

**ABUSE IN CARE ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY
MĀORI 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: Ms Julia Steenson
Dr Anaru Erueti
Mr Paul Gibson
Judge Coral Shaw
Ali'imuumua Sandra Alofivae

Counsel: Ms Julia Spelman, Mr Kingi Snelgar, Mr Wiremu Rikihana,
Mr Luke Claasen, Ms Maia Wikaira,
Ms Alisha Castle, Ms Tracey Norton,
Ms Season-Mary Downs, Ms Alana Thomas,
Mr Winston McCarthy, Mr Simon Mount QC,
Ms Kerryn Beaton QC for the Royal Commission
Ms Melanie Baker, Ms Julia White

and

Mr Max Clarke-Parker for the Crown
Mr James Meagher for the Catholic Church
Ms Fiona Guy Kidd for the Anglican Church
Ms Sonya Cooper, Ms Amanda Hill as other
counsel attending

Venue: Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei Tumutumuwhenua Marae
59b Kitemoana Road
Ōrākei
AUCKLAND

Date: 10 March 2022

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

COMMISSIONER STEENSON: Tēnā anō koutou katoa. (Greetings, welcome back). We'll now move into our afternoon session. I just want to acknowledge we are running behind, thank you for your patience. Ms Spelman, ko wai te kai whakaatu o te ahiahi nei (English: who is the witness this afternoon)?

MS SPELMAN: Tēnā koe te Heamana (thank you Madam Chair). Our next witness is Ms NN. Matua ake e mihi ana ki a koe Ms NN. (First and foremost I want to thank you Ms NN). I start by acknowledging you and I'm using the anonymous name that we will hear today. I wanted to begin before we play your prerecording by talking briefly about your name.

That context is important for what we are going to hear in the prerecording that is to come. Ms NN's father was forced to change his Māori name to a Pākehā name when he was at school. When Ms NN was born, she was named by her father for his mother, your grandmother. Ms NN, a staunch Ngāti Porou woman, and through your experiences of being in care and the many things that you have gone through throughout your life, you speak in your statement about your whakapapa to Ngāti Porou, to the East Coast, but you say that's as far as it goes for you. That it's not that you don't want to connect, it's that mentally you can't because of what happened to you as a child. And I acknowledge that, because you have taken this step to change your name to a different name, and you speak about that in your statement as a way of trying to address what's happened in the past.

We've heard kōrero from other survivors about the importance of names and I wanted to acknowledge that because we're not able to discuss it in detail in the video due to Ms NN being anonymous for the purposes of this. But I begin with that to centre us around that important aspect of Ms NN's evidence.

As I said at the start of the day, this prerecording took place on the 21st of January this year at Te Wānanga o Raukawa in Otaki. We will listen to the recording in two blocks and Ms NN will share about her experiences in State care and the impacts on her and her whanau. So, Ms NN, I know that you will be joining us through the livestream for this and we'll turn now to begin the prerecording. Tēnā koe, tēnā tātou. (Thank you and thank you one and all).

(Video played).

QUESTIONING BY MS SPELMAN: "Good morning, my name is Julia Spelman, as you know, and I'm one of the Counsel Assisting the Royal Commission and we're here to today prerecord your evidence for the Māori hearing. It's Friday, 21st of January 2022. I just wanted to start by thanking you for coming today to meet with us to do this recording. And if you wanted to introduce yourself before we do the affirmation.

A. I'm just going to say hi and thank you everybody for coming. We finally got here. Yeah.

Q. Well, I'll read you this affirmation and then we can start this morning.

MS NN (Affirmed)

Q. So we spoke just before we started about how we can take a break at any point, so we'll just make time for that when we need to.

A. Mmmhmm.

Q. And otherwise I'm going to begin at the beginning and ask you if you could tell us when you were born?

A. I was born on – GRO-B - 1972-.

Q. And could you tell us a bit about your parents?

A. Who they are?

Q. Yeah?

A. So my mother is – GRO-B - and she is a full European and my father is- Māori and they are separated. What else do you want to know?

Q. Yeah, that's great thank you. So your mother's Pākehā?

A. Yeah.

Q. Your father's Māori from Ngāti Porou, is that right?

A. Yes, Ngāti Porou, the east coast, yeah.

Q. East Coast, yeah. I know that the meeting between your mother and father, a Māori man and a Pākehā woman was something that wasn't accepted very well by either of their families. What was your memory of that reaction of both sides of the family to that relationship?

A. It was - so my memories of witnessing different things between my mother and my father and the family, so my grandparents, my grandparents from the East Coast absolutely hated my mother; she was a white woman, and my grandmother, a very staunch- Māori woman, absolutely hated her because she was white. And my mother was never given even the opportunity to be herself. I mean, you're talking about a little rural town where your neighbour is get on a horse and ride that way for 2K.

I recall going back to the Coast with my mother and my father and my mother had to stand at the gate. She wasn't allowed to step on the property, and my father did nothing and my mother just stood out there in the middle of bloody nowhere. When she was allowed, eventually allowed to come in, she was given a pup tent, and I can still see it, it was one of those cowboy Indian tents that you put up in like 5 minutes and she was sent to

a paddock way, way, way away from the house, and that's where she stayed. She couldn't drive, she couldn't even leave the property until my father was ready to go. I don't ever recall her being fed. She wasn't allowed in the house, wasn't allowed to use the toilet, nothing, because she was white, yeah. And my mother's parents towards my father, the same, it was just the same. He was dark, you know? And as a kid, I can see it, I can still smell the blinken pine trees on the farm where my mother was standing outside the gate because they refused to let her in that gate because she was white.

You know, and you don't - I guess as a kid you don't sort of think why, how come mum's out there and not over here, but as you get older you start putting all that together and your memory start- - you know, you start noticing, "Shit, oh my God", you know? But yeah, my mother's parents, God, they, to me, they were like the king and the queen of England because my mother's mother wore a fur hat, this round fur hat with a matching fur bag and they had this really nice black shiny car and they didn't want to know us, we were the brown kids, we were nothing-.

And I remember me and two of my brothers playing marbles outside the house and they'd come for a visit. And they pulled up right next to where we were playing. He gets out, walks around, opens her door, lets her out, helps her get on the footpath, whatever, and they just looked down at us, you know? And it's that look of disgust, we're nothing. Nothing.

Q. So very strong feelings on both sides of the family really?

A. Yeah. I never saw them again for years. And I had actually forgotten about them, and I went looking for my grandfather and my mother found out and she made him choose between me and her and he chose her and that's fine, that was his daughter, that's fine. But my mother made my grandfather choose and he was much older and he wanted to build a relationship, it was there, we were talking and she wasn't having a bar of it. She made him choose. Yeah, so that's my parents and their parents.

Q. And just to go back to your father; so he's from the Coast?

A. Yeah.

Q. Obviously he grew up having his own experiences and you've talked about some of the hurt that he carried. What was his experience like? I know you've mentioned in your statement about him having to change his name?

A. Yes, my father and his siblings, my uncles and that, all had Māori names, and they were all given Pākehā names, all of them, the whole lot. And I remember back the Coast, when the family got together, it was wow, everyone turned up with booze, and you could hear these

conversations and you'd hear my uncles, and even to this day, some of them will still randomly talk about how they had to change their names, and how they hated it. To this day my father hates white people. He just - and any Government organisation, he just- - you will not tell him what to do, he just- - his- - and it's not just him, it's through his- - the whole family, it's colour, it's bloody colour-.

Q. So he had those experiences when he was young?

A. Yeah, and they would get whipped, they would get whipped. You're talking a rural farm, these kids out on the fence and they're getting a hiding, you know, just for colour.

Q. And you mentioned in your statement about your dad was also beaten for speaking te reo at school?

A. Yeah.

Q. What did that mean in terms of when you were young? Did he speak te reo to you at home?

A. He did speak te reo to me at home but when my mother was never around. It was a very - it was very- - I don't think dad was scared of her, I think it was more he was ashamed, himself. He would ask me to pass him the bread in- Māori, and I would pick up bits and pieces here and there, and I knew what he would be talking about, so you know, and my mother would walk in the room and instantly, you know, and dad would give me this look and it would be "Just shut up, just don't", nothing, you know? But at home, yeah, again, two different cultures. You're either that way or you're - you could never be both. You could never- - I'm two cultures, I could never be both. I'm- Pākehā, that's it, that's all I was allowed to ever be. I was never allowed to be Māori.

And that was really hard for me, because when I was sent back to the Coast to live as a child, I was named after my grandmother, my grandmother weaved, my grandmother did Māori medicine, everyone went to my grandmother for help and I learned these things from her. I'm the kid sitting outside on the doorstep weaving, you know? And they were good times, yeah. So they were the only times that I could be Māori without feeling ashamed of being Māori, not that I ever knew what feeling ashamed of being Māori was. All I knew was I was different. Yeah.

Q. So that was your staunch Māori grandmother you were named for her?

A. Staunch, yeah, yeah. So I was named after her. And with that came the expectation that I would carry on in her footsteps. Well, that never happened. That never happened, yeah.

Q. Let's talk about that, because I know obviously you've told us at the beginning of that conflict between your mum's side and your dad's side when you were a child and you mentioned that your parents separated?

A. Yeah.

Q. How old were you when they went their separate ways?

A. I would have been around 8, but you've got remember, because their relationship was so dysfunctional anyway, he would go, come back, she would go, come back. So I can honestly say that they separated around the time that I was 8 because my - there was- trouble back at the homestead and my mother wasn't allowed to go so dad went and I was expected to go, being the namesake. And I recall the massive - the fighting over it. Sorry, I just- --

Q. Yeah. Part of that story – GRO-A - that I wanted to ask you was also your place in your family. Could you tell us a bit about your siblings and your place-?

