

**ABUSE IN CARE ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY  
TULOOU – OUR PACIFIC VOICES: TATALA E PULONGA**

<b>Under</b>	The Inquiries Act 2013
<b>In the matter of</b>	The Royal Commission of Inquiry into Historical Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-based Institutions
<b>Royal Commission:</b>	Judge Coral Shaw (Chair) Ali'imuaamua Sandra Alofivae Mr Paul Gibson Dr Anaru Erueti Ms Julia Steenson
<b>Counsel:</b>	Mr Simon Mount QC, Ms Kerryn Beaton QC, Ms Tania Sharkey, Mr Semisi Pohiva, Ms Reina Va'ai, Ms Nicole Copeland, Ms Sonja Cooper, Ms Amanda Hill for the Royal Commission Ms Rachael Schmidt-McCleave, Ms Julia White and Ms Alana Ruakere for the Crown
<b>Venue:</b>	Fale o Samoa 141 Bader Drive Māngere AUCKLAND
<b>Date:</b>	26 July 2021

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**TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS**

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1 shown today is one that will rise amongst the stars and our mutual prayer is that it's going  
 2 to lead to some recommendations that are going to really make a difference. It has to. It  
 3 has to. That is one of the purposes of why we're doing this talanoa. So we wish you well,  
 4 you and your family and every other amazing thing that you are now doing with your life.  
 5 Please know that we're here and we hope that you'll continue to walk this journey with us as  
 6 we thank you for the privilege to continue to walk beside you as well. Ia manuia oe ma lou  
 7 aiga faatasi ma lou aiga potopoto. Fa'afetai lava.

8 **[Samoan song]**

9 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Fa'afetai ma ia manuia.

10 **Adjournment from 2.42 pm to 2.49 pm**

11 **CHAIR:** Welcome back, Mr Pohiva, and welcome back to everybody in the room.

12 **MR POHIVA:** Thank you very much, good afternoon Commissioners. Our third and final  
 13 witness for today is Mr Billy Tanu who will be sharing his experience in State care  
 14 residential homes, Epuni, Arbor House and Hodderville Home which is a Salvation Army  
 15 faith-based institution. He also had shorter stays at Ōwairaka and Hamilton Boys' Home.  
 16 He'll also be sharing how this has impacted him throughout his life. And I wonder if this is  
 17 an opportunity for the affirmation to be taken.

18 **BILLY PUKA TANU**

19 **CHAIR:** Can I call you Billy?

20 A. Yeah.

21 **Q.** Is that your name, that's what you like to be called?

22 A. Yes.

23 **Q.** Billy, I'm just going to give you the affirmation and if you just listen and agree. Do you  
 24 solemnly, sincerely and truly declare and affirm that the evidence you will give to the  
 25 Commission will be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

26 A. Yes.

27 **Q.** Thank you very much.

28 **QUESTIONING BY MR POHIVA:** Thank you Commissioners. Malo ni Billy. Oi kavatu te  
 29 matou leo fakafetai lahi lele, ki te koutou loto makeke ma te mautinoa, kua kitea a tu I te  
 30 koutou kaumai oi talanoa ki na haunoaga mamaha atili, e Vena hoki ki te koutou ola  
 31 taumafai, kei na talanoa mai ki a te ki matou. Billy, thank you for your courage in being  
 32 here today. I understand it's not an easy task, but we are—we appreciate your being here  
 33 today. Before we begin I understand that you have provided the Commissioners and the  
 34 Royal Commission a full statement of your experience.

