

**ABUSE IN CARE ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY
FOSTER CARE 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'imua Sandra Alofivae
Dr Anaru Erueti

Counsel: Mr Simon Mount QC, Ms Kerryn Beaton QC, Dr Allan Cooke and Ms Aroha Fletcher for the Royal Commission
Ms Rachael Schmidt-McCleave, Ms Julia White and Mr Max Clarke-Parker for the Crown

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

Date: 15 June 2022

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

INDEX**MS ED**

Questioning by Dr Cooke	193
Questioning by Commissioners	238

STEPHEN PAUL SHAW

Questioning by Ms Fletcher	241
Questioning by Commissioners	271

**ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR EMILY KEDDELL
AND DR IAN HYSLOP**

Questioning by Dr Cooke and Commissioners	272
---	-----

10 **Adjournment from 11.43 am to 12 pm**

11 **CHAIR:** Hello.

12 A. Hello.

13 **Q.** I'm over here?

14 A. Sorry, I remember you.

15 **Q.** You remember me?

16 A. Yes, I do.

17 **Q.** Hello, nice to see you again?

18 A. Nice to see you again.

19 **Q.** This is your wife?

20 A. My partner.

21 **Q.** Hello, what's your name?

22 A. GRO-B

23 **CHAIR:** Thank you for coming and being supportive. So, Stephen, can I just ask you before we
24 start for you to take the affirmation?

25 A. Yes.

26 **Q.** That means to promise to tell the truth.

27 A. Yes, I promise to tell the truth.

28 **Q.** I'll just put it in formal words, and you can agree if you wish.

29 **STEPHEN PAUL SHAW (Affirmed)**

30 **QUESTIONING BY DR COOKE:** Your name is Stephen Shaw?

31 A. Correct.

32 **Q.** You were born in 1954 and in Wellington?

33 A. Yes.

34 **Q.** How old are you now?

- 1 A. I'm 68.
- 2 Q. You've got your statement in front of you?
- 3 A. Yes, I have.
- 4 Q. And your statement was prepared by you using a mixture of your memory, recollections
5 and also from the file that you have obtained?
- 6 A. Right, that's true.
- 7 Q. I'm going to ask you some, - take you through that and ask you some questions. If you want
8 to break at any time just let us know and we'll do that. You'll- see over on - straight over
9 there we have a signer, so we have to make sure that we just speak nice and steadily and not
10 too fast-.
- 11 A. Okay, thank you.
- 12 Q. Just remember to speak into the microphone. So, the statement you've made is going to tell
13 us about your time in State care between 1955 and 1972?
- 14 A. Correct.
- 15 Q. And it's going to talk -- you're going to talk about the effects that that's had on you after
16 leaving State care, isn't it?
- 17 A. Yes.
- 18 Q. And we know that -- sorry, before I go on, you'll see me turn the page from time to time,
19 but I'll probably tell you when I'm going to turn the page as well so that we're all in
20 synchronised state.
- 21 A. Okay.
- 22 Q. We know that you've told us that your parents were living in Miramar when you were
23 born?
- 24 A. Correct.
- 25 Q. How many siblings do you have?
- 26 A. I had six siblings.
- 27 Q. And how many -- I know you were taken in care, how many of your siblings were taken
28 into the care of the State?
- 29 A. At the time only one - two of us, my sister, and myself.
- 30 Q. Your sister and you, okay. And you said at the time, so that tells us that some others got
31 taken in care at a later date?
- 32 A. Yes, at a later date.
- 33 Q. You tell us down there that your dad was pretty violent and that he had mental health issues
34 and epilepsy?

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. When I pause there, can you just generally say, don't nod but say "yeah, that's right", or "no
3 you've got it wrong" --
- 4 A. Yeah, no, that's right.
- 5 Q. -- as the case may be, that would be great. We're told that in fact during one episode when
6 you were very small, that he cut your throat with a razor?
- 7 A. Yes.
- 8 Q. And that you've still got the scar today?
- 9 A. Yes.
- 10 Q. And when we talked about you and a sibling going into care at the same time, that was your
11 sister, wasn't it?
- 12 A. Yes, my sister.
- 13 Q. If you look at paragraph 7, you'll see that he refers to - sorry, you refer to a sibling having
14 her head bashed against a brick wall when she was 4 months old, that's your sister - isn't it?
- 15 A. Yes, correct.
- 16 Q. And you go on to say that this eventually led her to be led into mental health institutions
17 later in life?
- 18 A. Yes, that's correct.
- 19 Q. And you're going to tell us, aren't you, that that included Lake Alice?
- 20 A. Yes.
- 21 Q. And some of her experiences were the same as those that this Commission's heard about
22 through its Lake Alice inquiry?
- 23 A. Correct, I know that she was -- had electronic, electro whatever it was on a daily basis there
24 for years, for months. I can't say years, but for months.
- 25 Q. And you tell us that your dad, although he hurt you and bashed your sister in such a serious
26 way, that he was never charged?
- 27 A. No, he was never charged.
- 28 Q. And your mum sadly was -- you say that she was too scared to speak out?
- 29 A. Correct.
- 30 Q. And that she lived a life of fear?
- 31 A. Yes, she did.
- 32 Q. Is that something that you recall yourself, that that was the way in which she lived, or was
33 that something that you got from the files?

- 1 A. No, that's -- I saw my mother being violently held down on the ground by my father when I
2 was 14 years old, twice I had to drag him off her.
- 3 Q. You were 14?
- 4 A. Yes, at the time.
- 5 Q. Just on the cusp, heading into adolescence?
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. The impact on you as a young adolescent seeing that occurring between your parents would
8 have had its, again, impact on you?
- 9 A. Yes, definitely did.
- 10 Q. We're going to talk about now going into care. And we know that the family moved, and
11 you ended up in Napier?
- 12 A. Correct.
- 13 Q. And he appears to have thrown his employer a farmer into the river, and as a result of that
14 he got the sack?
- 15 A. Yes, that's correct.
- 16 Q. I suppose anyone thrown into the Tukituki or one of the rivers around there must have
17 been --
- 18 A. It was the Esk River.
- 19 Q. And your family got kicked out of where you were living?
- 20 A. Yes.
- 21 Q. And it tells us that you were very malnourished at the time?
- 22 A. According to the records that I read, yes, I was very sickly and malnourished at the time.
- 23 Q. And your grandmother came in at that time and took your -- took one of your siblings?
- 24 A. Yes.
- 25 Q. Not you?
- 26 A. No, there was only three of us at the time, so she took one.
- 27 Q. So, you and your sister were formally taken in care in May 1955?
- 28 A. Correct.
- 29 Q. You were then 16 months old?
- 30 A. Yes.
- 31 Q. And the order apparently provided for both of you to go into State care together?
- 32 A. Correct.
- 33 Q. And just, GRO-B?
- 34 A. About GRO-B than me.