A. So I'm one of 10. I didn't even know I had two older brothers until I was, like, 35. So there's 10 of us and there are three different fathers to all these 10 kids. Total dysfunction, total, absolute fuck'n mess, the whole family. All 10. So there are - my father's- Māori and I have four full siblings and then I have - the two older ones, their father's part- Māori, and then I have three younger siblings, they're - their father's Samoan, so it's -a - yeah. Yeah, so there's 10 of us and I'm the third oldest and I always thought I was the oldest. But again, my mother wouldn't allow any relationship whatsoever with the older brothers even, so-.

Q. In that time when you were growing up, you were effectively the eldest of the kids in the household?

A. Yeah.

Q. And what did that mean for you in terms of that time after your dad left and your mum was looking after you?

A. Hell; that's what it bloody meant. My mother turned to alcohol, parties, and that's really where we became absolutely nothing, we were nothing. We lived in a cul-desac and everyone would come and party at her place. It was hell. I became the mother and the father to my younger siblings, and that's how my life panned out. There was just no- - nothing else-.

Q. And was it - it was during that period that the State started to become involved in terms of Police and social workers-?

A. Yeah.

Q. Could you tell us a bit about that?

A. So I - when my dad left, there was a lot of crap going on in the background. Even at the age that I was at, looking after my brothers, I guess dad not being in the house, that was my protection gone. So when my mother started partying, Christ, I don't know even know who the people were coming and going from the house. The door was always open, the door was always open. And when you're that young, all you're trying- - I just- - just trying to get through the day, through the night. So I became my siblings' parents. And then of course- with my father going back to the - **GRO-B**- yeah, that was when the doors started opening for abuse and what not, and -I - that was when I started speaking to a teacher-.

Q. And what did you tell the teacher?

A. I told my teacher what was going on at home and - yeah. And then I had to talk to another teacher because- - oh, gosh- - the first teacher that I had been speaking to at school about things that were going on at home, I found he was sleeping with my mum-.

Q. So the person you were --

A. So I spoke to another teacher. Yeah, yeah.

Q. - trying to go to for help, yeah-.

A. Yeah. And she was really good. So I'd go to school, sort my brothers, go to school, and she'd take me aside and we'd talk, and I'd tell her things. I guess she had a way of getting me to open up and I was telling her things that were happening at home and that, different people in the house and things like that, and then things started happening with me, and she went to the office, and then next thing there's these other people there, social worker people, and then next thing my mother's dragging me down to the road to the doctor and I can still smell his crumby office to this day. And she dragged me into his doctor's surgery, dragged me up the hallway. I didn't know what was happening, it just bang, bang, bang, bang, and this Chinese man picks me up, puts me on his bed and I'm having this real mental fit because I didn't know what was going on and my mother's screaming at me and she's holding my legs, and oh God, it's just really yuck.

Q. And just to clarify, the incident that you were referring to that you spoke to the teacher about, was that the time that one of the neighbours --

A. Yeah.

Q. - abused you-?

A. Yeah. Because our house had become the party house, and I was the oldest in our house, I became responsible for all these other kids on the street. So all these bloody kids would

be coming out of these houses because their parents were at our house drinking. So I'd just be constantly going from house to house to house, you know? It was - yeah-

Q. And what happened on that occasion?

A. The occasion with the neighbour?

Q. Mmm?

A. I - there was a party next door at our house and I was sent to the house next door and it was a State unit, so it was upstairs/downstairs, bedrooms upstairs. All these kids asleep in- the lounge on the floor and I was - I was taken upstairs and this particular bedroom faced our house next door quite clear, you could see people coming and going. I can still see the street light outside the bedroom window. And that was the first time that I had- - that was the first time that I was sexually abused by an older female-

Q. Thank you for sharing that with us. And that's then - obviously you've explained that you told the teacher that-?

A. Yeah.

Q. That social workers came to the school?

A. Yeah.

Q. And that you were taken to a doctor to have a check. And what came of that?

A. I don't know what happened from the doctors on - I don't know what happened between- - what happened after that. After that happened, my mother sent me to my father. She didn't like the people coming around the house. I was being naughty-

Q. By "the people", who do you mean?

A. There's teachers and that coming to the house because I'd been talking to them at the school. So yeah, she sent me away and I went to stay with my father.

Q. And it seems right in the next period that there was quite a lot of that, going back and forth --

A. Yeah.

Q. - between where your father was and where your mother was-?

A. Yeah, it's almost like, oh my God, look out. They're on to us, get rid of her, move her. It sort of felt like that, it sort of felt like "Flippin heck, the teachers are coming to the house now, I'm going to get in trouble, get rid of her". So it was just this constant shifting of nobody wanting to be blamed for anything. It was just madness how easy parents could do that with their kids and yet schools knew, teachers, it just - I can't get my head around that. That's like really falling through a system and nobody's picking up the- - you know? Wouldn't that send alarm bells to you, you know, -noone was- -noone's ever been

accountable from- - just, oh my God, yeah, I have a hard time dealing with that. Because even when you tell people stuff, people try, but they- - I guess they just give up, they don't try hard enough-.

Q. That's one of the things that you've spoken about, is that you did have both teachers and social workers visiting?

A. Yeah.

Q. And also your house was quite close to the local police station?

A. Yeah. So we moved. We moved again, so I had been sent back again, and she'd been given a bigger house, and it was right next door to a Community Police base. So back then what was happening was they were putting these bases up all over the place and we lived right next door to one. So there were cops there all the time. It was evident then that our father was not coming back, and she was full of so much rage, I cannot even - yeah, she was- - she had just become this really angry person. But we were a pay cheque as well, we were a pay cheque and yeah, living next to this Police Station, Christ, you'd think things would have got better. No way, no way-.

Q. You've spoken a bit about the reasons you thought these people didn't take these concerns seriously?

A. Yeah.

Q. When you and sometimes your brothers, there would be concerns, people would come to the house and speak to your mother?

A. Constantly.

Q. What was it about your mother, what was it about the way that she was treated? Could you tell us about that?

A. My mother, oh God, my mother is a master, a - she is the best. She is this very, very fair woman, blonde hair, blue eyes- and - and then you had us. We were like the bloody spawn of the- - then you had us, and just- - people would feel sorry for her. I cannot- - Christ, you know, it just sounds really far from the truth but, oh my God, she could wrap anyone around her finger with this change in her voice and this instantly pity, everyone felt pity for her. The cops would come to the house, and they'd be all over her and when we'd run away and we'd beg these cops don't take us back there, oh my God, she's going to kill us-.

And it was just like - you just pretty much open the door and dragged- - you know, it just, fuck it, just, oh my God. My mother is, even to this day, oh my God, she's the master manipulator. She just- - the social workers, we even had church members coming to the house. She had them, she just, "poor me, poor- me".

- Q.** And how was that for you in terms of - how did you feel that you were treated as a young- Māori girl?
- A.** As a young Māori girl, we were - we were the brown stock, that's what we were. We were nothing. We were nothing. And that's why they had so much pity for her. Here's this- Pākehā woman struggling with all these bloody little brownfaced kids who are playing up. And we weren't, but it was just this colour, colour. Flippin heck, I've seen it all my life, colour is the- - that's it, just colour. We were treated different because we were bloody- brown and that is the honest goddamn truth. That is the truth. There was never once a Māori cop come to the house and the minute these cops would walk out of there, oh my God, I'd be sitting on the doorstep watching them, and they'd come in the gate like they were coming in for a bloody cup of tea. You know, the thrashings, the thrashings in that house and you've got a Police base right there, right there. You open that back door, they're right there. Nothing. Nothing. Not a bloody thing.
- Q.** And for you, learning that lesson at that age, that how you look made people treat you differently, what did that mean to you in terms of how you felt about being Māori, about your own culture?
- A.** I may look Māori, I'm not Māori. No way. Never. I've never been allowed to be Māori. And when you've seen things that I've seen and things that I've heard from grandparents and what, you know, about being Māori, whatever, I don't want to be Māori. Why should I? I've never been allowed to be Māori. My mother whipped my arse if I even - you know, I wasn't allowed to be- Māori. And my mother didn't want us brown kids. Christ, we would have had a massive upbringing if we were white. But we weren't. And because of that, it just - it dictated our future, that's what it did. It dictated our future. And with all the involvement from Social Welfare and bloody social workers, what did they do? I'll tell you what they did do; they would pick us up and put us in the back seat of a car and drive us 50 fuck'n K into the hills- – GRO-B - and dump us at a shearing station because that's exactly what they did-.
- Q.** Can you tell me about that time --
- A.** That was absolutely fuck'n horrific. It was horrific. I'd been sent back to live with my father again, the social workers had dropped me off there because I was playing up. God, I think just breathing I was playing up. And I remember this guy pulling up and he said - he was talking to my father, as I said earlier, my father doesn't deal with white people and he's

frick'n going off his head at this guy knocking on the door. He'd come from Social Welfare, it was called back then-.

Next thing, I'm being put in the back of his car and my brother's there and we're off, dumped in the middle of bloody nowhere at some shearing - fuck, God, some shearing quarters. You're talking no more road, it's gravel, and no- - oh my God, I can't even- - it's just in the middle of nowhere, seriously-.

Q. What did the social worker tell you and your brother?

A. They didn't tell us nothing, nothing. So we're going through the Manawatu Gorge thinking, oh, okay at least we're together. So the brother I was with is the next one down from me. We had no idea where the frick we were going. And he takes us out there, we get out of the car, and all these rooms, all these rooms in lines. And we were left there, we were left there. My brother was given a room, I was given a room, and then as that day went on you knew why there were so many rooms because all the shearers came back from the hills, so you sort of - fuck, I don't know, I can't explain it. I really can't. You don't know where you are, you don't- - you don't know who any of these men are, and they are men, they're not frick'n boys, they're grown men who have been up in the hills and shearing sheep and what not, and you don't know what you're doing, you've had no direction, -noone's said to you "You're going to do this and you're here for this long and we'll come back and we'll do this and you'll be fine". There was none of that, it was drop, go, that was it. And me and my brother, I mean, my brother was really scared-.