- 1 A. Yeah.
- 2 Q. And that will be made available, but for your evidence today you'll be taking us through  
3 parts of your experience, is that correct?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. Can I ask you to begin by introducing yourself to us all.
- 6 A. Malo ni, kia ora koutou, my full name is Billy Puka Tanu and I am of a Tokelauan and  
7 Māori descent.
- 8 Q. Thank you Billy, why have you chosen to come forward to share your experience with the  
9 Commission?
- 10 A. I think it's important that people know my story, where I've come from, just so it doesn't  
11 happen to anyone else.
- 12 Q. Billy, I'm going to ask you to share with us about your family background and your early  
13 life. Can you tell us about your family?
- 14 A. I am one of seven, I'm the youngest, third youngest. Grew up in Porirua, born and bred  
15 Porirua. I also have a half-brother, it's my mum's eldest.
- 16 Q. You said that you are of Tokelauan descent, is that from—so your father is Tokelauan?
- 17 A. Yes.
- 18 Q. Can you share with us when your father, what decade your father came and why?
- 19 A. He came over about the '60s, migrated from the Islands to New Zealand for work pretty  
20 much. That's where he met my mum, yeah.
- 21 Q. And where in New Zealand did he end up?
- 22 A. Moved to Wellington, as we worked on the railways, mum worked as a cleaner doing  
23 nightshifts, yeah.
- 24 Q. So you mentioned that your mum worked nightshift. What nationality is your mum?
- 25 A. She's from here actually, Ngāti Whātua, Ōrakei marae and Ngāpuhi.
- 26 Q. So she's Māori?
- 27 A. Yeah.
- 28 Q. And during your early years, you had said that they worked long hours?
- 29 A. Yeah, dad worked long hours on the railways. He would finish that and then go work at the  
30 local tavern in Porirua.
- 31 Q. And as a result, what happened to you as a child, you and your siblings?
- 32 A. Because of that result we were left unattended for most of the time, yeah.
- 33 Q. And still staying in your early life, Billy, you can take time before answering questions.
- 34 A. Yeah.

- 1 **Q.** Still staying in the early life and when you were growing up, what was it like in terms of  
2 culture, language and church for you? And I'm just referring to paragraphs six and seven of  
3 your statement.
- 4 **A.** Growing up we didn't learn much of our Te Reo or Tokelau language or culture. Dad  
5 would tell us we're not in the Islands anymore, so he didn't bother teaching us.
- 6 **Q.** And in relation to your mum's whānau?
- 7 **A.** We didn't really know our Māori side from up here either, didn't really know them.
- 8 **Q.** But you attended church? You attended church?
- 9 **A.** Yeah, we'd go to church on Sundays, Mum would take us to the Apostolic, Dad would drop  
10 us off and pick us up.
- 11 **Q.** I'm now going to ask you questions about your mother, I understand she suffered from a  
12 mental illness, that's at paragraphs eight to 13. Can you tell us about this?
- 13 **A.** During that time at home there was a lot of violence happening. My earliest childhood  
14 memories were looking up at my dad beating Mum up. I didn't know why. Had no idea at  
15 the time. Only a lot of yelling and I think I was about five or six.
- 16 **Q.** At the time?
- 17 **A.** At the time, yeah.
- 18 **Q.** Did you know what your mum was diagnosed with at the time?
- 19 **A.** Later on I learned Mum was diagnosed with bipolar schizophrenia.
- 20 **Q.** But you didn't know that at the time, you later learned of that?
- 21 **A.** No, yeah.
- 22 **Q.** And as far as you're aware growing up there was unusual behaviour, is that correct?
- 23 **A.** Yeah, it looked weird to me. And the more lack of sleep she got, the more strange and  
24 weird things she'd do. It was quite scary.
- 25 **Q.** And the fact that she was working nights didn't help, is that right?
- 26 **A.** Yeah, working nightshift she wouldn't get enough sleep during the day attending to us and,  
27 yeah.
- 28 **Q.** And what about your dad, how did he respond to this?
- 29 **A.** I don't really think that he clicked or realised what Mum's illness was and the only way he  
30 could deal with it was by violence and giving her a slap around here and there, and, yeah,  
31 that's how he dealt with it.
- 32 **Q.** And you saw that often?
- 33 **A.** Yeah, quite a lot, yeah.
- 34 **Q.** And just on that, you mentioned it was quite important for us to understand that your mum