- 1 **Q.** [GRO-B] okay, because you say that you were together until she was about 7 years
2 old and then she went into mental health institutions?
- 3 **A.** Yes, I think I [GRO-B] when she went in.
- 4 **Q.** Okay. And we know that there's a document on your file which is referred to in paragraph
5 12 where Social Welfare wrote to State advances saying it would be unlikely that you
6 would be returned to your parents for some considerable time?
- 7 **A.** Correct.
- 8 **Q.** And you've seen that statement?
- 9 **A.** Yes, I've seen that statement, and I've read that statement.
- 10 **Q.** Do you have any thoughts that you would want to tell the Commission about seeing that
11 statement?
- 12 **A.** Well, when I saw it in my later life, I was just flabbergasted that they would do this and not
13 think about my family or my mother or my -- there was a letter written by my grandmother
14 to the Department of Child Welfare begging them to send me home.
- 15 **Q.** But the decision was made?
- 16 **A.** Yes, the decision was made.
- 17 **Q.** And we, you know, I've gone over the page now, so I'm on page 3 of your statement, that
18 there was foster homes somewhere in Napier and then you went to Dannevirke. Just before
19 we get on to Dannevirke, I should ask you this question. Can you -- it may be in the
20 statement, but I may have overlooked it, can you recall how many placements you went
21 through?
- 22 **A.** No, I can't, but I did hear that I was in a couple of placements in -- one in Napier, two in
23 Napier before I went to Dannevirke.
- 24 **Q.** But you've never added them all up --
- 25 **A.** No, I've never actually added them up.
- 26 **Q.** -- during your time in care?
- 27 **A.** No.
- 28 **Q.** Do you think if you were to do so, do you think would you count -- this may be an unfair
29 question, would you say that we count them on the fingers of one hand or would you move
30 on to your second hand?
- 31 **A.** One hand.
- 32 **Q.** Okay. You're in Dannevirke?
- 33 **A.** Correct.
- 34 **Q.** We've spoken about Dannevirke because we both know it.

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. And there you were with the foster parents who you were calling mum and dad?
- 3 A. Yes, correct.
- 4 Q. And they -- you describe them as being very strict Catholics and you went to a Catholic
5 school?
- 6 A. Correct.
- 7 Q. And you tell us that you were nearly two years old when you arrived, and you spent about
8 three years in that placement?
- 9 A. Correct.
- 10 Q. And if you look at paragraph 15 you say that it was a small house and the parents had one
11 room, the girls had another, and where were you sleeping?
- 12 A. I was sleeping in the lounge. I think I recall I was sleeping in their bedroom on a couch in
13 their bedroom.
- 14 Q. Never had a bed?
- 15 A. Never had a bed in that time, no.
- 16 Q. And there were two other children in the home, foster children, and you -- were they both
17 girls?
- 18 A. Yes, they were both girls.
- 19 Q. And you specify one in particular as being of Greek origin?
- 20 A. Yes, correct.
- 21 Q. And you also tell us that there were -- there must have been other foster children coming in
22 and out because they had too many foster children for the home?
- 23 A. Yes, correct.
- 24 Q. Do you recall that, that perhaps there were children coming in and out?
- 25 A. Yeah, such a small house, yes.
- 26 Q. Go to paragraph 17, do you want to read that to -- read that out loud?
- 27 A. Yes. While I was there, I was about 3 years old, I was sexually abused by this Greek foster
28 child who was 13. She would take me into the toilet outside in the garage and make me
29 touch her. I was only three at the time.
- 30 Q. In the next paragraph, we're talking about the foster parents, aren't we?
- 31 A. Yes.
- 32 Q. Just tell us by using the word "foster parents", tell us what your experience was there in that
33 regard, if you look at paragraph 18?

- 1 A. Yeah, I was beaten up quite regularly by these people. I was made -- that every statement I
2 was made to sound like I was a liar, and I wasn't telling the truth, so they used to beat me
3 up for the sake of it.
- 4 Q. You tell us that you were strapped several times?
- 5 A. Yes.
- 6 Q. And that these occurred behind closed doors?
- 7 A. Correct.
- 8 Q. Do you recall, you wouldn't have been at school, would you?
- 9 A. No.
- 10 Q. Did you ever go to pre-school, kindy or anything like that?
- 11 A. No, no. Can I just -- about this stage where I got my finger cut off and they put a bandage
12 around, and that was it, I've still got the scars to that day.
- 13 Q. You talk about how your grandmother and your mother came to visit and you tell us that
14 they saw you being beaten up?
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. And what was because you wouldn't sing?
- 17 A. I wouldn't sing, yes. I remember the song I wouldn't sing, A White Rose and a Pink
18 Carnation.
- 19 Q. I know the song, but we won't ask you to sing it today.
- 20 A. No, I still remember the words.
- 21 Q. And you've referred to the complaint that they wrote to the Minister of Social Welfare
22 about the placement there?
- 23 A. Yes.
- 24 Q. And to your knowledge, nothing ever came of that, did it?
- 25 A. No, nothing.
- 26 Q. You also say, and this is important isn't it, that at the time you didn't recall the visit from
27 your mum and your grandmother?
- 28 A. No.
- 29 Q. And you say as well that you didn't realise you had real parents and siblings until you were
30 a lot older?
- 31 A. Yeah, I was 10 years old when I suddenly realised, I had a mother and I had siblings, it was
32 quite a shock.
- 33 Q. So, can you go back, or are you in a position to say where you thought you belonged at that
34 time, before you found out about your mum and dad?

- 1 A. No, I found it really hard to actually comprehend where I belonged because I -- by the time
2 I found out I was in five or six different foster homes and I called each of them mum and
3 dad, so who is my parents?
- 4 Q. You don't recall ever being told by social workers that "this is your name, you have a mum
5 and dad, but they live somewhere else, they're not able to look after you"?
- 6 A. No, I do remember when I was in one foster home in Porirua my parents lived in -- across
7 the bay in Titahi Bay and I remember going over there but I never knew who they were,
8 I just thought they were somebody looking after me for a day or two.
- 9 Q. Right, we'll come on to that. You talk about, this is again back in Dannevirke, that the
10 caregivers, foster parents, would yell and scream at all of you, that you were locked in your
11 room regularly?
- 12 A. Yes.
- 13 Q. Sometimes up for a day?
- 14 A. Yes.
- 15 Q. Do you have memories of that, or is that something that you recall, is that from the files?
- 16 A. No, I do recall a lot of little incidents there where I was locked in my room or in their room
17 and not being let out and called liar and everything else.
- 18 Q. Because you say about being called a liar that you once found a cast iron toy on the street,
19 took it home, but you were blamed for stealing it as a result of that what happened?
- 20 A. I got a beating.
- 21 Q. You got a beating?
- 22 A. Yeah.
- 23 Q. You talk about getting a beating, was that a beating by hand or was it by an instrument of
24 some sort?
- 25 A. Yeah, it was by an instrument.
- 26 Q. What kind of instrument?
- 27 A. A belt.
- 28 Q. Was it always a belt?
- 29 A. Yeah, basically it was always a belt.
- 30 Q. Are you able to recall the belt?
- 31 A. It was his thick leather strap that he'll walk around, because I knew -- she would say "your
32 dad's coming home soon, he's going to punish you for what you've done today."
- 33 Q. Are you able to recall whereabouts on your body you were hit?
- 34 A. Everywhere on the back, on the legs, on the buttocks.