Q. How old were you two at this stage?

A. Christ, Julia. Christ, look, I want say 12, 13, something like that. We were - my brother was so scared, he was so scared. That made me scared. So our first night there, -noone talked to us. There was a room this size and there was a kitchen, bench, and then I get told that I'm having to cook these meals. Fuck, I don't know what the hell I'm doing. I don't know if any of you know what shearers are like, but my God, they get real shitty real quick when they're not being catered for, and I learnt that. As the time went on, I learnt that-.

So I guess I took over the kitchen, cleaning duties. And then our first morning at work arrived next day. Do you know what time shearers get up to go to work? Fuck. So we're dragged out of our beds and we got separated, me and my brother. And I was frick'n terrified. They had these vans and they were just - where the back door was open like that, no windows, and everyone just sort of piled in there and I was- - I was picked up and put into this van, and I was- - I was so scared. I was so scared. And I was calling out for my brother. The van that he was in had already gone and all you see is all this dust coming up

off the road and I tell you what, you just- - you- - it's this fear that you can't- - you can't name it, it's a- - it's fear, yeah, just fear-.

And that was our first start at work right through that whole day. We worked, we had to work like them, we worked - we were put to work. That's a better way to put it, we were put to work, every damn day that we were on that shearing. And we were there for a while. I didn't know if I'd see my brother again. We got back after the first night and I was exhausted and I still had to go cook frick'n tea. And I was tired, and I stunk, and even- to this day the smell of sheep oils, sheep lanolin or whatever it is on the wool, even to this day if I smell it I go straight back to the shearing quarters. Automatically, I don't know, I leave and I go straight back to the shearing sheds, man.

And they were hard, they were hard men. These are men, like, how can I say hard? These are men that are tough, real like toughened men, yeah, didn't give a shit. We were just little shits, me and my brother. And we were the only kids there. Everyone else was a working shearer adult, yeah. So yeah, and then that became our day, that became our daily thing; up at bloody 5, separated, in vans, and put to work.

Now, when you get to these shearing quarters, you can't go sit down, you work and everyone's your boss, everyone in that work room is your boss. So you can have 10 men yelling at you, and if you're not jumping, every fuck'n time they'd lose their shit. I don't know how many times things would go flying across the bloody room because they were getting shitty because you weren't working faster then. You went from raking sheep wool to picking it up, and they're weighty, you know? You had to - you had to be bang, bang, bang, get it off the floor, pick it up, throw it on these tables, clean it. And then you were put -to - that was mine and my brother's, we were put out there, it was like frick'n hard labour and we were being punished. I don't know why, why we were put to work like slave frick'n labour. It was just horrific, oh my God-.

- Q.** So there's a social worker who dropped you off but it doesn't sound like there was anyone there who was meant to be looking after you or in charge of you?
- A.** No follow up, no. No support. No, nobody. Nobody. And as time went on, my brother wanted to run away. Where were we going to run to? We're frick'n 30, 50 K in the hills, you know? Friday night was booze night, all the shearers got, you know - Friday night was booze night. So that meant at the end of Friday night everyone was showering and getting ready for a party-.
- Q.** What did that mean for you?

A. Christ, I tell you, it was just like moving from one hell to another hell to another hell. It just - it was consistently being moved from hell 1 to hell 2 all the time. It was- - party nights -were - for me, -I - because my mother had been having parties before I'd gone there, so I sort of knew when people drank too much this is what happens and then they'd fight and then bottles would be thrown around and my brother- - I remember this one night these shearers -were - they'd had way too much to drink and one of them brought us a bottle- - this Tequila. I remember that, and I'll always remember that because it had a worm in it and I just, at that time I'm assuming, oh my God, there's a live worm in this- bottle not knowing what the hell it is. So that's what we got, we were filled up on Tequila. My brother's room was next to my room. These rooms are like a shoe box, just a bed. No protection, just - you can't do anything. So you just do. Yeah-.

Q. Because you were the only girl there?

A. I was, yeah. Yeah. And then sometime later, ages later, a social worker turned up with another two boys and they were dumped there. Same thing, put to work like us. It's fuck'n - that is- - that is a very sad thing for a system to do to kids, make them go away like that, you know? Yeah, just very sad for the system to have allowed that to happen-.

Q. And you've told us obviously being put to work and the physical labour during the day and then was it every Friday essentially that --

A. Yeah, Friday night.

Q. - the shearers got drunk-?

A. Yeah.

Q. Provided with you alcohol?

A. Yeah.

Q. And you experienced abuse while you were there?

A. Yes, I did. I remember a few weeks in, my brother - my brother, -he - we'd got back and I said to him that I wanted to go into my room and he come in the room with me and he shut the door and I said I just- - I looked at him and I said "I need to lock the door". He didn't get it. He didn't get it. So I said to him- - in particular, one of these guys, don't even know his name, would come into my room and do stuff and I told my brother and that night he slept on the floor in my room. But that didn't last. It didn't last-.

Q. So he tried to protect you?

A. He tried to protect me, yeah, yeah. I remember when the social worker came back with these other two boys, they were given the rooms next to me and I remember my brother

saying to them "Don't go near my sister", you know? And then they were - they were given Tequila like us, yeah, the two Social Welfare boys, yeah-

Q. Your brother was only a child himself, so there was only --

A. Fuck, we all were.

Q. There was only so much he could do?

A. Yeah.

Q. And you mentioned before that your brother wanted to run away from there?

A. Yeah. He did.

Q. Did you guys try to run away?

A. We got probably as far as from here to the main door out there, turned around and went back. There was nothing, no traffic, nothing. Nothing.

Q. And at some point, but you're not sure when, a social worker came back again without warning and picked you up again?

A. Yeah. Another move. Another move, just constant move.

Q. During these moves where you've told us of being taken from one hell to another, I wanted to ask you a bit about your wider whānau, because I know in particular you had an aunty who had tried at different points to intervene. Could you tell us a bit about what she tried to do, how she was involved?

A. My aunt on my father's side, she had - she knew what was going on in the house, but she couldn't do anything. My mother- - my mother would have just walked next door and said to the Police, you know, that she was lying and they would have bloody believed her because this was always happening. My aunt knew what was happening and there was a particular incident at the house when I had been sent back again, the social workers dropped me back off at home and she had met this other man and he was violent as hell. Fuck, -he - oh God, he was so violent-

And there was this particular incident where - there were a lot of incidents, but this one was really pretty bad, and he'd been drinking in the kitchen and he was losing the plot, and they started fighting, and he had a machete. When he drunk, this machete would sit on the table right there next to his bloody Fosters beer and so him and her were fighting in the kitchen and he started running around, then he picked up this axe and, fuck, it was- - it was like a movie. I opened up a bedroom window and the light was off and I kept saying to my brothers, ssh, we can't turn the light on, they'll see the light because the house was in darkness so if the light would have gone on she would have seen it from the kitchen, push this window open in the middle of the night and getting really shitty with my brothers

because they're making noise and I'm freaking out, I picked them up and I'm throwing my brothers out this fuck'n window. It wasn't high to the backyard. And I climb up, they're frick'n out there crying and I'm like really- - I'm freaking that they're going to come at me with a bloody machete, oh my God-

I get out, I climb out, and I get my brothers and I take them around down the backyard and we go under the house. There's this, like, little trap door thing and usually she had a padlock on it. The padlock wasn't on it. And my youngest brother starts crying, what are we doing, what are we doing. I just kept saying ssh, we had to be quiet. I pushed this frick'n door open and it went under the house, and I remember it was so dark, but it had these, like, little air vents going all around the house, so the little bits of light that came in you could sort of make things out. And there was a little concrete pad under there, like really little, and then it was just dirt. And my brothers wouldn't bloody get in. They wouldn't go in. I'm, like, trying to pull them. My brother's getting louder and louder, and I'm really frick'n freaking out, and I'm trying to pull him under the house so that at least then the others would come and they were, they were scared.

Anyway, I got them under there and we're on this concrete pad and we stayed there for days under this house. And I'd get up, I'd sneak out the door, sneak up the side of the house, sneak in the house, open up the cupboards. She never bought food. I remember there was some bread in the cupboard so I took the bread, I thought she won't notice this is missing, sneak out the door, go back down under the house and feed my brothers. We stayed there for ages. And that is what got my aunt involved, that particular incident, because after that happened, my brothers would not ever go back under that house, they wouldn't. I thought, fuck, what am I going to do if this happened, you know? I was always preparing.

So what happened, I would get them out of the house and we would run. My aunt lived a good 10, 15 minute run from where we were and I would run with these kids.

Q. So your three little brothers?

A. Yeah, I'd run with these kids to my aunty. And she - she wanted me, she wanted me out. My mother wouldn't give her, wouldn't give me to her, because my mother would lose her benefit. My aunt would beg her, plead with her, "Just give me her, just give me her, keep the boys". Wouldn't do it. And that's how my aunt got involved. She started ringing Social Welfare and making a ruckus, wanting me removed. No-.

Q. And why do you think they - that Social Welfare wasn't listening to her-?

A. I believe and my aunt believed it was because she was Māori and she took that - she was so heartbroken that she couldn't save me. She tried so hard. She tried so hard. She was the most humblest- Māori woman I knew. She took anyone in, colour meant nothing. She'd always say to me it's not this, but it was that. But she battled, she battled and they wouldn't give her the time of day, wouldn't give her the time of day. So right up until she passed away, she - she would apologise to me for not being able to save me and it wasn't her job to save me. I need to just have a break-.

[Break taken].

Q. Okay. So we've just finished a break and we're back and it's now 11.40 am. I wanted to ask you now about the experience that you had going to Porirua Hospital when you were about 12 or 13. And just if you could start by telling us really what was going on around that time at home. I know you've told us you were looking after your brothers, could you just take us through that in the lead up to how you ended up going to the hospital?