- 1 first experienced mental health when she was in—when she had your older half-brother?
- 2 A. Yeah, she told me that earlier before she met my dad she was in Christchurch, fell pregnant,  
3 went to jail, women's prison, and had baby there, got baby taken off her, and that's where  
4 she started getting sick. That's where that started, that's what she told me.
- 5 Q. That's what she had relayed to you or told you?
- 6 A. Yeah.
- 7 Q. During that period did you receive any support in the community or from anyone else?
- 8 A. No, not really.
- 9 Q. Still in your early years of life, Billy, what was it like at home in terms of violence?
- 10 A. Yeah, it was pretty violent. Dad was real aggressive and violent behaviour towards Mum  
11 and us. He'd work days on railways, afterwards work at the club and come home and take  
12 it out on us. He'd walk in the door with blood coming out of his head because he'd been  
13 bottled over on the way home by the guys he kicked out of the pub. And he'll just go into a  
14 rage and just throw us around like we were just rag dolls. My older brothers got the worst  
15 of it too because they're older.
- 16 Q. And you describe the hidings that you got from your father in your statement?
- 17 A. Yeah. They weren't five-minute jobs, they were like two, three hours, half the night, maybe  
18 all night. Especially on Sundays because we weren't allowed to go outside, we had to stay  
19 inside, Toke style, I guess, I don't know. But after a while he'd massage our arms and legs  
20 after a good hiding for such a time, and probably that was his guilt trips kicking in and  
21 giving us—rubbing us down with coconut oil, baby oil.
- 22 Q. And staying in your early years, how were you treated by your siblings?
- 23 A. Being the youngest out of the brothers I was pretty much picked on the most, got bullied a  
24 lot, beaten up a lot, and they weren't just little jug cords and that, my older brothers would  
25 have a 4 x 2, one time he had a steel bar in his hand, and all I could do is just cover up.
- 26 Q. And you mentioned in your statement that that led to activity or criminal activity?
- 27 A. Yeah, well my brothers were play ups as well, and eventually they forced me to break into  
28 places where they couldn't fit in, so they'd throw me in the window as well. So they pretty  
29 much forced me to go and do the dirty work and wait for me to come out with all the goods.  
30 Yeah.
- 31 Q. And the reason why you did that?
- 32 A. I didn't want to get a kick in the head, did I. They were drunk half the time, being older.
- 33 Q. Moving on to, well, staying in your early life, what was it like growing up, what was it like  
34 financially when you were growing up? And I'm referring to paragraph 17.

- 1 A. Back in the days when I was growing up I remember going to school, no shoes, no lunch  
2 most times. If it was lunch it would be just bread and beetroot, and I'd be sitting outside  
3 when I had no lunch, sitting with all the kids having their lunches and teachers would feel  
4 sorry for me and go to the shops and get me a pie or something. Sometimes I'll go into the  
5 cloakroom and pinch the other kid's lunches because I was hungry because there wasn't any  
6 food at home. And I'll get caught and back in those days the teacher would put his fist out  
7 and tell me to run into it, yeah, a lot of us had to do that.
- 8 **Q.** And that happened at school.
- 9 A. Yeah.
- 10 **Q.** So just moving on to summarise what was happening at the time before going into Epuni  
11 Boys' Home, and I'm referring to paragraph 18 to 21. Can you tell us what was going on  
12 just before you went to Epuni?
- 13 A. At the time mum was pretty sick, she was in and out of Porirua Hospital. Dad didn't know  
14 how to cope because he was working and trying to look after us at the same time.  
15 Everything that was going on and that was happening at home, I started playing up,  
16 retaliating, not going to school, staying away from home for days and days. My older  
17 brothers weren't around, everyone just took off and did their own thing on the streets. And  
18 I just followed suit.
- 19 **Q.** So when you went into Epuni, all of that was going on in your life and you were still quite  
20 young?
- 21 A. Yeah.
- 22 **Q.** And my understanding is that your records show that you were 12 years old but that's  
23 different from your own recollection?
- 24 A. I know for a fact that's not right because I went to Arbor House and had my 12th birthday  
25 there, that was another boys' home after Epuni, so how could they say that I was at Epuni at  
26 12, I must have been nine or 10.
- 27 **Q.** We'll talk about Arbor House later. So what happened when you first was taken away to  
28 Epuni?
- 29 A. When I got to the Epuni the staff did their checks and procedures, they made me strip  
30 down, have a shower, then they throw all this white powder over you, kind of made me feel  
31 like I looked like a ghost because I was covered in it. After that you get dressed in the  
32 boys' home clothes and then you go out the back to the yard where all the other guys are,  
33 the older kids, and they leave you to it.
- 34 **Q.** So after you getting changed, you went out to the yard and everyone else was there?