- 1 **Q.** Were your clothes ever removed for the purpose of getting a hiding?
- 2 **A.** I used to have to take my pants down to get a whack around the backside, yes.
- 3 **Q.** You tell us in that home that although you don't remember ever going hungry, which is a
4 good thing I suppose that you don't recall ever having had a bath in a bathtub?
- 5 **A.** No, I never had a bath any time that I was there, I don't even remember the bathroom.
- 6 **Q.** And we used to wash in one of those large concrete tubs out in the back washhouse?
- 7 **A.** Yes, correct.
- 8 **Q.** Any birthday presents or Christmas presents?
- 9 **A.** Not that I recall, no.
- 10 **Q.** Do you remember -- one of the things that happens for us as kids, I think I remember this,
11 that you get upset from time to time and what we need is to have someone to give us a hug
12 or a kiss and tuck you into bed or whatever, "you'll be all right." Do you recall ever getting
13 that kind of --
- 14 **A.** No, I never recall being told anything, I was just around the house, part of the house.
- 15 **Q.** You spoke earlier, you held up your finger and told us that it was cut, and you've still got
16 the scar. You tell us in here that you had some bad injuries.
- 17 **A.** Yes.
- 18 **Q.** And you did cut the end of your finger off on a tin can?
- 19 **A.** Yes.
- 20 **Q.** You describe how your finger was hanging there, so it must have been --
- 21 **A.** Yeah.
- 22 **Q.** -- as a small child incredibly traumatic. And you were screaming, they say, what did
23 they -- they put sellotape around it?
- 24 **A.** Yeah, they put a bandage, sellotape or a bandage around it and it stuck, it's still working
25 today.
- 26 **Q.** But no medical treatment?
- 27 **A.** No.
- 28 **Q.** And similarly, you tell us one day you tripped on your way home from your first day of
29 school?
- 30 **A.** Yeah, I was going to school.
- 31 **Q.** Going to school?
- 32 **A.** On my first day.
- 33 **Q.** On my way to my first day of school and you smashed your head open?

- 1 A. Yes, a piece of bone fell out the front of my head and into my hand. I looked at it and went
2 home and all they did was put the bone back in and put a bit of sellotape across it again.
- 3 Q. No medical treatment?
- 4 A. No medical treatment, and I had to go back to school.
- 5 Q. No surprise a bone falling out of your forehead?
- 6 A. It was a bit strange, I suppose, when you're five years old seeing this thing in your hand.
- 7 Q. That's your experience and that's what happened?
- 8 A. Yeah, that was what happened.
- 9 Q. I've gone over the page now to page 5, because that deals us there was an important thing
10 that happened when you were aged around three?
- 11 A. That's correct.
- 12 Q. Tell us what happened there?
- 13 A. Do you want me to read that part.
- 14 Q. You can read that out, yes?
- 15 A. When I was about three years old our house caught fire in the middle of the night.
16 I remember being plonked in the front lawn and all these people - sorry-.
- 17 **CHAIR:** It's all right, take your time.
- 18 A. All these people and firemen were rushing around me, nobody was concerned for this little
19 three-year-old boy just sitting and watching the flame. I felt insignificant and I clearly
20 remember realising I had to look after myself in life because nobody was going to look out
21 for me.
- 22 **QUESTIONING BY DR COOKE CONTINUED:** You go on to say that was a harsh reality that
23 hit you.
- 24 A. Yes, it was a harsh reality that hit me at that age. I remember that as clear as a bell as
25 though it was yesterday.
- 26 Q. Then one day the placement came to an end, and I'll take you through that. They said to the
27 two of you, you and your sister, you're going away for a holiday, and you had your little
28 blue van and you said to the man "can you paint this for me when I come back", he agreed?
- 29 A. Yes.
- 30 Q. But you never went back?
- 31 A. No, I never went back, and I never saw them again.
- 32 Q. Or the van?
- 33 A. Or the van, no.

- 1 **Q.** Were you given any -- were you told that you were leaving on the day that you left, do you
2 remember?
- 3 **A.** No, because all I was told is I was going away on a holiday.
- 4 **Q.** And you ended up going by bus to Wellington?
- 5 **A.** Correct.
- 6 **Q.** And you do say you don't remember any adult company on the bus?
- 7 **A.** No, it was just me, my sister and myself on that bus.
- 8 **Q.** Okay.
- 9 **A.** 5 years old, 7 years old.
- 10 **Q.** Looking back are you surprised at that?
- 11 **A.** I do now because it was quite -- all I remember on that bus ride was being very car sick,
12 had to stop the bus couple of times.
- 13 **Q.** But you were on your own?
- 14 **A.** Yes, we were on our own.
- 15 **Q.** And then you went to the Miramar Receiving Home?
- 16 **A.** Correct.
- 17 **Q.** And there you describe how you cut your leg on a ride-on train, tin train and you showed
18 the matron, and you use the word obviously there was blood around because that's the word
19 you use?
- 20 **A.** Yeah, I think I said the word "bloody" or something like that, anyway.
- 21 **Q.** And what happened to you as a result of that?
- 22 **A.** As a result of that I was locked in the cell for six days with just bread and water, a mattress,
23 a blanket and a bucket to pee in. My first life experience in jail.
- 24 **Q.** You say that it felt like jail for six days and you were locked in there for the whole time?
- 25 **A.** Yes.
- 26 **Q.** And you've described over the page again the bucket to pee in, the mattress, the blanket, the
27 pillow.
- 28 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Can I just check the age you were, Stephen, at that stage?
- 29 **A.** I was six, I think.
- 30 **Q.** Six years old, thank you.
- 31 **A.** No, I was - yeah, I think I was six at that stage, five or six, I can't remember quite-, but
32 I remember the experience quite dramatically.
- 33 **QUESTIONING BY DR COOKE CONTINUED:** Then you went to the family who lived in
34 Porirua?

- 1 A. Correct.
- 2 Q. And you were about five and they had their own children?
- 3 A. Yes.
- 4 Q. You tell us they had three children, two boys and a girl?
- 5 A. Correct.
- 6 Q. And at last, you had your own bed?
- 7 A. Yes, I did.
- 8 Q. And you were there for about 18 months?
- 9 A. Correct.
- 10 Q. And you describe her as being quite mild, but he was harsh?
- 11 A. He was very harsh, he was in the armed services.
- 12 Q. And then you tell us you went to the Holy Family School --
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. -- in Porirua and you thought you were doing well but notwithstanding that you
15 were -- how were you described at school, what did they call you?
- 16 A. Well, the school didn't -- I read in my records that they -- the actual Department of Social
17 Welfare called me a special needs child, but I don't know how -- I was doing well at school,
18 because I loved school, it was my escape. But I don't know why they put I was a special
19 needs child.
- 20 Q. Right. And it was at a time in Porirua when it was opening up to a new lot of State housing
21 up the back there, wasn't it?
- 22 A. Yes, at Canons Creek.
- 23 Q. You tell us you went for walks over towards the Hutt Valley?
- 24 A. Yes, on Sundays used to go for walks over the hills just about walk to the Hutt Valley over
25 the hills and back again.
- 26 Q. But then there's the other side of it, isn't there, which you then go on to describe and how
27 you would be beaten with straps, wooden spoons and other implements?
- 28 A. Yes, I was.
- 29 Q. Was that by both of them or just one?
- 30 A. That was just the man.
- 31 Q. Just the man?
- 32 A. Yeah.
- 33 Q. And you say that it was -- you then began to lie because you were getting beaten for telling
34 the truth, it was like a defence, so if I lied, I didn't get beaten up?