A. Okay. Dad had gone back to live – GRO-B - and there was no contact. We hadn't heard from him and I missed him, I did. I really missed my father. My mother had met another man, there were very many, anyway, this other guy, another Samoan guy, he was violent, he was- - I don't know, I could look at him and he'd give me the absolute shits, I tell you, I just- - he had- - I don't know, it was like there was nothing behind his eyes, and you couldn't read him. And he scared me, he did. So I just kept away from him. He had his own place and he worked and he lived about 30 minutes from where we were. And she was in love with him. So we were getting left home more and more. The neighbours all knew because quite often their kids would come over, because their mum had sent them over to see if we were okay. So you had all these surrounding homes, families and people knew that you were home alone looking after your siblings. But -noone said anything, you know? So this new guy she met, she was starting to stay at his house with him, which meant I was left in our house with my siblings-.

Q. And you were about only, what, 12 or 13 --

A. Yeah, yeah.

Q. - at this the time, okay-.

A. The good thing about that was her rage, her rage had settled. And I've always had this feeling that the rage she had with us, especially with me, I really have a hard time wondering if it's because I'm brown, with my mother. I can't really explain that feeling, but yeah, it just - it's just something I've always wondered, and that explains her rage with us-.

So one night she didn't come home, and it was pouring down outside, there was no food in the house again and - there was sugar and butter. I became the absolute pro at making toffee to feed my brothers, because there was nothing else to feed them, so I'd make this toffee up. The boys loved it. And I'd whip this toffee up, and I'd feed it to them. This one night, honestly, I don't know what happened, but I fed them, I put them to bed, huge four- bedroom house, so if they're at that end of the house you couldn't hear what was going on. I put them to bed and it was really late and I kept looking out the window, I was on edge waiting for her to come home. And to lock the door in our house, the frame- - we had knives going all the way up around the door frame, so that even if someone had a key you couldn't get in because all these doors(sic) were in the framing-.

Yeah, it was really late. The boys were okay, I went in the kitchen. And I climbed up, pulled the bottom drawer out, stood on that because I was too short to reach the top cupboards, climbed on that, then climbed up onto the bench and I could reach the absolute top cupboards and I'm opening all these cupboards. And I have to - I have to say this and it's in this statement as well, I never had the intention of- - GRO-B - I did not have that in my head. I don't know what was in my head, but I had no intention, I never thought I'm going to open that and I'm going to get up there and take this- and - GRO-B - that did not even compute in my head-.

So I climbed up and there was all these pills. What I did was I scooped them all out and I had all these pills, thought, wow. Again, I didn't know what the fuck I was doing and I had all these pills and I was tipping them out, and then I just took them, I can - I am there now, I'm back to that night. And they looked fucking great, all these coloured capsules and what not. I had no idea that by just going like that and having some water and just taking them all, I had no idea what I was doing, but I can honestly say that I did not intend on doing- - GRO-B. So I did, took all these pills.

I walked around the house, made sure everything was okay, how frick'n weird is that, and I'm like, okay, boys are in bed okay, okay. I went out the front door so that I didn't have to take all the knives out the back door. Went out the front door and I automatically snibbed it so it locked behind me so I had no way to get back in the house unless I woke the boys up, and this is really late at night and it's pissing down with rain. I get outside and I'm thinking, "Shit, what am I going to do?" I walked out the driveway, cool, calm collected, you know? I thought, far out - GRO-C - long walk from here, oh well, I'll go for a walk, in the rain, no jacket, nothing. And I start walking down the main

road, there's -buggerall traffic, I'm just walking, walking, walking, walking, I'm not tired, I'm not thinking about anything. And I approached the fish and chip shop down there, I finally get- — [GRO-C] - and I'm walking up to this fish and chip shop because the light was bright and I guess thinking back on it the pills were starting to kick in and I'm going to this fish and chip shop and there was a bus stop there- — [GRO-C] - is a real shithole. I've grown up in Porirua, man, and this place- - is you don't walk- — [GRO-C] - by yourself at night-.

I'm getting close to this fish and chip shop, and the light's getting brighter and brighter, and I hear this ruckus in the bus stop and I'm not even scared and I'm like, wow, I honestly felt frick'n invincible. And there were these guys in there, and I sort of walked past, sort of just acknowledged them in there because I'm going to this fish and chip shop, I've got no money or nothing. I go up these two steps and I'm down. And all I remember is I had - I wasn't awake, but I could hear people talking to me, and I can hear this "Ring an ambulance, ring an ambulance", people screaming. I didn't care, I didn't even think, oh fuck, it's me they're ringing an ambulance for, nothing. Lying in the rain and I hear this guy and he's going- — [GRO-B] - because that was my name before I changed it, he's screaming at me and it was my cousin. And I remember I'm looking at him, straight into his eyes, and he's going, "What the fuck have you done?" Because he's a bit older than me, and all I remember, I said to him "I took all the pills, I took all the pills", fuck. And I was out, I was out-.

And I woke up in Wellington Hospital, I don't remember anything from the - nothing, I just remember waking up and I'm in this ward. And there were other beds in this ward and my bed was in the middle, so there was a bed on each side and three over here. And they only have curtains, slack for privacy, so, yeah, and I remember waking up and my mouth was really dry, I'm thinking holy shit, I don't know where I am and I'm looking on the side and there's a jug with water and I'm trying to reach over and this nurse, far out, this nurse comes in and the curtain just goes, whoosh, and I sort of sat bolt upright, because again, I don't know where I am, and she's frick'n nutting me, she's going really ballistic at me, "What did you do, what did you do?" And I'm just sitting in this bed not computing anything, and she's screaming at me, and then this doctor comes, then another doctor then another doctor and they're all around the bed-.

And I start getting scared, because noone is explaining, they're all yelling at- me and I - I - - nothing, nothing was coming out of my mouth. And all I wanted was a drink, all I kept remembering was I'm really thirsty, I'm really thirsty, I'm dying of thirst here. I had

completely forgotten what I had done, I had completely forgotten I had taken the pills, everything, I'd forgotten it. And shit, the- - and I have to say this, because it sticks in my head all the time, they were all European doctors and nurses, and they were just doing this, fuck, just screaming at me, telling me off, "Why did you do that", and all of this. And it was quite surreal when I think back on it-

And then, oh my God they part and my mother comes in. I'm like, oh fuck, I'm in big trouble now, they've rung my mother, you know? I'm freaking out, freaking out and she comes in and the audacity of her, but this is my mother. She picks a chair right next to the bed and starts rubbing my head and telling me I'm going to be okay and all this shit, because that's all it was, none of it was true, you know. And these doctors are, oh look, really feeling sorry for her and I'm lying there seriously and I'm thinking what a load of shit. Fuck. I get the water, my mother's doing all this lovey dovey fluffing over the bed and what not. Yeah. And doctors are standing there with their pens and their bloody clipboards writing all this stuff down, talking to each other, writing all this stuff down, go around and they have this sort of little meeting right there with her. She agrees, and they're talking and she agrees because I can hear her, yes, yes, yes.

And they all leave, everybody just backed off, pulled the curtains and left me in this cubicle. I thought, oh great, I must be going to get dressed, she's going to come back and we'll go home and get the thrashing of my life, repeat. She didn't come back. This bloody grumpy arse nurse comes in, fiery as, and she says - they did tell me in a matter of fact way that they had to pump my stomach. That was it. She comes back and in a matter of fact way she says, "Get up off the bed and get dressed". I had no clothes, didn't know where my clothes were. The gowns that they give you, they don't do up at the back, and I was really conscious of this frick'n thing and I was stressing because I couldn't get it, because I still felt sick. And I was stressing out that someone's going to see my arse, you know, hanging out this thing, and I remember saying to her "Can you please help me tie the bottom string", rope. No, she wouldn't, thought fuck, okay. So I got up and I had pulled it really tight and I'm sick, I'm really ill. Went with her, fuck'n hell, thinking I was going- home.

We went out this door and it was like a docking bay type thing, you know, like at the back of the supermarkets and that where the trucks reverse up and they unload, it was like that, dark, concrete, and this ambulance came and there was some other people there, but it was really quite, what's going on, what's going on? Because nobody was talking. This ambulance reverses in and then these people are getting ushered by nurses and stuff like that. I'm thinking my mother must be coming around here to pick me up, this is what's

going through my head aye, and then they're loading people in this frick'n ambulance, then I get put in this ambulance. Oh, maybe the ambulance is taking me home, this is what I'm thinking, they're taking me back to my house. Oh no, they don't take me back to my house, God no.

Q. That's what you thought, you thought that your mum's going to be there, she'll pick you up, you're going home.

A. Yeah, going home.

Q. Noone had told you anything different?

A. No way. And the ride, it was - the people that were in the back of that ambulance with me were not well, okay? Maybe the doctors thought I wasn't well, but I know that I was more well than any of them. And they were adult people. These are adults, you know. And I didn't- - nothing was clicking into place. I just thought, fuck, they're taking us home, this is cool, they're dropping us all off. We went to Porirua and it wasn't until the doors open, sunlight and, oh fuck, Julia, oh my God. We had been taken to Porirua Hospital. Yeah. My mother had sent me to the nuthouse. And I call it the nuthouse because, fuck man, I've seen inside that place and I'm telling you right now, fuck that-.

Q. And you knew where you were?

A. I knew where I was. If you lived and grew up in Porirua, you knew Porirua Hospital, you knew what it was for and who it was for. They had pulled right up to the door and I knew, fuck, boy, did I know, I knew. And I was really - I think I was hurt that my mother had sent me to a mental institution. I don't know what I did wrong. But nobody asked, not even at the hospital. -Noone asked me, why did you take those pills? Why did you do this? -Noone fuck'n sat there and asked me, I would have told them. I would have said because the shit's going on in my house and this is happening and this is happening and my mother, and oh fuck, I would have told. -Noone asked, -noone frick'n asked-.

