often. I would go in after **GRO-B** had come out. **GRO-B** was a handicapped boy and Brother Donnellan would do a lot of things to him. He would finish with **GRO-B** around 10pm at night and I would be waiting by his door. I knew to turn up then, because when I did not, Brother Donnellan gave me a severe beating. I did not want a beating and I feared for my safety, so that was why I nearly always turned up.
62. When I would go into his room, Brother Donnellan would be naked on his bed. I knew what he wanted from me, so I would strip my clothes off as well. Again, I knew that if I did not, I would get a beating from him. Most nights, I would have

tears running down my face. He would tell me to come to the bed and he would hold me tight underneath the covers. We would be facing each other and I could feel his penis touching my penis. I would then have to turn around and he would penetrate me. I was always sore and in pain. I cannot ever recall whether he ejaculated in me, but there were always wet patches in the middle of the bed. Once he finished with me, I would get dressed and go back to my bedroom. I did not tell anyone because I was so scared.

63. I did not directly see any Brothers sexually abuse other boys, but I knew that some of the other boys were being abused. As I have said, I saw them being taken away and knew what was happening to them, because I had been abused when I was taken away.
64. I could not wait for the holidays and long weekends, because I would get to go home for a few weeks. Sometimes, I would be put in Epuni for a 'holiday' instead. According to my records, while I wet the bed at Marylands, I stopped doing this temporarily when I was placed elsewhere.
65. I know from my records that my Wellington social worker, Mrs **GRO-B** sometimes commented on the poor standard of clothing that I was being sent home in from Marylands. I saw her briefly during my holidays, and when they were over she would drop me at Wellington airport to fly down to Christchurch.
66. I would often tell Mrs **GRO-B** that I did not want to be at Marylands and that I wanted to run away. Once, she recorded me telling her that the Brothers were mean to me at and that they tore up my letters, but she just told me to tell my Christchurch social worker about it and sent me back down to Marylands.  
**[WITN0716007]**
67. I do not remember seeing a Christchurch social worker, or any social workers, at Marylands the whole time that I was there, although according to my records I had one visit me a few times in mid 1976. I think my father came down to visit me there once or twice, and my parents sent the occasional letter to me.

68. My parents kept trying to get me returned home from Marylands. On 16 August 1972, my father told social workers that he wanted me removed from Marylands because it was not a suitable placement owing to the "retardation" of the other boys there. My father also pointed out that I was not a Roman Catholic. He raised these issues again a few months later, and said he was going to go to Court to get me back, but that did not end up happening.
69. In November 1972, my mother is recorded as having "firmly advised" Mrs **GRO-B** from Child Welfare that both parents wanted me home. Child Welfare told my parents, and me, that I would be allowed to leave at the end of the year. Prior Moloney persuaded Child Welfare that I should stay at Marylands to reinforce the gains I had made. Child Welfare then convinced my mother that I should stay at Marylands. According to my records, my father was "extremely angry, in fact furious" when he found out about the "change of plans" in January 1973.
70. I was very confused when Mrs **GRO-B** told me in early 1973 they Child Welfare had changed their mind and I was staying. I was so upset that I took her purse without her noticing. By the time I got to Marylands, they knew I had taken it and they asked me what I had done with it. Prior Moloney gave me a beating for taking it. He used to tell me that my future was behind bars.
71. I ran away from Marylands quite a few times. Once, I made it to Kaikoura before the police caught me, on 1 July 1976. I remember telling the police why I had taken off and they transferred me back to Christchurch Police Station. I then told the sergeant there what had happened, why I ran away, why I wanted to leave Marylands and all about the abuse and the beatings that I was receiving. The sergeant took notes when I was at the Police Station in the holding rooms. He was writing things down on a piece of paper while he was talking to me. I am almost certain that I mentioned the sexual abuse as well as the beatings, because the sergeant called me a liar, they thought I was just being smart. I think that may have been partly because I gave him a fake name, because I

was so afraid of being sent back to Marylands. They worked it out though. I remember that the sergeant took me back to Marylands and told Prior Moloney that if he laid one more hand on me, he would charge him.