- 1 A. Yes, correct, every time I told the truth I was beaten up.
- 2 Q. So as a young boy you were in an impossible position?
- 3 A. Yes, I was.
- 4 Q. And you tell us as well that on one occasion you were badly beaten because you were on
5 the swing in the backyard and you -- obviously swinging made you feel a bit sick?
- 6 A. Yes, correct.
- 7 Q. And you were beaten because of that?
- 8 A. Yes, I was sick in the -- I got off the swing and I was sick and I know I was really badly
9 beaten with that, I think that's -- I didn't know until years later that that piece of stick, that
10 rather large piece of stick actually caused a fracture on my skull and I did not know that
11 until about three years ago when I had a CAT (computed axial tomography) scan and the
12 doctor said to me, "what happened to you as a child?" Because the doctor said I had a
13 big -- I had a broken skull, three broken jaw bones, three broken jaw bones and two
14 cracked -- and two broken cheek bones in my life.
- 15 Q. And you say on that occasion you got badly beaten, but you described as being hit by a
16 piece of wood or a stick?
- 17 A. Yes, it was.
- 18 Q. Then there was - you go on to talk about psychological abuse and you give the example of
19 on New Year's Day your sibling told a lie that you'd- looked at your birthday present --
- 20 A. Yes, correct.
- 21 Q. -- while they'd been away. Was it your birthday?
- 22 A. My birthday was in January and when they got back my sibling said that I had looked under
23 their bed to look at my birthday present. I had not done that; I know I had not done that. But
24 through that I was - I had quite a dramatic experience of standing in the corner for 22 days
25 with my hands behind my back and not being able to move. -I went out of the corner for
26 lunch, I went there after breakfast, went out of the corner for lunch and then back out of the
27 corner to go to bed at night time, for 22 days I stood there with my hands behind my back.
- 28 Q. What about toileting, were you allowed to escape for toileting?
- 29 A. No, I had to wait until I had lunch to go to the toilet. I remember that as clear as a bell, it
30 really made an influence in my life.
- 31 Q. You left that placement and they moved, and they didn't want to take you, but they took
32 your sibling?
- 33 A. Yes, they took my sibling.
- 34 Q. Because you don't remember her being with you from that point onwards?

- 1 A. I remember her, yes, when they took me down to Christchurch I was with my sibling for a
2 while, I was - she- was taken away.
- 3 Q. Because you went to Ashhurst, and you describe that as being for a short holiday period?
- 4 A. Yes, correct.
- 5 Q. Is that a word you would have used then, or a word you use now, "holiday"?
- 6 A. I probably use it now, because I -- I was so confused I didn't know where I was going,
7 because I was -- went to Ashhurst and then I went to St Margaret's in Palmerston North
8 then I was put on a bus to go to Christchurch.
- 9 Q. Did you know where you were going to?
- 10 A. No, I didn't. And I suddenly realised that years later why was I going to Christchurch when
11 my parents -- this is what I read, why would I be going to Christchurch when my parents
12 lived in the North Island.
- 13 Q. Because you ended up in Christchurch?
- 14 A. Yes.
- 15 Q. You ended up with a couple, in fact you ended up in placements in Christchurch where all
16 the female caregivers were related, weren't they?
- 17 A. Yes, they were.
- 18 Q. They were all sisters?
- 19 A. Yes, correct.
- 20 Q. So that's the sister from Dannevirke, the woman from Dannevirke and then two sisters in
21 Christchurch in separate placements?
- 22 A. No, the sister from Porirua where I was in Porirua.
- 23 Q. That's what I meant.
- 24 A. Was one of the sisters and then that was when I was in Opawa in Christchurch.
- 25 Q. We'll get it right as we go through but forgive me for the moment. So, you ended up in
26 Christchurch, you tell us that you were about eight years old, and you were there for about
27 a year or so?
- 28 A. Correct.
- 29 Q. And again, you've just told us that you knew nothing about where you were going before
30 you arrived, and you don't know who took you or --
- 31 A. No.
- 32 Q. -- anything about it?
- 33 A. No, I don't.
- 34 Q. And they had no children of their own but had some foster children?

- 1 A. Correct.
- 2 Q. And from what you tell us I see that you went to the local -- went to a Catholic school in
3 Christchurch, food and clothing was fine but you didn't have any possessions of your own
4 other than clothes, no toys, books?
- 5 A. No.
- 6 Q. But you do have a memory of hearing a rugby game?
- 7 A. Yes, I do, I remember when Don Clarke kicked that 75-metre penalty to win the game.
- 8 Q. It's one of those things that stand out?
- 9 A. Yes, definitely.
- 10 Q. You can pinpoint it, can't you. But there that's where sexual abuse started at that home?
- 11 A. Yes, correct.
- 12 Q. And that came from the foster father?
- 13 A. Correct.
- 14 Q. When she left the home, he would make you perform oral sex on him?
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. And he would sodomise you?
- 17 A. Yes, correct.
- 18 Q. And you tell us that it was a constant thing when you were there the whole time?
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. Was there anyone you could tell?
- 21 A. No, nobody asked, nobody said -- I thought -- at that part of my life I thought that was part
22 of being in a home, that's what happened.
- 23 Q. You say that DSW (Department of Social Welfare) only cared because you were in a home
24 and nothing more?
- 25 A. Exactly, because I do -- in the time I never ever spoke to anybody else, there was no
26 department of Child Welfare officers around that I can ever recall talking to me or asking
27 me how I was. I don't remember anybody, without a word of a lie, I do not remember
28 anyone.
- 29 Q. Looking back, you describe yourself, you use the words "I was a petrified kid" there?
- 30 A. Yes, I was, very petrified.
- 31 Q. You hated being in the room by yourself?
- 32 A. Mmm-hmm.
- 33 Q. You'd wake up many times for nightmares and run to the foster parents' room early in the
34 morning and what would happen?

- 1 A. I'd get a beating because I woke them up.
- 2 Q. And you tell us that you got whacked all the time, the girls as well?
- 3 A. Yes, we were all whacked at that place.
- 4 Q. And you tell us it was for just being no more than a child?
- 5 A. Yeah, we were just doing childish probably naughty things as children, as children do.
- 6 Q. You talk about being thirsty and it would appear that you weren't able to get to the tap or
7 have a glass of water?
- 8 A. No, we weren't allowed to, that was one home where we were restricted to drinking
9 anything, it was quite strange.
- 10 Q. So where would you drink from?
- 11 A. Well, on Saturday we always had a bath in the afternoon and the girls would jump in the
12 bath first and then I'd just about drink the bath dry because I was so thirsty.
- 13 Q. The dirty bath water after?
- 14 A. Yeah, dirty bath water.
- 15 Q. Bath water with additives possibly?
- 16 A. Yes, I suppose they washed themselves in it, so -- but when you're thirsty you just drink it
17 anyway for the sake of drinking it.
- 18 Q. You talk about it was there you realised you had a lazy left eye?
- 19 A. Correct.
- 20 Q. And but it was too late?
- 21 A. Yeah, I didn't know it was too late then and I -- they patched my eye and that's when
22 I became a very avid reader because I had to read with my left eye, because they patched
23 my right eye.
- 24 Q. You do say that was avoidable?
- 25 A. That would have been avoidable, the doctor told me many years later, if I had have had
26 treatment before I was 3 years old, I would have had a perfectly normal eyesight.
- 27 Q. And the people responsible for your care at the age of 3 were?
- 28 A. Department of Social Welfare, Department of Child Welfare.
- 29 Q. Moving on, you leave this home, their marriage breaks up you tell us, and you're told by a
30 lady from DSW (Department of Social Welfare) you say that you're going to go back and
31 live with the former foster parents?
- 32 A. Yes, correct.
- 33 Q. The ones from Dannevirke?
- 34 A. No, the ones from Porirua.