So anyway, we get put in this line and there's these big guys there, you know, obviously like orderlies or security or something for the hospital, and I'm freaking out, I'm really freaking out, I'm not knowing, right I can't run away, they're going to chase me, I'm not going to get away from here. And there's all this chatter and it's all these doctors, they see me, and there's all this going on, and they're all huddled in a corner and they're fuck'n looking at me and they're writing and they're doing all of this and I'm thinking, oh God, this is not looking great. The other people had been, I guess, processed, and it was my turn. I seriously don't think they knew what to do with me, is the feeling I got. And I think they

just couldn't understand. That's - looking back on it right now and I can see those doctors there, I think they were a bit, what the hell is she doing here? You know-?

So I get processed, there's these big doors, bars, steel like bloody prison bars. Go through that, and I start getting - I'm freaking out. Fuck. Shuts the door, this big guy shuts the door, and they had these chain things, and on those- - and they all had them- - were keys, hundreds and hundreds of keys, so every frick'n time they moved, jingle jingle jingle. To this day I fuck'n hate keys jingling, it just drives me mad. And these guys are not there to talk to you and ask you how you are, they're there purely just to do their job and you bloody listen and get in there and don't give us any shit. That's the attitude-.

My room was right behind the processing station, so there's a wall and there was my room and I wouldn't go in it. So I had my hands on the - I wouldn't go in and I'm fighting this guy and he's getting shitty and I'm getting louder and anyway, the room, shoe box, dark as hell. It's that darkness that you walk in and your eyes have to really adjust till you see what it's in that room, little window with bars on it, bed. I went in there and I sat on that bed and I fuck'n cried. I cried and I cried and I just thought, this is it, this is it for me. Shit life and now I'm in a fuck'n mental institution, that's it, my life's over, nothing. There was just nothing and nobody, there was -noone to help transition, nothing. And I remember walking over to the little baby window and I was too short, and I'm trying to jump up, trying to look out this fuck'n window-.

And if you sort of got the angle right, you sort of could just see out and it looked straight out into the driveway where the ambulance was. And I was left in that room and the man, doctor came, I don't know what the hell he was talking about, no idea, and then the man came to go for a meal and I wouldn't go out of the room. He's getting really wild with me, I still wouldn't go out the room with him, so he dragged me off that bed. And in that mental institution a door was - there's just doors after doors after doors, fuck'n doors everywhere to everything. I remember him struggling because I was fighting him, and he was struggling with these bloody keys to get these doors open and then you had to lock them and, oh fuck. And he got me into the next room, and I wasn't backing down, and I'm really fighting this guy, big guy, that was it, fuck, just dragged me through, down that corridor. And there were these doors that go, like, they're swinging doors. -Noone else around, there was nobody anywhere. So he opened those fuck'n doors, oh my goodness, nah-.

Q. What was that room that he took you to?

A. I think everyone out of the ward was in that room. Everyone was sitting at tables in like a U type shape and straight ahead when you went through those doors were the- - I don't know if they were nurses, they had ladies that had these big ridiculous- looking hats and big bloody uniform- type clothing on, all sitting in this bloody line like matrons or something. And I just- - I knew, when those doors opened, I knew where the fuck I was, and it was everyone else in that room and their actions; there were people throwing food, there were people vomiting, there were people fighting. Fuck, it was like a circus, seriously. And I started screaming-.

Q. Because these are all adults --

A. Yeah, and he was trying to get me on to sit at the table and I was - no, I'm not sitting at the fuck'n table. I remember screaming "I shouldn't be here, I shouldn't be here". And I see- - just so many unwell people, but I knew I wasn't that unwell, I knew I wasn't that unwell. I mean, why the fuck am I here? So, anyway, this guy's getting shitty, shitty, shitty and I get dragged off back down the room, throws me in there, doctor come and give me some pills, and my mother came. Yes, she turned up again and started playing her "feel sorry for me" bullshit. She brought me a new nightie and I threw it at her and one of the matrons, nurses, whoever they are, got angry with me because I wouldn't accept it graciously from my mother. You know, your mother's just brought you a brand new nightie, da, da, da and be grateful, all this shit. But yeah, so my mother left-.

Q. And at this point had anyone, including your mother, said how long you might be staying there?

A. No, Julia, no. No, not at all. Not a word. I seriously thought that's where I was going to be permanently living the rest of my frick'n life."

COMMISSIONER STEENSON: Okay, we're going to take a short break and when we do we'll resume with the recorded evidence. So we'll pause the livestream and return shortly.
Thank you.

Adjournment from 4.35 pm to 4.51 pm

COMMISSIONER STEENSON: Kia ora ano, we're going to resume with Ms NN's prerecorded evidence.

(Video played).

A. "What happened was I could hear yelling, swearing, and I knew the voice, my father. He was outside. My room was right next to the processing, so you had to come to processing to get in that unit, ward, whatever it is. My father's having a haka out there. They released me to him and then the next stage of my hell fucking life started, the minute I left that

mental institution. I think I probably would have preferred to stay the fuck in there, because that is when the most serious of all the sexual abuse started. I was thrown into -a - the social workers come up, oh, it's okay, you're with your dad now, da, da, da, like that was okay, you know. That's okay, you'll be fine, you're with your father now. Fuck'n big mistake-.

My father lived in Levin at the time in a cul-desac and he was with his new partner and she was- - she hated me. She really hated me, because I was his only daughter and she had three daughters of her own, so her marriage was broken, blah, blah, blah. I was introduced to her nephew two houses down and as young as I was, I started living in a very- adult relationship. That became so violent and yet my father thought that was okay. My father thought that that was okay. And when I ran away from the house, back to his house two houses down, I'd be dragged straight back to that house. Just another house of horrors.

So her nephew, I became his property, yeah. And then my father moved. I was going to school, we were going to Social Welfare in Levin and he would just sort of say "How are you doing, are you okay", and that's it. Nobody digs. How can you - yeah fuck, just there's so many how comes of why didn't- and --

Q. And that's a thing we've spoken about?

A. Yeah.

Q. And obviously at this point of your life is noone actually finding out or asking you in a way that you felt safe, to tell them what happened?

A. Yeah. I mean, if you're running away from home and you've got a younger sibling with you and you're sleeping three nights in a bush reserve and you're 9, 10 years old, the Police find you and they take you home, why - that's not normal behaviour. So why didn't anybody ask and why didn't anybody dig? Why didn't anyone say "Is something going on that you want to talk to us about and maybe we can help you?" How many incidents and situations in this fuck'n thing are there that nobody asked? You know, my mother didn't care for us. My father, well, yeah, so here's another story-.

When you're put into the care - and this is what I assumed growing up was you had this Social Welfare, that's who they were called, right, they were there to look after you, to help you. If things weren't right they'd help you make things right, that sort of shit. There was none of that. Nobody listens and nobody wanted to listen because it was easier for us to fuck'n disappear and that's why. Look at the incident getting dumped up in the back hills of- GRO-C - would anyone have cared if we'd have died up there? Those are things

I look back on now. We're lucky we survived. I wish I didn't have the memories. We are damn lucky we survived-.

But we were put in positions that we never should have been put in and so were other people, but noone's standing up and saying "We should have did this, we should have did this, but now we're doing a Royal Commission thing", you know? It's too late for my brothers. Ten of us, 10, I have 10 fuck'n siblings. Social Welfare came in, broke that all up. Where are they? Brothers in the mob, brothers in prison, brothers that have been in every frick'n boys' home you can name. Brothers that were sent to an island up north on some frick'n Social Welfare camp where he was raped, just shit after shit after shit, and it just kept going. Noone's stopping it. My mother was psychotic as hell and noone, noone questioned that. They'd pick us up and take us back, pick us up and take us back. Going to school with bruises, my brother got the thrashing of his life with a frick'n jug cord. There were so many welts on his body I couldn't even separate the welts from the best skin when I tried to heal him. But he went to school like that. Fuck.

But yeah, so I am angry, I'm angry at the shit that we were exposed to through the Government agencies that should have been protecting us, and I believe a lot of it, a lot of it is because we were brown kids and nobody cared about us. I know that because I felt it and I felt it over and over and over and over, from the Police next door, to the doctors. Why didn't my doctor question it? Just, fuck, just so much, you know? I was going to intermediate with frick'n chunks of my hair pulled out because my mother went on a frick'n psychotic rage at me, nobody asked anything.

And as a kid, and you have to understand this, I did tell people, I told people I thought I could trust all bar the teacher that I found out was sleeping with my mother because he was coming out of her bedroom, but I did tell people. When people don't act, you give up telling. You know? And it should not be like that, you've got to have people that need to fuck'n listen, because they want to help. Not just because, hey, this is your job title, here you go, Julia, go and see if these kids are okay, you know? If you don't have that empathy and that passion to help whānau, don't sign up to do these jobs. Because you're playing with our lives and seriously, fuck, I - the Porirua Hospital, the shearing, the- - they are just a bit of the incidences through my life that I was subjected to, and I never ever should have been subjected to a lot of that shit. I'm speaking for me, I'm not speaking for my brothers, because I don't have that relationship with them, because, sadly, they blame me for not being there to help them with their journey. But I was in the beginning- --

Q. Yeah.

A. - until we were separated, and they blamed me for that-.

Q. And you've spoken about that as one of the impacts, that Social Welfare essentially destroyed your family unit?

A. Yeah.

Q. By separating you?

A. Yeah.

Q. And what happened when your brothers were taken because I know they still tried to get you to help when they were in boys' homes?

A. When the boys -when everyone was separated, I'd get social workers, they'd come and they'd want me to go to the boys' homes and speak with my brothers and get them to stop playing up basically, right. I had been- -I was flown to Christchurch to the boys' facility down there, I was expected to help them when my brother was playing up on some island programme through Social Welfare. Just- -it sort of became my job because it was almost like they didn't want to do their job, so it became my job to make sure my brothers were okay in the boys' homes. It wasn't my fucking job. Yeah, so, yes, I'm angry-.

Q. And that anger that we're talking about, that is still very real today, isn't it, because those impacts are something that you still experience in your life now?