72. Nothing was followed up after I was taken back to Marylands, and I have seen in my records that the police simply recorded that I was “a liar, of extraordinary capabilities. It does not matter how much pressure [is] brought to bear on him, he won’t change story.” No one would believe that the Brothers would do something like that, and nobody would believe children like us. **[WITN0716008 and WITN0716009]**
73. Although I kept getting taken back to Marylands every time I ran away, the Brothers eventually got sick of me running away so much and told Social Welfare to take me away. According to my records, there had also been concerns raised by a Reverend Richards about my being punished excessively at Marylands, although a copy of his concerns was not kept on my Social Welfare file. In an internal memorandum, Social Welfare dismissed those reports as well, calling me “manipulative” and “an expert liar”, and expressing confidence in the Brothers, even though Social Welfare had previously received “exaggerated” criticism of their treatment of boys. **[WITN0716010]**

#### **ADMISSION TO STANMORE ROAD BOYS’ HOME (‘STANMORE ROAD’)**

74. On 19 July 1976, aged 14, I was admitted to Stanmore Road Boys’ Home in Christchurch. This was originally meant to be a holiday placement from Marylands, but I never went back to Marylands because they were sick of my absconding, as I have said.
75. I remember being really angry when I was at Stanmore, because nothing was done about what I had disclosed had happened to me in Marylands. Once I left Marylands, I did not say anything more about the abuse I had suffered there,

because I knew that I would not be believed. No one listened before, so I did not trust anyone.

76. I ran away from Stanmore Road as well, because I was afraid of returning to Marylands. When I was returned to Stanmore Road, I was locked up in the Secure Unit, which was like a jail cell, as a punishment for running away. The showers in secure were always really cold, even though there was hot water at Stanmore. It was terrible having cold showers, when it was already so cold down in Christchurch in winter.
77. Staff members at Stanmore Road like Mr **GRO-B** would forcefully punch me in the ribs as a punishment for misbehaving. After this, they would tell me that I was a "cry baby" and a "poofter" and needed to take the beatings "like a man".
78. Just like I got when I was at Epuni, I was given an initiation beating by other boys at Stanmore Road. Other boys came into my room after dark and punched and kicked me.

## **READMISSION TO EPUNI**

79. In September 1976, I was moved back to Epuni for a month, because Stanmore Road was struggling to manage so many boys. It was noted on my arrival that I had had 16 different placements since I was 4 ½.
80. I was 15 during this admission. This time, staff at Epuni gave me cigarettes, which I started smoking there. I became addicted to nicotine after this.
81. During this admission, I was sexually assaulted by a nightwatchman who I believe was named Mr Ngatai. He used to sit on my bed and play with my private parts. It happened three or four times. A couple of the other boys told me that they had been sexually abused by him too.



82. Because of this sexual abuse, I kept running away. I would be put in the secure unit when I was returned, but by then I was sort of used to being locked up. I think I had become institutionalised by that point.

### **ADMISSION TO KOHITERE TRAINING CENTRE ('KOHITERE')**

83. On 1 October 1976, aged 14, I was admitted to Kohitere, where I lived until 28 April 1977.
84. The day I arrived at Kohitere, I was once again covered by an old blanket and "stomped on" by the other boys.
85. I hated being trapped, so I kept running away. Once again, I ended up being put in the secure unit a lot, as punishment for absconding. It was cold with prison-like cells, and the showers were cold like they were at Stanmore.
86. While I was in the secure unit, I was made to do excessive physical training. I found it hard to keep up and staff members made everybody else had to do extra exercise as a result. The staff would make it obvious to other boys that I was the one who had been slowing the group down, so the other boys would beat me up.
87. I was made to fight with older boys at Kohitere, even though I was small. Staff didn't care when they saw that I had bruises.
88. I had to do a lot of work at Kohitere, such as sweeping the yards, cleaning the toilets, working in the kitchen and doing forestry. I remember being picked on for being slow at things like that, and for not fitting in.
89. In a holiday report dated 22 February 1977 Stella Sutton noted, "Mrs Nixon said that Alan did not want to return to Kohitere because some boys were going to "beat him up". I assured Mrs Nixon that the staff at Kohitere took every

precaution against this type of behaviour, however it may be possible that Alan was worried about this.”

90. In addition to all of the above, drugs and alcohol were easily available at Kohitere. Staff just turned a blind eye to that as well. We were able to buy cigarettes from the canteen too.