- 1 A. Yeah.
- 2 Q. And what was that like for you?
- 3 A. Oh being that age, quite scary, being alone, don't know anyone. A lot of older kids than me  
4 looked like they could—they had that look like oh yeah, pick on this guy, the new guy.  
5 And I didn't feel safe at all.
- 6 Q. Then what happened after going into the yard?
- 7 A. They showed me to my room, went into the wing. I went into one of the wings and felt like  
8 I was in the children's prison, like it was—they had long corridors, every room was  
9 opposite each other, they didn't have any doors, they only had—they had shower blocks  
10 halfway down the wing, toilets, shower blocks. The rooms were always open, they only  
11 had a chair, table and a wardrobe and your bed and that was it.
- 12 Q. You talk about a scragg line when you first arrived at Epuni. Can you tell us about this and  
13 what this is and what happened?
- 14 A. That's kind of like a welcome to Epuni Boys' Home. The boys were waiting in their rooms  
15 opposite each other and whatever they got in hand you've just got to try and run through  
16 and make it to the end. So, I had to run and some of them had their chairs, and they would  
17 smash you on the way through. Didn't get very far, only got like two or three doors and  
18 then I was on the ground, yeah. It was like a welcome, welcome to the home sort of  
19 initiation.
- 20 Q. So, like a welcome hiding?
- 21 A. Pardon?
- 22 Q. So like a—that was how they welcomed you into the—
- 23 A. Yeah.
- 24 Q. And where were the staff during this time?
- 25 A. Wherever they were they weren't monitoring us, they weren't around. Because this was all  
26 in about a two or three minute period, just quick and fast. While they were probably going  
27 toilet or having a coffee or talking to each other in the office, I don't know what they were  
28 doing. That was a quick, yeah.
- 29 Q. And you also talk of a welcome hiding, is that right?
- 30 A. Yeah.
- 31 Q. Which is different from the scragg line you talk about?
- 32 A. That was different. That's night time stuff. Nightshift the staff were monitoring us, they  
33 would be asleep, half the time they'll go to sleep about 12, one o'clock and then the boys  
34 would come into your room, couple at a time and beat the shit out of you. Yeah.