A. Yeah.

Q. What does that mean in terms of your relationships with your family at this stage in your life?

A. There are none. I haven't seen my father, I don't know, for a few years and he lives in Palmerston North. He can drive past my house and just keep going. My mother, my mother disowned me and my children a few years back because I - I wouldn't bend to the rules and do the way of life that she wanted and that involved helping my brothers when they escaped prison, when they were killing people, when they -were- all that crap. I was not going to live that life. My mother's very much- -she's like the godmother in that movie on the godfather, my mother's the godmother. -She- it's okay, "just bring your guns over here and we'll put them in the roof, it's okay, just put your drugs over there, that's all right", that shit. It's that life of, I don't know, insanity I want to say, but, yeah-.

Q. So you don't have contact your mother for the same reason?

A. No, no. No.

Q. And so it seems as though when you got to a certain age when you met your partner, you then sort of turned and then the focus then was on your own family and the kids that came later. Can you tell me a bit about that period?

A. You make it sound so simple and idyllic, it was hard. My father -my partner is European, full European, and we met when we were 15. So my father bashed him up on the side of the road in Levin because he was white and his father did not like me because I was brown, so we went full circle back to this bloody colour stuff. So it was hard, it was really hard, and we were young, you know. So we were, yeah, we- were 15.

The influences from my mother were tough, because she - she would often say any man is too good for you, she always expected me to be on that level like her, I guess. And it was hard, it was really hard. So I met- – **GRO-B** - I got pregnant, total mistake, but- anyway, I got pregnant and my brothers -because it was a boy, my brothers reared their ugly heads and they wanted to take him to raise him in the gangs. Far out. My father wanted him, because he expected that he had a right, being- Māori, to having his first born grandchild and because it was a boy, and I said no.

So I put up with a hell of a lot of shit to hold my baby. And the shit didn't stop then. It was just -it got harder. We spent years running from my family; living in a caravan, at Hokio Beach-, me – **GRO-B** - three babies, you know, hiding from my family, because where Social Welfare messed up, in their minds it was my fault, I hadn't fought hard enough to keep my brothers together, and that's my fault, that became my fault, it's still my fault today. No relationship at all, at all, no way. No, they stay away from me, I stay away from them, I couldn't care less if they dropped dead-.

It sounds really hard and harsh considering earlier I was sitting here saying to you I would sneak into a house to feed them and I would do this for them and I would do this. But you don't understand the fear that I had to live through having my babies and because – **GRO-B** --'s Pākehā, they developed an issue with that.

So again, I'm back, again, fighting, fighting, fighting but for my own children this time, and I did. If that meant washing their clothes in a river in Levin, that's what I did. And we hid, we hid for a long time. And we survived. We survived. I have five adult kids --

Q. And none of them were taken into care?

A. Fuck no, fuck no, no. No way. And I made damn sure my kids got what they needed and they never went near that system. And that disappointed my mother greatly. Oh, yeah.

Q. So today you've got five adult kids?

A. Yeah.

Q. And mokopuna?

A. Yeah. All my children, they all work, they've graduated in things, they're just - they look after their children. And they -are - they're my kids and they're fuck'n awesome kids. They really are. They know that I've had a hard upbringing, they don't know why. And I'm not sure that they'll ever know why, or that they'll ever know the full story, but I have allowed them to be them, you know, and that's been hard because my identity with being- Māori is not. And yet my grandchildren are learning to speak Māori and da, dada, -dada, and I'm sitting on this side of the fence thinking, wow, I'm happy for them in that respect, but I'm sad for me because I wasn't allowed that, you know? Yeah, and I blame the system for that-.

Q. Yeah.

A. From the getgo.

Q. And there was a time that you took your family back up the Coast to try to reconnect on that side?

A. Yes.

Q. How was that for your --

A. When the kids started getting older they started asking about tribes and things like that and I'm like, oh, shit, I'm not going to be able to dodge this bullet for much longer, you know? So we did a trip and we went back to the homestead. We didn't stay because of the abuse that happened back there. A lot of abuse, a lot of abuse, just - yeah, a lot of abuse. So we didn't stay, but I think doing that for my children, I have enabled them to go further if they want to. They have every right to. And I've never ever stopped them from- - it's their choice, they're adults, it's their decision, but I just sit in the back. Sadly, because it never should have been like that either, you know-.

Q. And that's because you - if you had it, if you'd had the chance to grow up with that, then you would have been able to pass that on to them-?

A. Yeah, yeah. Yeah.

Q. And I know you've spoken to us about how Social Welfare or CYFS at that time wasn't involved with your kids at all, but you did have a more recent experience when you saw how they operated?

A. Very sadly, yes.

Q. How long ago was that? That was quite recently recent?

A. Yeah, so a couple of years aye.

Q. Okay?

A. Out of the blue I get a phone call from a social worker in Hamilton. They rung me to ask me if I'd take my nieces and nephew and I said to them I don't even know who they are, they don't know me, I don't know them. I even had to ask them what brother these kids were, you know? They were uplifting the children from my brother because my brother was and is heavily addicted to meth, very unstable home environment for the kids. Anyway, they reached out to me and asked me if I'd take them and I said yes, I will take them until you can home them. This is not permanent, but I will take them in the interim, right? Kids didn't know me, I didn't know them.

So they had arranged for the following week to do the uplift, so I sort of got the picture that they were trying to find somewhere for them, then go in and get the kids, and do the runner with the kids. So the following week comes, they ring me and they say, right, we're going around to the house this afternoon and I can hear the commotion in the background, just yelling and things like that. Shit, this is really happening. Fuck, here we go, another two kids going through the system, blah, blah. They ring me and they say "We've got the kids". I said "Okay, what do you want me to do?" I'm panicking because I felt like I was part of a - I don't know, I felt like I was stealing these kids, type thing. And they said, "Right, can you meet us halfway?" I thought, far out, okay, where's halfway from here to Hamilton? So they agreed that I'd meet them in Taihape. So I said, yeah, all right, I'll meet you up there tonight-.

So I get in my car, I go alone and I'm thinking, oh yeah, well, Taihape's not that far and they're already on the road. I get to Taihape, pick the kids back and we'll come back and then just get on with it. We get to Taihape and there's nobody there. So I'm sitting at McDonalds, I'm sitting there for hours and it was like 10 o'clock at night, and I'm getting really pissed off because I've got to drive all the way back with two kids I don't know in the dark. The social workers pull up, so I get out, and I'm going across this carpark, it's pitch black, Taihape's really dead, it's just the trucks going through at night. And there's these kids, poor little buggers, they wouldn't even get out of the car, they were so freaked out. Three of them. And I said to the social worker, I said, oh, why is there three? And she says, "Oh, we've brought the older one, can you take him as well?" And I says, no, I can't take him. They didn't like that I wouldn't take him with the other two. I said, look, I'll take the two young kids but I'm not taking the older one, you'll have to take him back. They said we can't take him back to Hamilton, we've got nowhere to place him, I said that I can't take him, I've set my family up to know I'm coming back with two and that's all I'm taking.

And they were quite upset about it, and I just put my foot down and I said, no, I'll take the two kids. So I was trying to get these kids out of the car. You've got understand, they don't know me, and they didn't want to come and I'm trying to be really, you know, just, come on let's go, I'm your aunty, get them over and I'm buckling them in and the older boy comes across the carpark and he's standing at the passenger door. I said, what are you doing? He said "I'm getting in the car". And this kid is like a man and he just talks to you like he don't give a shit who you are, type thing, and that got my back up because he was quite disrespectful. And I said to him, "What are you doing", and he was trying to get in the car, I says, "Hang on, hang on, no, you're not coming with me" and I'm calling the social workers across, "You need to get over here and get this kid. I refuse to take him." Fuck.

He gets in the car, so by the time they get there he's sitting in the car and I'm getting really pissed off and I'm telling them "Get him out of the car". Then he frick'n in his pocket and he's got this weed. And at first I'm just, like, what's that? And he just looked at me, not a care in the world. You know? And I was like, oh my God, get out, get out of my car now. Got out of the car and I lay into the social workers. I was so angry, because obviously they hadn't checked these kids.

So anyway, I said "He's got weed on him, did you know he's got weed on him, did you even check him?" I guess in that second, whatever, I had forgotten that the two little ones were in the car and this kid's over here acting like some tough guy and social workers are pressuring me. We turn around and this kid's running down the middle of Taihape road in the middle of the frick'n night. Anyway, I was screaming at the social workers to chase him, and they just stand there. I'm, like, hello, that kid is - it was really- - you just- - frick, it was unbelievable and they just stood there, two of them. And I'm screaming at them. This kid, by that point was gone, out of sight, gone, gone. And I'm just thinking, like, get in your car, get in your car and go, just go- home.

So I get my car, I'm still yelling at them and they're saying, oh well, he's gone now, there's nothing we can do about it. And I'm yelling at them, losing my shit saying he's got no family here, we don't even know if he's got money, you wouldn't even know because nobody checked them. Anyway, I left. I could not - I wasn't going to deal with it any- - fuck, it was just so- - such incompetence, oh my goodness, and I was pissed off-.

We left Taihape, it would have been near 11. This drama had been unfolding in this carpark with these kids, it was traumatic. The kids started crying, and then I felt bad because I'd left their brother, but well, he was running down the road the opposite way and

I'm trying to console the kids. Halfway back they'd fallen asleep. I thought, thank God, you know? I was really - I was hurting for them, but I was hurting for the kid that I didn't take, and oh fuck, it was a mess. Got home, and it wasn't until I got the kids to come out and help carry them in, and it wasn't until we got the kids inside the house with the lights on that you saw the neglect, just, far out. These kids were feral, they didn't know what soap was, they didn't know how to eat with a frick'n spoon, they were feral-.

These kids had been in the system for years. Don't get me started on the whys, but anyway. They were bad, they were in really bad shape. They had sores, oh, it was just - it was really bad, it was bad. So I bathed them. And they're like animals, man, it was really sad. It was so sad. And I'm showering the girl and she's covered in sores and welts and frick'n bruises and everything. And as I'm showering her, it starts hitting me; holy shit-, I don't even know if these kids are allergic to anything, I don't even know if these kids have been abused, I had no info, nothing, blank canvas, right? So I start panicking, and I do her, get her out, we find clothes for them, and we settle them in the lounge. I remember them, I sat them on the couch and they just, these two kids holding on for dear life to each other.