### **ADMISSION TO LAKE ALICE HOSPITAL ('LAKE ALICE')**

91. Because of all my absconding, while I was still a State Ward and only 16 years' old, I was sent to Lake Alice from Kohitere on 28 April 1977 for observation.
92. My parents weren't told that I was sent to Lake Alice. My mother kept writing to me at Kohitere.
93. When I first arrived at Lake Alice, I was taken to an old wooden house in the Adolescent Ward and thrown on a bed. I had a black thing put in my mouth. I was given two jolts of electro-convulsive treatment (ECT) without any sort of muscle relaxant or anaesthetic, as punishment for not telling the Lake Alice staff the reasons why I kept running away. I believe it was criminally negligent for them to have given me ECT when I had a suspected diagnosis of epilepsy.
94. I was put in a ward with some seriously crazy adults for the first five days, before they put me in a rehabilitation ward.
95. I was also given a lot of Chlorpromazine at Lake Alice. I hated this because it made my legs really unstable. When I refused to take it, or when I misbehaved, they injected me in the bottom. I continued to be prescribed Phenobarbitone and Valium, as well as and epilepsy medication.
96. They let me smoke cigarettes at Lake Alice.

97. I was sent back to Kohitere after a month, and then sent home to my mother two weeks after that.

### **INVERCARGILL BORSTAL**

98. Ten days later, in July 1977, I was sent to Invercargill borstal. I was still 16 years' old. This place was just the same as the Boys Homes.
99. Even though I was still a State Ward, Social Welfare just left me in borstal, without any monitoring. They had no idea what to do with me and they just waited until I was too old to be their problem. [WITN0716011]
100. I was sent back to my mother's house on probation in April 1978 and I was discharged from being a State Ward a few months later.

### **AFTER CARE**

101. I was back in borstal in November 1978, aged 17.
102. The next 30 years of my life was spent going in and out of borstal, prison, psychiatric hospitals and rehabilitation centres.

### **EFFECTS OF TIME IN CARE**

103. I found going in and out of prison for so many years extremely difficult and frustrating, but I never lasted very long in the community. I became institutionalised because almost my entire life had been spent in institutional care. Before 2007, the longest time I had spent out of prison was for 12 months, when I went on the Rotoroa Island programme in 2000. I have not been back to prison since July 2007.

104. When I was in prison, I attempted suicide and self-harmed on numerous occasions.
105. As a result of the sexual abuse I experienced, I have suffered from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, an anxiety disorder, impulsive control disorder and depression. As part of this, I can sometimes see the Brothers' faces on walls and I also hear voices.
106. I have been diagnosed with tardive dyskinesia, which I think was caused by the high dosage of Chlorpromazine that I was given at Lake Alice.
107. From about 1980, when I was 19 years old, I started drinking alcohol heavily and taking drugs to try and block out all the memories. I kept doing this until about 2007. Nowadays, I will binge drink on occasion, but I keep it sensible. I also GRO-C on occasion because it helps with my post traumatic stress disorder symptoms, and helps me not want to take revenge on people because of what happened to me.
108. I'm too sensitive and I get uptight and I can sabotage a lot of good things that come to me. I am unable to trust people and have difficulty forming relationships. I am scared of being beaten by people and I love my animals more than humans.
109. My relationship with my family is not good. They cannot cope with the fact that I kept ending up in prison.
110. I don't have a partner or any children. For a long time I wondered if I might be gay, because intimacy is such a big problem for me. I always thought that I was a dirty person and that I was to blame for the abuse.
111. It took me so many years to tell anyone about what had happened to me. I remember seeing something on TV about abuse, but I was too scared to say anything. I felt that I was going to be punished and rejected if I did. In any event,

I never knew who to tell about what had happened. As children, we were seen, but we were never heard or listened to.

## **DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE AND LEGAL PROCEEDINGS**

112. Because of all the abuse I had suffered at Marylands, my offending often involved targeting churches for burglary, vandalism or arson. Anything with a steeple reminded me of Marylands, so I would just lose control and attack it. I have about 400 convictions, the majority of which relate to church buildings.
113. In late 2002, when I was facing criminal charges, my criminal lawyer Paul Gruar noticed that most of my offending was in relation to church buildings. He asked me if I had suffered abuse in a church, and I told him that I had, at Marylands. Even though I just wanted to avoid thinking about it, he encouraged me to talk to someone about what had happened. I finally agreed to address it, because I had realised that my mental health issues were getting out of hand and destroying my life.
114. Paul Gruar put me in touch with the St John of God Order ("the Order") and I was told that the Australian Head of the Order, Brother Peter Burke, wanted to meet with me when he next came to New Zealand. I also started counselling through ACC at around this time.
115. In November 2002, Brother Peter gave me an interim payment of \$1,500. I understand that the Order gave this to everyone who had been in contact with them to complain about Marylands.
116. In March 2003, I met with Brother Peter and Michelle Mulvihill and I talked about the abuse I suffered at Marylands. I felt they believed me, they were both quite helpful and wanted to do things to support me because they could see I had missed out on a lot of things in life. I think Brother Peter did things right, they way they should have been done, at least at the beginning.