- 1 **Q.** Oh.
- 2 **A.** That's okay.
- 3 **Q.** Porirua. And you say that was the first time that you'd been told where you could be going?
- 4 **A.** Yes. I came home from school and the two siblings, and my bags were all packed and we
- 5 just said that, we weren't told why, we were just saying, the siblings were going back
- 6 somewhere else, and I was going back to the foster parents that had me in Porirua.
- 7 **Q.** Anything change from Porirua to them looking after you on the second occasion?
- 8 **A.** Just that they were just their normal selves towards us. We weren't,-- I wasn't there for a
- 9 great length of time, but they were no different than what,-- how they treated me in Porirua
- 10 as to what they did in Christchurch.
- 11 **Q.** You do say you recall being hit by a piece of 4x2?
- 12 **A.** Yes, once again by the same guy.
- 13 **Q.** And by now you're also seeing your sibling, aren't you?
- 14 **A.** Yes, I saw my sibling again because they were when I went there.
- 15 **Q.** Yeah. But you say that you saw them being s by a bus driver?
- 16 **A.** No, not by the bus driver, by a person in the back of the bus.
- 17 **Q.** Oh sorry.
- 18 **A.** Yeah.
- 19 **Q.** You were both on the bus, yes? You were right at the back of the bus.
- 20 **A.** Yeah.
- 21 **Q.** And you were told to bugger off and he kept on doing what he was doing?
- 22 **A.** Yes. I was told by this guy to go and sit further up the bus. And at that age you... --
- 23 **Q.** It's this stage, isn't it, that you say that you went into a mental institution?
- 24 **A.** Yes.
- 25 **Q.** So, we're now going to talk about the other foster home in Christchurch. I think it's
- 26 Papanui, is that right?
- 27 **A.** Yes, Papanui.
- 28 **Q.** And you describe the foster mother there who's one of the sisters as being really lovely to
- 29 you?
- 30 **A.** Yeah, she was very, --she was a very loving lady.
- 31 **Q.** And what was he like?
- 32 **A.** He was,-- he abused me in many ways too.
- 33 **Q.** Because you say in your statement that this was a regular thing on a Tuesday night?

- 1 A. Yes, because my foster mum would go out to a women's meeting or something and he
2 would bath me and sexually abuse me in the bath.
- 3 Q. And you say that on Tuesdays when you were at school you would shut up like a book --
4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. --- because of it, because you knew what was going to be happening?
6 A. Yes, I was absolutely petrified.
- 7 Q. No--one noticed --
8 A. No-one noticed.
- 9 Q. -- -- what this little boy was feeling?
10 A. No, no--one noticed, no--one cared, no--one answered, --asked, I should say.
- 11 Q. And you tell us that it lasted for about a year before it suddenly stopped?
12 A. Yes, it just suddenly stopped when he went back to his marital bed, which is quite strange.
- 13 Q. So, prior to that, were they in separate rooms?
14 A. Yes, they were in separate rooms.
- 15 Q. You say there that there were some bad things done by that family, other things, that they
16 didn't let you go to the bathroom after you went to bed, so you'd have to pee on the floor?
17 A. Yes.
- 18 Q. And importantly on one occasion you heard one of the foster parents and one of the other
19 foster children talking in the kitchen and they said if they "didn't have that boy we'd not be
20 able to afford our TV set"?
- 21 A. Correct.
- 22 Q. You were a source of funding and resources for them?
23 A. Yes, correct.
- 24 Q. Is that the way you saw it?
25 A. That's the way I saw it. That is, that deeply shocked me because I didn't realise that things
26 like that happened, I was 10 years old at the time.
- 27 Q. Then you're going to,-- you talked about being an altar boy, is that in the same,-- when you
28 were in the same placement or a different placement?
29 A. No, that was in the same placement I became an altar boy.
- 30 Q. And you remember getting caned by the nuns because you left a love letter for a girl who
31 you had a crush on?
32 A. Yes, I remember that.
- 33 Q. What about this thing where apparently it became your fault that the school fees weren't
34 paid?

- 1 A. Yes, that was when I attended GRO-B, my college down in Christchurch, and I used
2 to get caned quite regularly by the rector there because the Department of Child Welfare
3 didn't pay my fees and it was a private school, as you probably know.
- 4 Q. So, was it made clear to you that there was a connection between you being caned and the
5 fees not being paid?
- 6 A. Basically, yes. I knew that resentment was there because I remember the rector telling me,
7 "you get things free here and everybody else has to pay."
- 8 Q. They were aware that you were --
- 9 A. A State ward, yes.
- 10 Q. --- a State ward?
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. Did they ever use the word "in-mate" or anything like that?
- 13 A. Not that I recall, but I was definitely ostracised because I was a State ward.
- 14 Q. They knew you were a State ward?
- 15 A. Yes, they knew I was a State ward.
- 16 Q. When you say "they", do you mean --
- 17 A. The school.
- 18 Q. --- the school?
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. And when we say, "the school", do we mean the staff?
- 21 A. The staff, yes.
- 22 Q. Students?
- 23 A. Students not so much, but the staff did definitely know, my form teacher and everybody
24 knew I was a State ward.
- 25 Q. And do you think, when you look back on the treatment you received from your form
26 teacher, for example, or other teachers that you were treated,-- were you treated in the same
27 way as other students?
- 28 A. No, because I was,-- I knew I was being ostracised there as a,-- but I did enjoy going to that
29 school because I did many things like play rugby and in the cadets and things like that, so
30 I persevered with it.
- 31 Q. You do say there that you had no friends, so you concentrated on your schoolwork?
- 32 A. Yes.
- 33 Q. And obviously on your sports as well?

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. And here you refer to Mr Simmich being your social worker?
- 3 A. Yes.
- 4 Q. And he was good to you?
- 5 A. Yes, he was good to me, he was the first social worker I ever knew I had.
- 6 Q. You talk about he would ask you "how are you, how's it going, anything you're not happy
7 with?"
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. "I felt more human." Did he ever ask you about how things were at home?
- 10 A. No, because he never,- he had -only, -he- would never get me by myself and ask how things
11 were, it was always I had to sit in with,- he would go and see my foster mother and talk to
12 her and then he'd call me in, and if I'd done something wrong- I would be told how I had to
13 behave and do things better or something.
- 14 Q. Okay. Were you told, --so they would know when the visit was coming?
- 15 A. No, I never knew when they were coming.
- 16 Q. But you were, you were told how to behave?
- 17 A. Yeah.
- 18 Q. And what to say?
- 19 A. Yeah. But Mr --
- 20 Q. You also say in hindsight you wish you'd stayed there?
- 21 A. Yeah, I really do, in hindsight now, wish I had stayed there.
- 22 Q. And that's on the basis that they'd moved back into the bedroom?
- 23 A. Yeah, and that was ---
- 24 Q. And the abuse had stopped?
- 25 A. -- good, and I was being treated like a, actually first- time in my life, as a member of a
26 family. But it was also hard because I was going home on holidays, that's when I found out
27 I had parents, and the Department would send me home for a week and I'd come back and
28 that's when I suddenly realised I had siblings and a family.
- 29 Q. Because you say, this is on page 13 now, you say that you were taken back to meet the
30 family. Where were they staying?
- 31 A. They lived in Palmerston North.
- 32 Q. In Palmerston North. And when you went back to the family there were, there were other
33 siblings there?
- 34 A. Yes, correct.