I went down in the room and I said to her, holy shit, I don't know anything about these kids. And I remember saying to - **GRO-B** - in the middle of the morning, I said, don't go near them, I'll do them. I wanted to protect him because bruises and, you know, I'm thinking of my own childhood here. So that's kicking in, and I'm running on this frick'n adrenalin, and there's no- one to ring. There's just nothing. I've been given these kids and it's like, off you go, you're with your aunty now-.

And right there it was almost an identical replay to when we were being shipped around. It was the same frick'n thing. These kids couldn't eat. I stayed home, I had them for about nine months. I taught them to read, I taught them to eat, I taught them how to shower, and toilet, I taught them - I just- - I taught them-.

Q. Yeah.

A. I schooled them at home, because I couldn't put them in a school, I didn't know how long I had them. And I was getting tired. It was 24/7 care for these two kids. They were special high needs kids, they- - they're not the sort of kids like you could go in a room and put a movie on and you can slip into the kitchen and go back when the movie's just finishing. These kids, they had to see you, they had to be there, they had to be there, I couldn't go to the toilet, I couldn't- - and there was no respite. I was never offered respite. I was not

given- - that was my fuck'n day, 24 hours a day with these two kids. I had to find beds for them, I had -to - oh-.

Q. What sort of contact with the CYFS social worker, were they coming --

A. All I got was it would be transferred from Hamilton to Kapiti, that was it. That was it.

Q. You were just left to it?

A. Left to it. It wasn't until later, because when you're in those moments you don't think about the bigger picture, right? So if someone was to ring you and say, "Can you take two of your brother's kids just until we can find a home for them", you're going to say, okay, right, it's not forever. This went on and on and the kids were - the girl especially was displaying behaviour that didn't sit right with me. But I didn't have any history on them. She was, yeah, she was- - yeah, she just- - it was odd behaviour for a girl of her age, and I guess I was falling back on my own childhood here with my own abuse and stuff. So it started- sending lights off in my head. Yeah, there was just - there was just nothing Julia, nothing. Nothing-.

Q. So how did they - did they stay with you for about nine months-?

A. Yeah.

Q. Where did they go after that?

A. To my mother, mmm. To my mother. What happened was their dad, my brother, started ringing me and threatening to shoot me and come and burn my house down and what not. And I rung them. I remember ringing CYFS in Kapiti. I said to them my brother's ringing me and he's making threats and he's off his head on meth, and I've got his kids here, and he's threatening to kill me, I said, and what are we going to do about it? This went on for a good part of a week, my brother kept ringing, ringing, ringing, saying "Don't go to sleep tonight, I'm coming to burn your house down", all this shit and I'm frantically ringing CYFS.

So, in the end, I got quite demandful of them, do something about it or we're going to turn up on your doorstep with these kids. So they got a security firm to drive past the house every now and again to make sure we were okay. And then I couldn't do it, I couldn't protect those kids. My brother on meth, other brothers in gangs and things, you know? I couldn't give them the protection that they deserved even though I knew CYFS couldn't fuck'n protect them. What was I meant to do with them? I had no options, no choices, and so what was happening was I was starting to become retraumatised because I had these kids in front of me that reminded me of me and my brother, you know?

So there was just - yeah, what do you do? I felt like a real bitch because I couldn't look after these two kids, but why did that become my problem, when the department removed them? So, again, we're removing children and putting children without even doing background checks. How did they not know that my partner was a frick'n serial killer, whatever? It could have been anybody. Nobody checked him-.

So those sort of things that they are letting fall through are having huge impacts on people, and it's not just the children, it's the caregivers of these children as well. If they're not sharing information, how are we to know? You know? And they have these FGCs and they have these conferences and things like that and a lot doesn't come out of those, because they're not actually asking these children. You know, just because you're 6 years old doesn't mean you don't know what you want. Fuck, I knew. It just becomes, oh, it's just a child, it's just a child. You know, and that's where they're letting - they're letting the- system down by not getting in there and doing the harder work, it is hard work, but doing the harder, dig, do the digging.

Q. Because noone did that when you were young- --

A. Yes.

Q. - and then now you're seeing, I suppose, another version of that- --

A. Yeah.

Q. - not being done again. What does that, you know, in terms of that trauma that you were having to relive, how did that make you feel towards- --

A. The system.

Q. - the system-?

A. My anger, my anger, I don't - I cannot even put that on a scale. There isn't a scale big enough to hold my anger against the system. They, right from the get- go, just because my parents became separated, automatically CYFS and agencies are involved but nobody did their job way back then and this just went on and on and on, because nobody listened. My anger is why all of this, that's just me, and that's only not even a quarter of my story-.

Q. And for you, you know, you've gone on to have five children and grandchildren, and - but that's not to say that all of this hasn't taken its toll on you in terms of the impact in your life and you've spoken a bit about with your own health and how things have affected you. Could you tell us a bit what have been some of the impacts of your experiences as a child through to now as an adult-?

A. I don't know if I can answer that, Julia. I just I guess - I struggle when I hear you say to me or anyone else and they say to me, you're a survivor, you're a survivor. Fuck off. Okay,

you see me as a survivor, okay, that's how you see me. And this may - - people will read that and go, wow, she had such a shit life, okay. I never should have been put in a fuck'n position to have survived any of this shit because it was the Department's fault, it was their job to protect. They didn't. And it wasn't just me, it was other siblings as well, they destroyed that family unit, it wasn't enough, it went on and it's still going on currently up to a couple of years ago with my niece and nephew. So I can go right back and it's still happening-.

I'm angry, I'm so angry. But in saying that, I'm proud of the job that I have done with my own children because I can damn well promise you, not even any of my grandchildren will go through the system. So when people talk about surviving, surviving, surviving, okay, you see me as the survivor. I don't feel like a survivor, not at all. Not at all. I do this and this because something has to change; not going to change it, there's going to be a shitload more crap coming and that's not fair. I have had mental health issues, fuck, who wouldn't? I have been suicidal, apart- - not including the pill thing, but I have been suicidal. I have seen so many counsellors and psychologists and people pick my brain to the point where I actually feel crazy. But I'm not crazy-.

I lived a shit life. And a lot of that shit shouldn't have happened. So who's going to say - GRO-B - yeah, you're right, a lot of that shit shouldn't have happened and we're going to do this and this and this to try and make it better. If not for my grandchildren, because I damn well know that they will never go through the system, what about all these other kids-.

- Q.** And that's your - that's why you're here, right, to make sure that your story contributes to that change-?
- A.** Yeah. I still suffer trauma, I still can't stand hearing keys jingling, I still have issues with anger, and I don't know where that comes from. I don't know if it's because I'm angry at me, I don't know if it's because I'm still angry with the world. I am angry, I'm damn angry. But I don't - I don't carry it on my shoulders, you know? I brought my children up and we brought them up hard, it was a hard life. I went on to work. I accepted what happened to me. Yes, I cry when I talk about it because it fuck'n hurts. I cry when I can't accept that I'm- Māori. That's a shit. You asked me this morning about if I wanted you to do a karakia, whatever, and I said to you, what? No. That's my right and I should be able to say hell, yeah. But I won't. Because that identity I had was taken from me. So I don't associate with that at all.

Q. What you said about what needs to change, I'm just thinking of our Commissioners at the Royal Commission who will be listening to this and the Government who will be listening to the recommendations. For someone who's been through this, what do you say about what they need to change, going forward?"

MS SPELMAN: The final part of Ms NN's evidence can be seen on the screen. If you could just put that back up, please.

COMMISSIONER STEENSON: Do you have that with you to read out, Ms Spelman?

MS SPELMAN: I do and I'm just going to bring it up here because it's important to share these final words for Ms NN.

COMMISSIONER STEENSON: Thank you. Can we please go back to - our technical people are saying they're going to do that-.

MS SPELMAN: It's okay, I will read it out from here. Ms NN said, "Children should never ever know racism, let alone feel it. Children should never be held back because of colour. Children must be heard even at the youngest age. Children must be believed by teachers, family, doctors and the like. If not them, who are children to go to? They deserve a voice, they deserve respect, they certainly deserve to be protected by those in power who are able to do so."

And, Madam Chair, that concludes the prerecorded portion of Ms NN's evidence.

So I will pass back to you in terms of Commissioner response.

COMMISSIONER STEENSON: Ngā mihi Ms Spelman, and ngā mihi nui ki a koe Ms NN (English: thank you Ms Spelman and thank you very much Ms NN) for your moving evidence today. I understand that Ms NN is happy for Commissioners to give any immediate reflections on the kōrero today. So I'm going to turn first to Commissioner Alofivae. Do you have any reflections for Ms NN, please?

COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE: I do. Ms NN, I just want to commend your courage, your story is a powerful one of resilience. And I want to say to you that we hear you, we hear you, we hear you. Thank you for being able to explain so articulately what's happened in the latter days in terms of your most recent experience with the department as well as being able to touch on all of the most horrendous and personal things that happened to you.

The thing that really struck me about your story was really your power and your will to survive and get through all of this, and you have, and you have created an amazing platform for your own children and your mokos and you have broken the cycle. You have broken the cycle, and that was no easy feat in terms of what you described. So I want to honour you for your courage, for sharing your story and for declaring yourself, that you are

not a victim, that, yes, you've lived through some stuff but what you've been able to share with us is going to go forward and help us put forward some strong recommendations for the Government about what it is that truly needs to change. So thank you, thank you, thank you once again, malie.