117. Brother Peter wrote me a personalised letter about a week later. He offered me an apology on behalf of the Order and a personal acknowledgment of my suffering. Brother Peter said "I would like to do anything I can to help you recover from what sounds a shocking time as a child." He offered to liaise with those offering a rehabilitation program to help organise a fresh start for me after the program. "This might take the form of having somewhere to live, a carer or case manager whom you can rely on, some counselling, and so on. You would also need some money to be put aside for you in some type of trust so that you can access it wisely..." Brother Peter said that he would like to come back and meet me again, and he enclosed a letter to the Parole Board, which we had discussed when we met. I had about six months of counselling after this, paid for by the Order. **[WITN0716012]**
118. In his letter to the Mt Eden Prison Parole Board, Brother Peter stated: "It may be important for the Parole Board to know that the Brothers named by Alan have been named continuously by many of the 78 victims from the Marylands School that I have personally visited. Also, the description by Alan of where the abuse took place is identical to descriptions I have heard from others: that is, that some of them, including Alan, were abused in a "sacred" site: a church. I understand that Alan has many charges against him in the past for attacking Church premises in a variety of ways. It would be my view, and certainly that of the visiting psychologist, that Alan would have a strong association between sexual abuse and churches and it no doubt acting it out... I have given Alan an undertaking that the Order would like to help him as much as possible to recover. I am prepared to commit resources to this end and to assist Alan in every way possible to begin afresh, now that he has been able to at last disclose to us this dreadful story. I will pay for counselling, case management, accommodation, education and lifestyle needs such as housing and transport: whatever it takes for the rehabilitation of this man." I took this undertaking, this promise, seriously. It was a contract. **[WITN0716013]**
119. In July 2003, the law firm acting for the Order, Saunders Robinson, wrote to my lawyer asking asked him to send copies of any psychiatric or other reports, so

that the Order could consider assessment of any pastoral payment to me. The letter outlined the process currently being used, namely that any reports were considered by the Order's pastoral assessment letter and then forwarded to Sir Rodney Gallen "for his consideration together with the recommendation that our clients will make for a pastoral payment. It is after this process that our clients will then make any appropriate offer to your client by way of a pastoral payment."

**[WITN0716014]**

120. At around this time, a man called Ken Clearwater came into prison and introduced himself to me as a male survivor. He ran an organisation supporting male survivors of sexual abuse, and I went along to regular meetings. Ken was very helpful and a good therapist too, he kept me out of prison. I think he is officially retired now, although he has not stopped all his advocacy for survivors like me. I am still friends with him today. From memory, he was the one who put me in touch with the police back in 2003.
121. In July 2003, I gave a detailed statement to the police about the abuse I suffered at Marylands. In the interview, I named some of the Brothers and other boys that were in photographs the police showed me. I was in some of the photographs too. I drew a map of the school layout and where the incidents of abuse took place.
122. This was the first of several meetings and discussions I would have with the police over the next five years, in relation to Brothers McGrath and Moloney. Their names were Detective Sergeant Earle Borrell and another one whose name was something like John Borlace. The police were really good and stuck with me all the way through.
123. In August 2003, I met with Brother Peter again, along with Paul Gruar and my brother John. Following this meeting, Brother Peter agreed to fund my ongoing counselling, medical, dental, optical and hearing requirements, as well as paying \$2000 towards clothing and funding a psychiatric appointment to assess me for post traumatic stress, with a potential placement at the Ashburn Clinic.