- 1 **Q.** How many siblings were there?
- 2 **A.** There was --
- 3 **Q.** If you remember?
- 4 **A.** There was five other siblings.
- 5 **Q.** Were you ever given an explanation as to why they were at home and you were not?
- 6 **A.** No, never, nothing was ever explained to me.
- 7 **Q.** Did you have questions around that, why was I not at home and my siblings were?
- 8 **A.** It was a bit,-- I probably didn't comprehend at that age about things, what was really
9 happening, because here I am having a mum and dad and still calling my foster parents
10 mothers and dad, it was so confusing in those days.
- 11 **Q.** So, when you go home, you see your siblings calling this couple mum and dad?
- 12 **A.** Yeah.
- 13 **Q.** And you know that they're your siblings?
- 14 **A.** Yes.
- 15 **Q.** And you're calling --
- 16 **A.** I knew by then that they were my siblings because they'd say, "my brother", you know.
- 17 **Q.** Right. And then you've got this split in your life between mum and dad here and mum and
18 dad there?
- 19 **A.** Yes, correct.
- 20 **Q.** You talk about going back down to Christchurch and you would cry for days?
- 21 **A.** Yes, I cried a million tears.
- 22 **Q.** And you'd get hidings for that?
- 23 **A.** Well, yes, I'd get hidings because I wouldn't stop crying and they didn't understand how
24 I felt and I think I told you about time I tried to take my own life and got a hiding for that,
25 because all I wanted to do was go home to my own parents.
- 26 **Q.** So, if you got to that point, things inside for this small boy, getting bigger but small boy
27 must have been pretty bad?
- 28 **A.** It was, I was so confused, emotionally, mentally.
- 29 **Q.** But you do go home, don't you?
- 30 **A.** Yes, I do go home eventually, yes.
- 31 **Q.** But you also say that you recall on a visit home one of your siblings obviously was playing
32 soccer, forgot to take their boots off and your dad got angry?
- 33 **A.** Yes.
- 34 **Q.** And he threw this sibling from one end of the hall to the other?

- 1 A. Yes, correct.
- 2 Q. So, would that have given – did you have any concern or apprehension around your dad in
3 that respect?
- 4 A. Yes, I didn't think that this, that my father was actually that violent until I'd seen that
5 incident.
- 6 Q. And were you able to reconcile in your mind, do you think, this desire to go home as,-- and
7 then but I'm going home to this man who could be behaving that way?
- 8 A. No, I don't think I did, I just wanted to go home.
- 9 Q. Just wanted to go home?
- 10 A. Yeah, I wanted to be with my siblings.
- 11 Q. Because we know from your statement that your mum had fought – was fighting for you to
12 come home?
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. Her and her mother?
- 15 A. Yes, her and my grandmother, yes.
- 16 Q. And of course, by sending you to Christchurch you would say that that made it far more
17 difficult for you to have that connection and that relationship with your family?
- 18 A. Yes, correct.
- 19 Q. Because as you recall, I think you said during the time you had only three visits?
- 20 A. Yes, three visits in that time.
- 21 Q. So, is that in the entire time that you were in Christchurch?
- 22 A. Yes, the entire time.
- 23 Q. And your mum and dad were in Palmy North?
- 24 A. Yes.
- 25 Q. And you were 14 when you went home?
- 26 A. Correct.
- 27 Q. When you were home, you go home, you're still in their care, aren't you?
- 28 A. Yes, I'm still in Department of Child Welfare.
- 29 Q. You're still a State ward?
- 30 A. Yes.
- 31 Q. Did you have any involvement with them, did they give you any help, support?
- 32 A. No, none whatsoever.
- 33 Q. And they knew you were home with your dad who was a violent person?
- 34 A. Yes.

- 1 **Q.** Do you think they knew, --you say here that your mother, they never asked how she was
2 coping emotionally, do you think was she struggling at home with all the kids?
- 3 **A.** Yes, she was, and they, and-- I'm sorry, but reading my reports on my file, the things they
4 said about my mother were so abusive and they knew that she couldn't cope with all us
5 kids, they, it was written clear as a bell in the files.
- 6 **Q.** This is not a good place for these kids?
- 7 **A.** No, basically.
- 8 **Q.** Because you do say that on the first day you arrived home just prior to Christmas you'd put
9 some pants on the floor, and because you'd done that, your dad locked you in the wardrobe
10 for the rest of the day?
- 11 **A.** Yes, correct.
- 12 **Q.** You had nothing to eat for that whole day, which was your punishment for that
13 misdemeanour?
- 14 **A.** For leaving my pants on the floor when I went to bed, yes.
- 15 **Q.** If you look at page 15, you tell us that your dad goes to the pub, comes home drunk, is this
16 back in the day of the six o'clock swill?
- 17 **A.** Yes, probably.
- 18 **Q.** Right.
- 19 **A.** Oh no, that was after.
- 20 **Q.** Afterwards, okay, some of us remember it, yes. So, you tell us he would return home drunk
21 and make who -- someone get up at midnight?
- 22 **A.** He would --
- 23 **Q.** GRO-B ?
- 24 **A.** He would make GRO-B.
- 25 **Q.** Make GRO-B
- 26 **A.** Yeah, GRO-B strip off, parade in the lounge and he would, he would beat the shit
27 out of me GRO-B
- 28 but, --and GRO-B d all go back to bed.
- 29 **Q.** And in the next paragraph you talk about mum who was being beaten up and downtrodden
30 by him, so it's clearly a, --she's having a very hard time. You also talk about having to pull
31 your dad off her when he had a pillow and knife at her neck?
- 32 **A.** Yes, I mentioned that before about pulling my father off my mother while he was trying to
33 strangle her and murder her.

- 1 **Q.** And of course, in addition to being violent to your mum and violent, physically violent to
2 **GRO-B** you tell us that he would sexually abuse people as well?
- 3 **A.** Yes, he would do horrendous things **GRO-B** and it's definitely,- he- never had
4 intercourse with me or anything, **GRO-B**
5 siblings he did, and,- but he'd- do strange, weird things to **GRO-B** and myself,
6 I mean my sibling and myself, sorry about mentioning names. But yeah, it was strange
7 things, take **GRO-B** pants down and roll up and see if **GRO-B** had worms and all
8 that type of thing, it was horrendous, not a nice thing at all.
- 9 **Q.** Right. Of the children in the home, we know that you were a State ward at that point, were
10 any of the others having the same status, do you recall?
- 11 **A.** I think my sibling had become one, my older sibling had become one.
- 12 **Q.** And was he in the home as well?
- 13 **A.** He went to home, but he was at home at the time and my, and eventually my two younger
14 siblings were made State wards too. So, they had total control of our family from the time
15 that we were basically, from 1955 right through.
- 16 **Q.** And during this time when they had total control, they placed you and they left the other
17 siblings in the care of your father who, one could describe him as being a monster to his
18 children and to his wife?
- 19 **A.** Yes.
- 20 **Q.** And they were aware of that do you think?
- 21 **A.** Of course, they were aware of it. You can't tell me they weren't aware of it. Nobody could
22 turn a blind eye to that surely. I made them quite adamantly aware of it when I went, at that
23 time that I was scrubbed.
- 24 **Q.** Yes – which is the next thing that we're up to. Because you talk about there was this
25 incident where after you'd done your paper run and your milk run and your mum said
26 something funny in the kitchen and your dad came, and gave you a steel wire scrubbing
27 brush go over, didn't he?
- 28 **A.** Yes, he did, he scrubbed me down with a steel wire scrubbing brush from head to toe and
29 all over my back and my legs, and I was bleeding like anything.
- 30 **Q.** You talk about there were scars left in your legs, open wounds?
- 31 **A.** Yes.
- 32 **Q.** You went to the bike shop?