- 1 **Q.** And what were you doing, what were you trying to do when that was happening?
- 2 **A.** I tried to cover up, protect myself as best I can. Can't run away from it, can't hide. Just  
3 have to handle. If you said anything they would—you'd get another hiding straight away,  
4 or whenever they're not around. Staff weren't monitoring us every second of the day. Had  
5 to go toilet sooner or later.
- 6 **Q.** And just on that, you—talking about the staff, you say that they—there were staff working  
7 night shifts?
- 8 **A.** Yeah.
- 9 **Q.** And I'm referring to paragraph 27. Tell us about the staff?
- 10 **A.** They were meant to be on to it at night and monitor us while we're supposed to be asleep.  
11 But I don't know, we weren't—we stayed up all night because the lights were out, they  
12 couldn't see us. Half the time he wouldn't be where he was(sic). That's where everyone  
13 started playing up, most times at night.
- 14 **Q.** And you mentioned that you were targeted or bullied?
- 15 **A.** Yeah.
- 16 **Q.** And what was the reason for that?
- 17 **A.** Just bullied by the older boys every day. Just being younger and smaller than everyone else  
18 you're a more vulnerable target. I mean when the staff are around they'll act like angels and  
19 best behaviour. As soon as they turn their back you get picked on and that's when they—  
20 yeah.
- 21 **Q.** So you believe that the older boys were around 15 to 16 years old?
- 22 **A.** Yeah, way older.
- 23 **Q.** You also mention in your statement a kingpin system, is that right?
- 24 **A.** Yeah.
- 25 **Q.** Can you tell us more about this?
- 26 **A.** The kingpin system is—it's got to be one that's tougher than everyone else, and pretty much  
27 whatever he says goes. I always knew who the kingpin was and I'd try and stay away from  
28 him and certain boys would tell us he's the one that's running the—he's the man, he's the  
29 man, you know. Be wary of that guy.
- 30 **Q.** So amongst yourself you would be talking to everyone and everyone would tell you who is  
31 the kingpin?
- 32 **A.** Yeah, the toughest guy in there, yeah.
- 33 **Q.** And just flipping over the page, you complained or told staff about what was happening?
- 34 **A.** After a few hidings, after a while I got sick of it and I'll just approach the staff members

1 and tell them what's been going on, they'll turnaround and laugh, laugh it off and reply with  
2 a "Harden up man, far, what are you on about." It's like they didn't care. They'll have a bit  
3 of a laugh about it. So...

4 **Q.** So just as a side note, you talk about a welcome hiding, you also mentioned you had a  
5 goodbye hiding?

6 **A.** Yeah.

7 **Q.** And that was the same thing happening, being attacked at night?

8 **A.** Yeah. The process is repeated again when you leave.

9 **Q.** And just to clarify, throughout your evidence you have been in Epuni several times?

10 **A.** Yeah.

11 **Q.** And this welcome and goodbye hiding happened every time?

12 **A.** Pretty much every time.

13 **Q.** Until you got a bit older?

14 **A.** Yeah.

15 **Q.** Going back to Epuni, what was the physical and emotional abuse you received from the  
16 staff? And I'm referring to paragraph 35 of your statement.

17 **A.** Staff members would often pick on us, there would be a couple of good ones but then  
18 there'd be a couple of dickheads as well. One of them was a—he didn't like PI people, he  
19 didn't like Pacific Islanders or Māoris. He favoured the white boys more than he did the  
20 Māoris and the Islanders.

21 **Q.** And then one morning you—

22 **A.** Yeah, one morning—

23 **Q.** —explained—

24 **A.** Sorry.

25 **Q.** You're all right. So, one morning you explained an incident that happened at breakfast, can  
26 you take us through that?

27 **A.** We were having breakfast and me and this other fella were arguing, something real tiny.  
28 The same staff member got us into the gym and he says right, for playing up, first I want  
29 you to line up at each end of the basketball court, start doing the duck walk around the  
30 whole gym. So, we started duck walking, doing a duck walk with our hands behind our  
31 head for ages. It killed me, my thighs were burning after that. He says in the gym you've  
32 got all those little ladders, he wanted us to step up and down all these ladders, and just  
33 about falling off them. And the third task was chase each other until someone catches  
34 someone.