Brother Peter made it clear at this meeting that the psychiatric assessment and any treatment at the Ashburn Clinic would not be taken into account when resolving my claim. **[WITN0716015]**

124. In September 2003, I was seen by Dr Lyndy Mathews for a psychiatric assessment. This was sent to Saunders Robinson by Paul Gruar in October 2003, along with my police statement and various records relating to my offending, so they could formally assess my complaint for pastoral payment in line with the July 2003 letter referred to above. Paul Gruar noted that I had been referred to Ashburn Clinic, a private psychiatric centre in Dunedin, and that Brother Peter had confirmed that the Order would meet the costs of that treatment. **[WITN0716016]**
125. In reply, Saunders Robinson confirmed that the Order would fund my placement at Ashburn Clinic and that, towards the end of that treatment, the Order would be “happy to consider a pastoral payment either in respect of a lump sum payment or ongoing support.” **[WITN0716017]**
126. I started attending Ashburn Clinic in October 2003. While the Order helped to pay for my treatment, when I went to apply for the sickness benefit, WINZ would not approve it due to the money that the Church was paying for my treatment, which WINZ treated as if it was income even though it wasn't coming to me. As a result, I had no allowance for other living costs. Some of my documents suggest that the Order decided to stop being for my treatment at the Ashburn Clinic in about February 2004, but I cannot remember if that is right. Either way, I remember that some of the other patients at the Ashburn Clinic supported me financially for a bit, but I felt really bad about this. I asked to be sent back to prison, but my probation officer wouldn't do that. Because I was so unsupported and uncomfortable, I think I ended up leaving the Ashburn Clinic early, in late February 2004, even though I knew I could not last long in the community.
127. I remember that one day, I turned up for my counselling session and I found out that it was no longer being funded. I don't know when exactly this was, and I am not sure whether it was being funded by the St John of God Order at the time



or by ACC, but I remember finding out that I had to pay for it myself. I couldn't afford to do this so I stopped having counselling as well. I could not get the treatment I needed without support, and Brother Peter had promised to support me so I couldn't understand what happened. I think I stopped hearing from the Order all of a sudden at around the same time, although I do remember Brother Peter saying he would meet me again after Brother McGrath's trial.

128. My mental health started deteriorating. I knew I was going to be asked to give evidence against Brother McGrath, and the stress of that really triggered my anxiety and depression, and I started self-harming and talking about suicide.
129. I remember getting sick and tired of fighting at this point. All my life I've been fighting and sometimes I just want to get down on my hands and knees and just bawl my eyes out. Brother Peter had promised me so much, and actually started to provide it, but then it suddenly got cut off without any warning. I had to fight the Order because Brother McGrath was pleading not guilty in relation to my allegations (and most of the others against him), and Prior Moloney was fighting the extradition from Australia - both of whom were being funded by the Order.
130. I ended up in Christchurch Men's Prison, not long after my discharge from the Ashburn Clinic in early 2004. I applied for more counselling from ACC.
131. In May 2004, at the suggestion of my new ACC counsellor, I requested my Social Welfare records, and Child Youth and Family Service lodged my request with their historic claims team and reviewed my records for a potential claim before they sent them to me. This was the start of a nine year wait for resolution of my Social Welfare claim. I had requested my records because I wanted to get my life back, move on and put this all behind me, but first I had to piece together and come to terms with my early life.
132. After receiving my Social Welfare records, I contacted Sonja Cooper's office in November 2004. I had heard another inmate talking about Ms Cooper's work in seeking to help people with Social Welfare and psychiatric hospital claims. Ms

Cooper also took over my claim against the Order for what happened to me in Marylands.

133. In December 2004, Ms Cooper wrote to Dr David Collins QC to try and arrange a settlement through the Lake Alice Hospital settlement process that he was managing. After about nine months, he wrote back saying that the Ministry of Health had finally sent him my records, but that he could not assist because it did not appear I was in the specific Child and Adolescent Unit of Lake Alice that he was considering.
134. In February 2005, a staff member from Ms Cooper's office interviewed me and I had to talk about all my experiences in detail. I found this interview very, very hard and distressing.
135. At around the same time, in April 2005 a psychiatrist prepared a detailed report for ACC. Dr Dominic Lim diagnosed me with: mixed anxiety disorder with (complex and chronic) Post-traumatic stress disorder; panic disorder; agoraphobia; socio-phobia; obsessive compulsive features; impulse control disorder (not otherwise specified); alcohol and drug misuse disorder (in remission); and possible dyslexia and learning disorder, among other things. Dr Lim recommended that ACC fund my return to the Ashburn Clinic.
136. In September 2005, I was released from prison and returned to Ashburn Hall for treatment, funded by ACC. I remember that Ashburn didn't want me to go ahead with my legal claims and the trials, because of how difficult I was finding them. I was so worried about not being believed that it was interfering with me getting better. However, I was determined to see them through.
137. In March 2006, Brother Bernard McGrath went on trial in the Christchurch High Court. I was one of the witnesses against him, although I had originally pulled out because I didn't think I could handle it, but in the end I agreed to give evidence of what he did to me so that he wouldn't get off. Giving evidence was quite scary at first – I felt like I was being attacked, the defence was telling me