- 1 A. Yeah, I went to work at the bike shop, my school uniform was sticking to my body and
2 every time I pulled it, it would start bleeding again, but nobody said a word. I went to
3 school the same way.
- 4 Q. Same thing, no-one made any inquiries?
- 5 A. Nobody made a single statement or asked a single thing.
- 6 Q. You did go to the social worker, didn't you?
- 7 A. Yes, after school I went to the social worker in the office in Palmerston.
- 8 Q. You describe her as being a bitch?
- 9 A. Yes, totally.
- 10 Q. You've chosen that word carefully?
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. And you went to complain to her about what your father had done to you?
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. You said, you say in your statement "I want to be taken away from home" and you showed
15 her your wounds?
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. And her response?
- 18 A. "You deserved it, you probably deserved it."
- 19 Q. Okay. Right. I'm going to move on a bit because-- the Commissioners have all read your
20 report, all read your statement, they are well familiar with it. So, I just want to summarise
21 one or two things as we go through. You're still in care but you're not going to school, and
22 because you say between the age of 14 and 18 you probably had about 30 odd jobs?
- 23 A. Yes, probably more.
- 24 Q. Probably more. That you were hungry all the time, no support from your dad, and your
25 mum was getting the equivalent of the family benefit?
- 26 A. Correct.
- 27 Q. And on one occasion you did this massive bike ride from Tangimoana back to Palmerston
28 North so that you could get some money, ask your friends for money and take it back to
29 your family?
- 30 A. That's right, I didn't know that they were going --they asked me to come home, so I biked
31 home.
- 32 Q. It's a big ride, isn't it?
- 33 A. Yeah, it's 24 miles or, not kilometres, but miles, 32 kilometres from there to there, and they
34 said can your mates give you some money so that-- I had to bike all the way back to

- 1 Tangimoana and bike all the way back to Palmerston North, and to give them \$6 so they
2 could buy some groceries, and then I biked all the way back to Tangimoana.
- 3 **Q.** And then you tell us that your dad went to Porirua Hospital?
- 4 **A.** Correct.
- 5 **Q.** So, he was – and --that was for sexually abusing some siblings?
- 6 **A.** Yes.
- 7 **Q.** And he didn't agree – he was asked if he would give consent to your joining the Navy and
8 he didn't?
- 9 **A.** No, and I couldn't understand, he was in by court order in a mental institution, and they
10 said, "well he's your father". This is Department of Child Welfare.
- 11 **Q.** And you were still under Child, Youth, & Family? Child Welfare at that point?
- 12 **A.** I was still under Child Welfare.
- 13 **Q.** Right. And you ran away from home, you tell us you were a State ward, and your dad was
14 ultimately released, but he would only stop hitting you I think when you were around 19,
15 I think, because you were big enough and ugly enough to look after yourself?
- 16 **A.** Yes, correct.
- 17 **Q.** You were able to hit him back?
- 18 **A.** Yes, I did hit him back, sorry, I had enough by that time of being belted with a buckle belt.
- 19 **Q.** Okay. You then tell us, don't you, that you were discharged from care in 1972 on 8 August
20 but you graduated, you went on the graduation pathway?
- 21 **A.** Yes, can I just make one statement.
- 22 **Q.** Sure.
- 23 **A.** When I ran away from home at,-- when I was 16 until they discharged me when I was 18,
24 they never even – --they didn't know where I was, they didn't do anything to find me, it's
25 just totally amazing, there was no care, I was a State ward and I'd gone missing, but they
26 didn't even bother about where I'd gone missing, I could have been dead for all they knew.
27 That's how much, I'm sorry, but, I feel about the Department of Child Welfare.
- 28 **Q.** You would say they were derelict in their duty to you?
- 29 **A.** Yes, definitely derelict in their duties to me.
- 30 **Q.** So, you were then discharged eventually?
- 31 **A.** Yes.
- 32 **Q.** And I said that you went,-- you did the graduation which was from State care into the
33 criminal justice system?
- 34 **A.** Correct.

- 1 **Q.** You went to Waikeria?
- 2 **A.** Yes.
- 3 **Q.** When you were 18?
- 4 **A.** Correct.
- 5 **Q.** So, you'd committed an offence of some sort?
- 6 **A.** Yes. I, believe it or not, stole 28 cents from my sibling and he put me in jail.
- 7 **Q.** You say, "Child Welfare decided to drop me from their books" and you got a letter from
8 them to that effect saying, "it's all over rover, see you later"?
- 9 **A.** Yes, that's all I got was a letter. No explanation, no nothing.
- 10 **Q.** You do say that if you hadn't got into trouble, because you could have stayed in the State
11 care system for another few years, couldn't you?
- 12 **A.** Yes, reading about that on my file that they were going to keep me there until I was 21.
- 13 **Q.** Okay. And you go on to talk about perhaps going to Waikeria was a place where you
14 learned some lessons?
- 15 **A.** Yes, definitely a blessing in disguise.
- 16 **Q.** There was an IQ test and they said that you had a high IQ?
- 17 **A.** Yes, they were just flabbergasted with my high IQ, they said I could be anything I wanted
18 to be in this world.
- 19 **Q.** And you didn't get into trouble --
- 20 **A.** Ever again.
- 21 **Q.** No. And you went on to do a whole lot of different things?
- 22 **A.** Yeah, massive, lots of --
- 23 **Q.** Massive amount of things, didn't you?
- 24 **A.** Yes.
- 25 **Q.** You say here that you worked as an engineer, a builder, a butcher, a baker, a cook, a
26 teacher?
- 27 **A.** Yes, I've done many, many things.
- 28 **Q.** Many, many things. You've told us as well that when you were teaching you helped one of
29 your students report that she was being molested by a family member?
- 30 **A.** Yes, correct.
- 31 **Q.** She also was a State ward?
- 32 **A.** Yes, she was a State ward too.
- 33 **Q.** So, I imagine that you must have been able to engender a positive relationship with her and
34 trust for her to be able to say to you "can you help me?"

- 1 A. Yes, even the principal said, "how did you do that?"
- 2 Q. It tells us that in many respects you must be a remarkable man who's gone through what
3 you've gone through and been able to assist that young woman in that way.
- 4 A. Yes, I felt I had done something positive for that girl.
- 5 Q. And although you tell us that you've done a lot of things in your life that are very positive,
6 which we've just talked about, nonetheless you've had over 500 jobs?
- 7 A. Yes.
- 8 Q. Which does seem --
- 9 A. A huge amount, yes.
- 10 Q. Well I was going to say just a few, but I'd be happy to go with a huge amount. And you'd
11 learn something, you'd leave, constructed some really successful businesses and you've
12 walked away?
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. You've owned houses, you've walked away?
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. The same thing's happened with relationships?
- 17 A. Yes, the same thing has happened with relationships.
- 18 Q. Because you tell us you've had five marriages?
- 19 A. Yes, correct.
- 20 Q. And that is it, the current relationship that you've been in for 14 years?
- 21 A. Yes, on and off for 14.
- 22 Q. So, it's on today?
- 23 A. Yes, and permanently this time.
- 24 Q. And, you know, don't you, as a result of what's happened here is that you've hurt, you've
25 hurt people who were important to you in your life?
- 26 A. Yes, I've hurt many people, which I should never have done.
- 27 Q. When you think about that aspect of your life, what you have done, are you able to look
28 back and say it was possibly for the,-- what was the causal reason for that, what -- why did
29 I behave like that?
- 30 A. Yes, and I didn't,-- it took me until I was 45 years old until I hit rock bottom that I went to
31 see a counsellor and I realised that I'd get to the top, or I'd have an awesome relationship,
32 I'd just dump it for fear of being neglected again and that was the basic reason why I failed
33 in lots of things, because it was just a fear of being rejected.