- 1 **Q.** So basically, it was duck walking around as your punishment?
- 2 **A.** Yeah, there was, yeah, all that, just because we argued about something little.
- 3 **Q.** And you mentioned it killed you?
- 4 **A.** Huh?
- 5 **Q.** You mentioned that it killed you.
- 6 **A.** Yeah, it would kill you too if you had to do all that.
- 7 **Q.** And afterwards you went back to have your breakfast?
- 8 **A.** I went back to—we went back, sat down, continued our breakfast. He came up and says to  
9 us "Are you guys all right, are you enjoying your breakfast?" I turned around and said yes,  
10 and he says, "Because you're going back into the gym after you finish." And me and—  
11 broke down and cried, I couldn't handle it. The boys started laughing at us, we were both  
12 humiliated. What can you do? He wanted to put us on the spot in front of everybody and  
13 he succeeded. Tried to break us.
- 14 **Q.** And that's what happened that morning?
- 15 **A.** Mmm.
- 16 **Q.** There were other examples of that kind of treatment from staff that you talk about. And  
17 you mentioned a time when you were playing touch rugby?
- 18 **A.** Yeah, we were out on the field having a game of touch. Last try wins. I had the ball and I  
19 was—because I was small and a lot faster than all the other guys, when I went to get a try I  
20 think the staff member came up behind me and just came over with the knee in my face and  
21 I remember waking too, waking up with everyone standing around me, "Are you all right?",  
22 water and everything. I was, I don't know, concussed, knocked out for I don't know how  
23 long.
- 24 **Q.** You make a point of that because you thought that it wasn't an accident, it was more  
25 deliberate, is that right?
- 26 **A.** Of course, it was because when you score a try you don't continue going after the guy, once  
27 he's put the ball down that's it. But he carried on and continued to put his knee in my face.
- 28 **Q.** And still on Epuni, Billy, just moving on to paragraphs 42 and 44, I understand from your  
29 statement that there was a lot of sexual activity and abuse going on at—so on your brief of  
30 evidence it's page 11.
- 31 **A.** Yeah.
- 32 **Q.** Going on at the time and you want to acknowledge that but not go into the details of that, is  
33 that correct?
- 34 **A.** Yeah.

- 1 **Q.** That's fine.
- 2 **A.** Don't want to talk about that eh.
- 3 **Q.** And there was also sexual abuse from staff going on, from a particular staff member at the  
4 time, is that right?
- 5 **A.** Yeah. Tried to play with me while I was—
- 6 **Q.** And then there was different types or different treatment from staff members, paragraph 48  
7 of your statement. Can you tell us about that?
- 8 **A.** Yeah, we were treated way differently to the Pākehā boys that were in there. The Māori  
9 and the PIs were, we weren't treated equal. The Pākehās would have the right of way,  
10 whatever it was.
- 11 **Q.** And you mentioned that they called you, as in the staff called you particular names?
- 12 **A.** Yeah. They'd call us the N word and I overheard them talking about us in that sort of  
13 conversation as well.
- 14 **Q.** So as a result of the staff calling you those names—
- 15 **A.** Yeah.
- 16 **Q.** You mentioned other boys in the home also referred to you as those names as well?
- 17 **A.** Yeah, Pākehās, white boys who do the same thing. Because they were bigger than us.
- 18 **Q.** Just moving on, Billy, to the secure unit.
- 19 **A.** Yeah.
- 20 **Q.** You talk about a secure unit when that was at Epuni at the time and boys would be sent  
21 there when they played up?
- 22 **A.** Yeah, there's a secure unit, block in Epuni.
- 23 **Q.** And you were put there yourself?
- 24 **A.** Yeah, I was in there, I think, I don't know, I can't remember what I was playing up for but  
25 I got sent down there for a while.
- 26 **Q.** And what was that secure unit like, can you describe that?
- 27 **A.** The only light in the room was a little dim light and only had one little glass window on the  
28 door, it was like not even bigger than your face. It was quite dark in there. There was a  
29 mattress on the floor and you had a fire blanket, that was about it. Weren't allowed to go  
30 outside for any exercise or anything, you just stayed locked up until they come and got you.  
31 That could be until the next day.
- 32 **Q.** And you remember feeling—what were you feeling at the time?
- 33 **A.** Oh, I did nothing but sleep, it was boring, but I felt a lot safer in there than I did in the yard  
34 with the locals, the other guys.