that none of it had happened. I felt like I was being called a liar just like I was when I was a child.

138. I think Brother McGrath faced 15 charges relating to me, some of which were indecent assault and some of which were sodomy. He was acquitted of all the sodomy charges, which I was gutted about, but he was convicted of 22 charges of indecent assault, including those relating to me. I still don't understand why they would believe him capable of committing indecent assault but not sodomy, it's the same kind of thing. It's just another case of the law protecting the perpetrators and not the victims. He was made out to be 'poor old McGrath' and I was ripped to pieces in the witness stand.
139. I read a Victim Impact Statement at Brother McGrath's sentencing. The Judge complemented me on it and on how well I said my piece. Brother McGrath was sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment on 28 April 2006. I think that he was allowed to go back to Australia after his sentence, and they let him keep being a Brother. I was so angry with the New Zealand Government for letting him go back return to Australia. I can't even travel out of the country on holiday because of my criminal record. I think I heard that he ended up facing a lot of charges in Papua New Guinea at some point.
140. After the McGrath trial, in May 2006 I called the Order's 0800 number, because I had heard that Brother Peter was coming to New Zealand in June or July and I wanted to meet with him again now that the trial was over, like he told me he would. I told them that I really needed some money. I was told that they would investigate the possibility of an interim payment and come back to me or my lawyers, but they never did.
141. Brother Peter wrote to my lawyers in July 2006 confirming that he definitely wanted to meet me as soon as possible, and to provide me with any help that I needed, but that was the last I ever heard about that, too. I had heard Brother Peter was unwell, and I know that Brother Timothy took over from him later, in 2007. **[WITN0716018]**

142. In December 2006, Cooper Legal filed my claims in relation to the abuse I suffered in Social Welfare and psychiatric hospital care. I understand that they did not file proceedings against the Church because they felt they would be able to come to a good faith arrangement with the Order where it was not necessary for them to do so to protect my position, and they did not want to interfere with the Order's 'pastoral process' when it resumed.
143. I am aware that between 2006 and 2008, Cooper Legal were in regular discussions with the Order's representatives about setting up a process for resolving my claim and those of several other clients. As part of this, they were prepared to join the Order to my proceedings that had been filed in court against the State. In the end, they did not need to do this as the Order set up a process based on *Towards Healing*.
144. During this time, I became very anxious about how long this was taking, particularly when I thought about all of Brother Peter's promises to me. I was worried that nothing would come out of it, even after Brother McGrath had been convicted. I called Cooper Legal on a regular basis and ask what was happening and what we could do to speed it up.
145. As I mentioned, I got out of prison in July 2007 and I have not been back since. I got sick of being in there.
146. In June 2008, I also gave evidence in Brother Rodger Moloney's trial. He was convicted on seven charges. This was mostly the same as Brother McGrath's trial, although Brother Moloney's lawyer Greg King came out and shook my hand afterwards, telling me that I was one tough cookie and that he had been unable to break me, which was a nice memory for me to leave with. I can't remember how many charges related to me – not as many as with Brother McGrath, but he was found guilty of charges relating to me. Brother Moloney was sentenced to two years and nine months in prison. Like Brother McGrath, he should have got longer.