- 1 **Q.** And do you look back on your life and say there, had my life been different then possibly
2 other things would have been different?
- 3 **A.** Oh definitely, yeah. I've seen my friends come from normal families and how they've
4 achieved their things, and what that, you know-- the difference between me and a normal
5 person is astronomically different in attitudes and lifestyles.
- 6 **Q.** You tell us you've been diagnosed with PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder)?
- 7 **A.** Yes.
- 8 **Q.** And that you easily get triggered if anyone comes up to you, you hear a loud noise,
9 sensitive to violence?
- 10 **A.** Yes, definitely sensitive to violence. I abhor violence. As I told you I made a promise to
11 myself when I was 15 years old.
- 12 **Q.** Tell us on the last bit, we're going to talk about the failure of the State, that's your heading
13 in your statement. You use a powerful word which is "disembowelled"?
- 14 **A.** Yes.
- 15 **Q.** That's pretty, really strong language, isn't it?
- 16 **A.** It is strong language but it's the truth.
- 17 **Q.** So, and you ask questions of where were they in my life, did they care about me. In fact,
18 you tell us that until Mr Simmich came along when you were 13, that was the first time?
- 19 **A.** Correct.
- 20 **Q.** You say it's hard to figure out what real love and nurture is because you never had it?
- 21 **A.** Yeah, never had it, no, we didn't.
- 22 **Q.** No record of your childhood?
- 23 **A.** No, I had one photo of myself as a seven-year-old child and the rest of my life is non-
24 existent to me because there's no records of it, no photographic records, I don't even know
25 what I looked like as a baby.
- 26 **Q.** So, it would be very hard to then have an understanding of when you look in the mirror you
27 can see yourself, but very hard to then see what I might have looked like?
- 28 **A.** Yes.
- 29 **Q.** 40 years ago, 50 years ago?
- 30 **A.** Exactly. I lost, --I have no childhood as far as I'm concerned, I don't have a childhood.
- 31 **Q.** You've got your Social Welfare records?
- 32 **A.** Yes.
- 33 **Q.** You've read those, and you say that they're derogatory about your family, about your mum,
34 and you found that difficult?

- 1 A. Yeah, I find that really, really difficult, especially about my mum who was such to me a
2 strong woman.
- 3 Q. You've done your ACC (Accident Compensation Scheme) claim, was that a process that
4 was easy?
- 5 A. That was a, I did a sensitive claim.
- 6 Q. Was that a good process for you?
- 7 A. On and off it's been,-- it's finally settled now, and I don't have anything to do with that
8 anymore, but they did help me get counselling and I agree that they did help me in an
9 around about way.
- 10 Q. And you went to CLAS (Confidential Listening and Assistance Service), Judge Henwood?
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. That was helpful, you described her as being very nice?
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. And she helped you bring the claim against MSD (Ministry of Social Development), and
15 you got offered a sum?
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. But you don't know whether it was pitched at the right level, do you?
- 18 A. No, I don't.
- 19 Q. And you'd like to know that, what was the assessment process?
- 20 A. Yeah, how they achieved that assessment process, but the worst part of that all was this, the
21 letter was incredible, you know, I think talking to other people in the same situation we got
22 a letter all signed, photocopied and sent out to us. And that was humiliating, that was an
23 apology letter? It was no apology letter; it was so impersonal. And I – I'm sorry, I want an
24 apology, a written apology from the minister or somebody that can actually say "we are
25 genuinely sorry for the way we treated you and the previous people."
- 26 Q. I know you say in your statement that you decided to sue the Government?
- 27 A. Yeah.
- 28 Q. Child Welfare, and you got some legal advice that said there wasn't sufficient evidence?
- 29 A. Yeah, I went to a lawyer in Wellington, and he said "no, we can't do that, there's no
30 evidence that you were sexually abused", and I said to the lawyer, what they're going to tell
31 the Department of Child Welfare so they can write down notes that I was sexually abused.
32 Yeah, just incredible.
- 33 Q. You wouldn't find it in the file note, would you?
- 34 A. No, there was nothing written in the files.

- 1 **Q.** Tell us about looking to the future just in the last couple of minutes, for me, what are the
2 things that you would want to see in the future so that (a) it doesn't happen again, and kids
3 who are in care don't experience that, what would make it work, do you think, for those
4 children?
- 5 **A.** To have the counsel or Child Welfare officer come into their homes and talk to the child on
6 a one-to-one basis without foster parents being there, asking the children. Because the
7 children will probably be quite truthful to them and then have a meeting with the parents.
8 That's what needs,-- the kids need to know that there's somebody there for them if they
9 need them. And that person must say "if there's something wrong, I need to know." And
10 saying it in such a loving manner that the child will take trust in that person. The child has
11 to have trust in somebody. You've got no trust, you can't say what you're, what you're
12 thinking, or doing.
- 13 **Q.** You've set out in your statement some of the other things, but I'm going to stop now and
14 I'm going to ask the Commissioners if they have any questions that they want to ask of you.
- 15 **A.** Okay, thank you.
- 16 **CHAIR:** I don't have any questions, I think you've got it all down and the way you've spoken
17 today has filled in the gaps beautifully, painfully but beautifully. So, nothing from me, I'll
18 just ask my colleague.
- 19 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Talofa, good afternoon, Mr Shaw.
- 20 **A.** Good afternoon.
- 21 **Q.** First off can I just say thank you very, very much for the way that you've spoken so
22 profoundly about the things that have been so personal in your life. Just two questions, if I
23 can, just points of clarity. DSW kept referring to you as a "special child" in inverted
24 commas. Did they ever explain what they meant by that?
- 25 **A.** No, never explained, it was just what I'd read in my files that I was a special needs child. I
26 was totally dumbfounded when I read it.
- 27 **Q.** Because that can be read a couple of ways, can't it, I mean you were exceptionally bright
28 doing very well in your later life, you've showed that during all of your achievements, but it
29 could also have another connotation in terms of stigmatising you.
- 30 **A.** Mmm.
- 31 **Q.** Yeah, around perhaps some sort of intellectual disability?
- 32 **A.** I would say that was more to the point because of my,-- the way they reacted to my sister
33 and my father and my mother, we were all mentally deranged.

1 **Q.** Mmm. Thank you for that. And just my second question just relates to in para 42 you just
2 referred to in later years, so that's page seven of your statement, you said later on in life you
3 had a CAT (Computerised Axial Tomography) scan, and the specialist was able to tell you
4 about the scarring and ask you lots of questions. Was that – how late was that, was that
5 most recently?

6 **A.** That was recently, yes.

7 **Q.** Was that,-- I think you said about three years ago, so it's about 2018, 2019?

8 **A.** Yes, correct.

9 **Q.** Thank you, I was just interested in the date and the previous injuries and the history.

10 **A.** He said they can tell by the calcium build-ups and everything in the x-rays and everything,
11 because he just questioned me, he said what type of life did you have as a child?

12 **Q.** Thank you very much for that.

13 **A.** That's okay, thank you.

14 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Tēnā koe, Mr Shaw. On behalf of the Commission, it's for me to
15 thank you, thank you and your partner for coming and speaking to us today. We could not
16 do this work without the courage and commitment of survivors like yourself who come and
17 bare all for us, and the most difficult moments in your life, how difficult it is to go back and
18 remember and to bring them out and bring them into the open here, it is so essential for us
19 to do our work, because without your courage then we just couldn't make any
20 recommendations at all. So, I really want to the thank you for your commitment to the
21 kaupapa and your perseverance and your insight and advice. We take what you say entirely
22 about apologies and redress and the need for restoration, real restoration to take place for
23 survivors, so on behalf of us all I'd like to thank you so much for your time.

24 **A.** Thank you.

25 **Q.** Tēnā koe.

26 **A.** We just hope that they will listen to you guys.

27 **Q.** Yes, we'll make sure.

28 **CHAIR:** We do too, we do too, but thank you, go and have a rest and a break and be looked after,
29 thank you. We'll take the lunch adjournment. Coming back, we're just a little bit over time,
30 oh if we came back at 2.15?

31 **DR COOKE:** Yes, we could come back at 2.15.

32 **CHAIR:** That's when we're supposed to, according to this, that brings us back on time.

33 **DR COOKE:** Yes, we're back on time.

34 **CHAIR:** Thank you.