1 **Q.** And just moving on, Billy, what about education, what was that like?

2 **A.** Epuni had three classrooms. Didn't really pay attention or learn anything there. Wasn't  
3 even in the right frame of mind.

4 **Q.** Did you have any cultural support?

5 **A.** No.

6 **Q.** During your time at Epuni, did you get any family visits or visits from your family?

7 **A.** I didn't really see my parents while I was in there. Weren't allowed to see our families. I  
8 don't know why.

9 **Q.** But at the time you were missing home a lot?

10 **A.** Yeah, course I was, seeing my mum at home.

11 **Q.** And just to finish off that period or that first time—

12 **A.** Yes.

13 **Q.** —in Epuni, overall, you were in and out for a long period of time in Epuni and you  
14 understand from your records that it shows four times, but from your memory you'd been in  
15 there a lot more, is that right?

16 **A.** Yeah, I'm sure it was a lot more than that.

17 **Q.** And every time you went in, it was for a few months each time?

18 **A.** Yeah, must have tampered with the records or something.

19 **Q.** And then straight after your time in Epuni you were transferred to Arbor House?

20 **A.** Yeah.

21 **MR POHIVA:** We're getting close to the afternoon adjournment, Madam Chair.

22 **CHAIR:** Would this be a good time?

23 **MR POHIVA:** Thank you.

24 **CHAIR:** We're going to take a short break, you can have a cup of tea and a break, is that all right?

25 **A.** [Thumbs up].

26 **Q.** We'll come back in about 15 minutes.

27 **Adjournment from 3.27 pm to 3.46 pm**

28 **CHAIR:** Welcome back Billy.

29 **A.** Hi.

30 **QUESTIONING BY MR POHIVA CONTINUED:** Thank you Commissioners. Billy, before  
31 the break we were just about to talk about Arbor House.

32 **A.** Yeah.

33 **Q.** And I understand that you went straight from Epuni to Arbor House this time. And that  
34 you remember that you were 12 years old at the time. Page 13 of your brief of evidence.

- 1 A. Okay. Arbor House eh?
- 2 Q. Yeah, so we're talking about Arbor House and you got there and you remember you were  
3 12 years old at the time?
- 4 A. Yeah.
- 5 Q. Why do you remember that?
- 6 A. At that time when I got to Arbor House, not long after that it was my birthday, 12th  
7 birthday. And the Greek chef there had made me a big as truck cake in the shape of a truck  
8 and I'll never forget it. It's actually the first time I've actually celebrated my birthday  
9 whilst in care.
- 10 Q. And you describe in your statement that Arbor House was totally different to Epuni.
- 11 A. Yeah.
- 12 Q. Because?
- 13 A. Arbor House is totally different. It was like a—it was still a boys' home but it was like a  
14 foster home as well. There were no tough guys or gangsters or any secure unit or anything  
15 like that, it was more laid back. It was more like a family kind of atmosphere at that place,  
16 it was a lot laid back.
- 17 Q. And then a lot of what you described about the sexual activity happening at Epuni also was  
18 happening at Arbor House?
- 19 A. Yeah, pretty much. When I first got there there was only boys there. But later on there was  
20 a mixture of girls from the surrounding suburbs, Carterton, Featherston.
- 21 Q. And in terms of schooling you attended Greytown School?
- 22 A. Yeah. I went to Greytown Primary. I was the only dark fella, Māori/Pacific Islander in the  
23 class. There was only a couple of us in the whole school. My fond memories of that, my  
24 teacher was—he looked kind of like that guy on Pink Floyd, “The Wall”. The teacher,  
25 yeah, looked exactly like it. And he took me out of the classroom quite a lot and I don't  
26 know what it was, but he didn't like me at all.
- 27 Q. And you said that you—he'd often pick on you?
- 28 A. Yeah, well anything went down with the other guys in the class I'll be the one that was  
29 getting dragged out, telling me I'm no good, I'm going to amount to nothing, blah blah blah,  
30 send me off to the principal's office. He'd look at me the same thing, if his eyes had bullets  
31 he would have shot me, you know. The principal was just as scary looking as the teacher. I  
32 don't know why they treated me like that.
- 33 Q. And shortly after that you attended college?
- 34 A. Yes, went to Mākoura College in Masterton.