147. I don't think I could handle being involved in anything like those criminal trials again, with my anxiety. It was very scary and traumatic. It was also extremely difficult for me that the more serious charges of sodomy were not proved.
148. In August 2008, Cooper Legal completed an application for my claim to be considered under the *Towards Healing* process. I had already filled in a form in 2002 asking to be considered under their pastoral process.
149. In August 2008, I was interviewed about Brother McGrath for a television show called 'Beyond the Darklands', which was screened on TV on 25 February 2009. I was on another television show talking about Marylands too, at some point.
150. In late August 2008, particularly after the second trial, I started decompensating. I went bush for a few weeks and did not want to talk to anyone. I was really worried that I would end up reoffending without support and go back to prison.
151. I am aware that because of how I was coping, and because of my role in the two trials, Cooper Legal advised the Order that it should not be necessary for me to meet with their Investigator, which was to be part of the process. They sent the Order a copy of my 2002 police statement and the 2003 psychiatric report from Dr Lyndy Mathews. I remember hoping that they could get the claim settled quickly, so that I could have the first good Christmas of my life.
152. In December 2008, after they met with Brother Timothy and his lawyers, Cooper Legal advised me that the Order had offered to settle my claim for \$80,000, including my legal costs, and an apology.
153. When I heard this offer, I was very upset and felt let down, after waiting since 2002 and being a witness in two criminal trials. I was angry that the St John of God Order had abandoned me for so long and then refused to keep Brother Peter's contractual promises to me, like giving me accommodation, transport, education and rehabilitation. I did not think the offer was anywhere near good enough for the damage the church had caused me. The way I saw it, the abuse

had left me unable to work, effectively on 'sick leave' from the job I should have had. I should have been paid that amount of lost earnings, even at minimum wage. I thought the offer was cruel, especially when I compared it to some of the offers I had heard the media talk about, which didn't take into account technical barriers like the ACC. Everyone else got paid good chunks and I got shafted. I did not get anything like what Brother Peter had promised me – like accommodation, housing and transportation.

154. Even after the bad experience of the two criminal trials, I wanted to take the St John of God Order to court instead of accepting the offer, but my lawyers told me that there were a lot of risks involved with doing that and I could end up getting nothing out of it, and that I probably wouldn't get legal aid for a full trial.
155. Sonja Cooper told me that now that Brother Timothy had replaced Brother Peter, the Order was now being guided much more by their own lawyers, who would have been telling them about the legal issues that these claims could face in court such as the Limitation Act and ACC. I understand they also took into account the \$29,291.46 that they said they had spent on counselling and treatment at the Ashburn Clinic, even though Brother Peter had told me that that wouldn't be part of their considerations.
156. I do not understand why they treated me differently from the people who had contacted the Order just a couple of months earlier than I had done, in 2003. Not only did I have to wait another five or six years before getting any resolution, and I gave evidence against the Brothers in two criminal trials, but I didn't get any of the support Brother Peter had promised me and my settlement was less because they had now decided to take into account technical legal defences as well as the treatment I had been given. They even made me pay my legal costs out of my settlement, even though it was their fault it was so high because they paused the pastoral process.
157. However, I had debts like Court fines to pay, and I needed to buy some furniture for my council flat. I was also tired of fighting, as this had been dragging on for

years and years and wearing me down. I'd been through two trials, the last one being six months earlier. I wanted to enjoy life and was angry that the Order had not stuck to their promises. I was put in a difficult position and I was really upset. After speaking with my lawyers I said I would accept the offer if it was increased so that I would at least get \$70,000 after legal costs were paid.

158. In 2009, nearly seven years after the St John of God Order were contacted about my experiences, I signed a Deed of Release in full and final settlement of my claim for the abuse I suffered in Marylands. I was paid \$70,000 and Cooper Legal received \$12,500 for their fees, and I was given a written apology from Brother Timothy. I had to agree to keeping the terms of the settlement confidential as well, however I understand that the Order has waived confidentiality for the purposes of the Royal Commission. **[WITN0716019]** and **[WITN0716020]**
159. I had lived in institutions for so long, prison was easy for me. When I got out, I did not know how to do things like driving a car, owning a house or paying power bills. I've only ever lived in State houses. I also did not know how to save or budget, and having money all of a sudden when you're out in the community without life skills or anything, money goes really fast. I wish there had been something in place for the settlement money to be set aside for me and given to me when I needed it, because it did not last long. I suddenly gained a lot of so-called friends. Because I didn't want to lose their friendship, I let them take some. They basically took it all and then they all left.
160. After this, Cooper Legal continued to represent me in relation to my psychiatric hospital and Social Welfare claims, which were still filed in Court.
161. In 2012, I accepted a \$4,000 "wellness payment" in relation to my claim for what happened in Braemar Hospital and Lake Alice Hospital, in return for discontinuing that part of my legal claim. I also received a letter of apology and my legal aid costs for this claim. Again, this was a stupid amount of money, especially compared to the Lake Alice Hospital settlements I had read about.