COMMISSIONER STEENSON: Thank you, Commissioner Alofivae. For me, I - what a complete and total failure you and your siblings experienced from everyone. Everyone. And the sheer racism that you've had in your life, it just makes me feel very, very sad. There's so many sad things within your account, but I'm going to read out a couple of things in your written statement that I understand you are comfortable with me doing, because of how they struck me. And the first is this. You say:-

"I feel more Pākehā than Māori because I don't know what being Māori is apart from being seen as dirty, secondhand, unwanted mongrel. I learned as a child that being brown meant you were mistreated, misled, unheard, and not believed."

And then earlier you talk about your staunch Māori aunty and you wonder about how different your lives would have been if you'd been allowed to go with her and that you'd be - you felt that you'd be loved and cared for and nurtured and saved. It's quite a lot to imagine for you-.

And as Commissioner Alofivae has said, you have been heard today and absolutely believed. And I just want to mihi to you as well. Ngā mihi for all of your courage

Now I'm going to move to my fellow Commissioner Gibson for any - sorry, first, I'm actually going to ask Commissioner Gibson to thank you, but before I do, I'm going to move to Commissioner- Erueti.

COMMISSIONER ERUETI: E te mihi atu ki a koe whaea (I want to acknowledge you). I want to thank you for your testimony today. There was a lot in it. One of the messages that rang clear for me is, as you so clearly stated, the many times in which you tried to reach out and tell people what was going on, and the circumstances themselves spoke for themselves; teachers, Police, social workers, and yet no one asked, no one wanted to know why were you sleeping in this reserve in the middle of the night for three days. Nobody asked.

This is something that the Inquiry hears often and is something that we need to work out; how do we ensure that proper reporting is done and how do we ensure that tamariki and young people feel confident and safe and trust people that they can talk to about what's really happening in their life. I'm really pleased, we're all really pleased to hear about your whānau and how you've kept them safe. I think that experience, that most recent experience you've had with your brother's whānau, that just so starkly illustrates the

challenges that are there today, for caregivers, social workers, but in particular for the tamariki.

So you know, ngā manaakitanga ki a koe me to whanau whaea (English: may you and your whānau be taken care of). Really enlightening evidence for us today. Great way to finish, great way for closing off today's evidence. Ngā mihi.

COMMISSIONER STEENSON: Thank you, Commissioner Erueti. And Commissioner Shaw has no comments to make, so I will now pass to Commissioner Gibson for any reflections and to thank you, Ms NN, on behalf of the Royal Commission.

COMMISSIONER GIBSON: Ms NN, as you said yourself, a lot of shit happened to you, which should not have happened, in telling your story. You will be making changes to the future, you will be helping to change the system in the future. There was racism, there was extreme racism. Nobody cared for brown kids, Social Welfare, who should have been the key protectors from the State, in this case weren't. Racism went both ways as you described in your family as well.

We all need to learn from that. It still exists in Aotearoa today. You experienced the worst of physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional and psychological abuse and neglect, and I want to talk about that; about the lack of food, the lack of warmth, the lack of connection with family, whānau, culture, what you did to try and feed and protect your brothers, your family, when you were only a child yourself. You have a right to be proud of the mum and the grandma that you have become to your children to, to your mokos, and you talk about the loss of your Māoridom, having your identity stolen, not being connected with Ngāti Porou, but you yourself demonstrate the strength and the staunchness of a mountain that won't move, of a Ngāti Porou mountain.

Even in the face of Social Welfare's failures, Social Welfare saying you to do this, and yet you look after the children and look after the commitments you have made. Your story will contribute to change, both from the perspective which you gave from you were growing up and then what we learn of the recent failings of Child Welfare, as recent as they are, the neglect that still goes on in the system. It's only through hearing the truth from people like yourself that we will have the ability and the strength ourselves to make sure that change happens.

So I really want to thank you again. Many of the aspects of what you've told us have been resonating in my mind in the last couple of years and they are help shaping out what we believe needs to happen in the future. Kia kaha, thank you (be strong).

COMMISSIONER STEENSON: Thank you, Commissioner Gibson. Kei a koe Ms Spelman (it's up to you now, Ms Spelman). I understand we're going to have a waiata now.

MS SPELMAN: Tēnā anō i te Heamana (thank you once again, Madam Chair).

I would also like to briefly add my acknowledgments to you, Ms NN. It has been my privilege to work with you, walk along side with you in preparing for today. You allowed us in to see the corners of your heart and we have seen and you have been heard. We have also spoken about the waiata, and I know the pain that you carry around your Māoritanga and what you've told us today about how that was taken away from you.

Although we are here in Tāmaki Makaurau, here in the whare are some of the team who are also from Ngāti Porou who want to acknowledge you and support you and your kōrero as a mokopuna of Te Tairāwhiti (the East Coast) with this waiata from the Coast. E te tuakana tēnā koe, tēnā tātou katoa (English: so thank you to my senior and greetings everyone).

(Waiata: Ko Waiapu te awa, Ngāti Porou te iwi, taku manawa ko Tai Rāwhiti. Kei konei taku kainga, taku whānau hoki. Taku aroha ko Te Tai Rawhiti. Tū mai rā Hikurangi me tō mana rangatira. Tēnei ahau tō mokopuna o Te Tai Rāwhiti.

[English: Waiapu is the river, Ngāti Porou is the iwi. Waiapu is the river, and Ngāti Porou is the iwi. My heart lies on the East Coast. My heart lies on the East Coast. Therein lies my home and my whānau. Therein lies my home and also my whānau. I have great love for the East Coast Tairāwhiti, I have great love for the East Coast. Arise and stand up Hikurangi mountain. Your power and mana here I am your grandchild mokopuna of the Tairāwhiti East Coast, the East Coast, the East Coast.]

Madam Chair, that is the end of our evidence for today, and tomorrow, as always, we will begin with karakia. But first, I'll pass back to you in terms of closing our day today.

COMMISSIONER STEENSON: Ngā mihi Ms Spelman (thank you) and ngā mihi for the waiata to our kaimahi from Ngāti Porou.

So just a reminder that those who can join us tomorrow, please do so via the livestream. We will recommence from 9.45 am. And now I would like to ask Matua Wyllis to close our proceedings today with karakia and waiata (Prayer and song).

KAUMĀTUA WYLLIS: Tēnā tātou anō. Tēnei te īnoi atu ki a koe e Ihoa o ngā mano. Kia tō mai anō i te mana tīmata mai i te orokohanga o te ao. I tīmata mai i a Rangi rāua ko Papa, heke iho ki ngā kaitiaki, ki ngā Atua Māori. E Ihoa, ki ngā tamariki a Tāne, ngā whatukura me ngā māreikura. Tō mai, tō mai anō e Ihoa ērā mana.

[English: greetings everyone once again. I pray to God, to bring forth the powers since the beginning of time. From the time of Rangī and Papa, to the Atua and guardians. To the children of Tāne. Bring forth those that essences, o God.]

Ki a koutou ngā kaikōrero o te rā nei, te rangatira nō Ngāti Hauā, e te rangatira nō Te Whānau a Apanui, Ngāti Porou, ka mihi rā ki a kōrua i ā kōrua kōrero kua whārikihia i te rā nei. Tō māia, tō kaha ki te tū, ki te mihi ki te whārikihia ki mua i te aroaro. Ā, tēnā ka huri atu au ki ēnā karakia hei whakakapi i tēnei wāhanga o te pō, ahiahi pō. Nō reira me īnoi tātou.

[English: To you, the witnesses today, the chief of Ngāti Hauā and the chieftainess of te Tairāwhiti Ngāti Porou, I thank you for your testimonies that you have presented here today, I applaud your bravery and your strength to stand and to share, to share your testimonies before us. So I turn to those karakia to conclude our proceedings. And so let us pray.]

Karakia: Rukuhia, rukuhia ngā kōrero. Ngā kōrero o te rā nei, ngā kōrero o te wiki nei. Rukuhia ki ngā pou tāhūhū o te whare a Tumutumuhenua. Rukuhia, rukuhia kia ū, kia mau. Rukuhia, rukuhia ngā wheako. Ngā wheako a tēnā, a tēnā. Rukuhia, ki ngā pou pou o te whare. Rukuhia, rukuhia kia ū, kia mau. Rukuhia, rukuhia ngā mamae a tēnā, a tēnā kua whārikihia ki mua i te aroaro. Rukuhia ki ngā tukutuku, i ngā taonga o te whare nei. Rukuhia, rukuhia kia ū, kia mau. Rukuhia, rukuhia ngā toenga kōrero kāre anō kia puta mai. Rukuhia ērā atu o ngā kōrero ki ngā taonga, ngā toka o te whare nei, ngā toka mauri e noho nei o Tumutumuhenua. Rukuhia, rukuhia kia ū, kia mau. Nā tēnā ka kī atu. Hikitia, hikitia. Hikitia kia rewa atu ki runga rawa, kia kore e hoki whakamuri mai. Poua atu te pūmanawa Māori, te mana a tēnā, a tēnā. He mana tikanga, nō te uri o māia. Poipoia ngā tamariki, poipoia ngā mokopuna, poipoia ngā rangatira mō āpōpō. Tūturu ō whiti whakamaua kia tina, haumi e, hui e, tāiki e).

[English: Let us delve to the depths of what was expressed today this week. Let us be bound to the pillars of this house, to one another, that we may be strengthened, let all the hurt and pain be released, also released from this house. And also, to give us protection for the evidence which is yet to be presented and also bestow your protection upon the people of this house. And let all the burdens be lifted so they do not come back negatively on us and for everybody to keep their mana, prestige, to be – for the children and mokopuna to be well cared for, for they are the leaders of tomorrow. All is well. Thank you all.]

Waiata: He hōnore, he korōria, maungārongo ki te whenua, whakaaro pai e ki ngā tangata katoa. Ake ake, ake ake, Āmine. Te Atua, te piringa, tōku orange.

[English: Honour and glory to God and peace on earth. Goodwill to all people. Forever and forever, amen. God, my companion, my forever, my salvation. Amen).

Hearing adjourned at 5.52 pm to Friday, 11 March 2022 at 9.45 am