Once again, I felt like I was being taken advantage of. It made me angry after all they had put me through in the hospitals. But I had to take it or leave it, so I took it.

162. In 2012, I met with the MSD Care, Claims and Resolutions Team (CCRT) to discuss my MSD claim. I did not tell my lawyers about this meeting, because Legal Aid had written me a letter saying that I should contact the CCRT myself and try to resolve my claim through them, without my lawyers. I thought that was what I was supposed to do and I did not understand that this could have significantly impacted my filed claim. I brought Ken Clearwater along to this meeting with me.
163. I know that in November 2012, because the Crown had given no indication of when it would make me an offer to settle my Social Welfare claim (which they had filed in court nearly six years earlier), my lawyers wrote a detailed letter to the Crown Law Office on my behalf offering to settle my filed Social Welfare claim for \$60,000, legal costs and an apology. I also know that my lawyers were putting increased pressures on the Crown through the courts to get my DSW claim settled, by asking the court to set up a Judicial Settlement Conference in order to finally get a settlement.
164. In September 2013, the Crown Law Office sent a letter to Cooper Legal, offering to settle my Social Welfare claim for \$40,000, as well as payment of legal aid costs and an apology. The letter details which of my allegations were accepted and some of those which were not. Significantly, the Crown said that it was "unable" to accept my allegations of sexual assault at Epuni by a named staff member and other boys.
165. In the letter, liability for the abuse that I suffered at Marylands was not accepted, although it was conceded that there were periods during my placement there where a social worker did not sufficiently monitor me. It was also accepted that my parents' consent was not obtained prior to my placement at Marylands, and



that DSW did not sufficiently investigate my complaint that the physical punishment at Marylands was excessive.

166. In a letter a few months later, the Crown Law Office clarified that they did accept that I was sexually abused while the social worker was not monitoring me at Marylands, although it appears that they still did not accept any responsibility for the abuse itself. They said that my offer was set at a higher level than for other clients of Cooper Legal, because I had been in care for 12 years. **[WITN0716021]** and **[WITN0716022]**
167. After 12 years in DSW care and nine years fighting the Ministry of Social Development with my lawyers, this offer was like a kick in the head. It was blood money, or chump change. The Ministry basically told me “we’re sorry, but we can’t do anything real for you, get on with your life.”
168. However, I accepted this offer because I did not want to do any more fighting and I did not want to wait any longer. In October 2013, nine years after I first made contact with Cooper Legal, I signed a Deed of Settlement in relation to my filed DSW claim. The Ministry of Social Development gave me \$40,000, paid my legal aid bill, offered to assist with counselling and they sent me a letter of acknowledgement and apology (on 15 October 2013). I agreed to discontinue my court claim in return.
169. Like before, I was up to my eyeballs in debt and the money did not last long. I got robbed twice and assaulted, because people knew I had money. I couldn’t handle it and I ended up having to move out of the city.
170. I am now living about 60km out of Christchurch, with another survivor. We look after each other, for example he drives me if I need to go somewhere. It’s difficult though - I am currently unemployed because I have Parkinson’s Disease, but I can’t get to WINZ very easily. I couldn’t get to counselling either, even if I could afford to pay for it. I’m coping, trying my best to enjoy life, although I still struggle with PTSD symptoms. It’s still hard. If I had the accommodation, transport and

counselling support that the St John of God Order had promised me, life would be so much better.

171. I am making this statement so that the truth comes out, fully this time. Some of the boys from Marylands couldn't handle the abuse and they ended up killing themselves. It is important that people know what really happened. They need to stop hiding behind saying that kids back then were just liars. Back then, we just got labelled as liars because they didn't believe kids could get abused. They need to know that kids in Marylands, or any other religious or state institution, can get abused. They are not just making up stories.
172. I want those in authority to own up to their wrongdoing – particularly the St John of God Order but also the Ministry of Social Development. They need to be more transparent and take care of the people who were hurt, rather than just protecting their own people. They need to take responsibility for what their people did – they can't just brush it under the carpet any more.

### Statement of Truth

This statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and was made by me knowing that it may be used as evidence by the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care.

Signed:

**GRO-C**

Dated:

8TH October 2021

### **Annex B**

Consent to use my statement

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