- 1 **Q.** And what was it like at school when you attended?
- 2 **A.** I didn't pay much attention at college. I did pay a lot of attention when it was lunch time  
3 and we went down the back of the field and smoked cigarettes and one of the boys' family  
4 was Black Power so he had weed and we sniffed petrol and went back to the next subject  
5 after lunch pretty high.
- 6 **Q.** So you were getting—you were sniffing glue at that time, is that right?
- 7 **A.** Yeah.
- 8 **Q.** And that's what you mean by getting high?
- 9 **A.** Yeah.
- 10 **Q.** Anything else about Arbor House before we move on to Hodderville?
- 11 **A.** No, not really.
- 12 **Q.** Moving on to Hodderville, that's at paragraph 87 of your statement?
- 13 **A.** Yeah.
- 14 **Q.** Where was that?
- 15 **A.** Pardon?
- 16 **Q.** Where was Hodderville Boys' Home?
- 17 **A.** Hodderville is on the back road towards Mangakino and back road to Putāruru and  
18 Tokoroa.
- 19 **Q.** And who ran that?
- 20 **A.** The Salvation Army.
- 21 **Q.** I understand from your statement that this in comparison to your previous care institutes  
22 that this was a bit more laid back is how you described it?
- 23 **A.** Yeah, pretty laid back, it was out in the country, yeah, totally different scene.
- 24 **Q.** And your records this time show that you were there for a year and a half?
- 25 **A.** Yeah.
- 26 **Q.** And you accept that was correct?
- 27 **A.** Yeah.
- 28 **Q.** You said that there was physical abuse occurring at Hodderville, but you didn't get a hiding  
29 on the first night, is that right?
- 30 **A.** Yeah.
- 31 **Q.** And we're referring to paragraph 88 of your statement.
- 32 **A.** Yeah, it wasn't that—as bad as the other boys' homes I'd been to before that, but it was  
33 still—there was still a lot of play ups and bullying going on, it wasn't as bad.
- 34 **Q.** And you described one night the kingpin, there was still a kingpin system going on at—

- 1 A. Yeah.
- 2 **Q.** —Hodderville?
- 3 A. One night they came into our dorm, there's about six to a dorm. A few guys come in,  
4 started—woke me up, started playing around, I thought it was all a joke. They held me  
5 down, tied my arms and legs to the bed with the sheets—with the pillow cases, and that's  
6 when the king—that's when the toughest guy came in that told them to do it, sat next to me  
7 and he had his jandal, started whacking my thing and there was a lot of laughing and  
8 carrying on, and I couldn't do anything about it. What could I do?
- 9 **Q.** And you were quite humiliated?
- 10 A. Yeah, of course I was.
- 11 **Q.** And that was a theme going throughout your experience, is that right?
- 12 A. Yeah.
- 13 **Q.** There were also other—there was another incident when the kingpin came to bully you.  
14 Can you tell us about that? Or when a new guy came in to Hodderville, page 17 of your  
15 brief of evidence.
- 16 A. Still looking at the last one.
- 17 **CHAIR:** Is that 17 or is it 92?
- 18 **MR POHIVA:** Paragraph 92, 17 he's got a—
- 19 **CHAIR:** He's got a different version, sorry.
- 20 A. Because the kingpin was Māori, there were a lot more brown boys in that home at the time  
21 as well. I wasn't bullied as much. One time another guy came, he was big, he was quite  
22 big. He started trying to think that he could get his way and pick on the young ones and  
23 bully the kids as well, the younger ones, and tried to make a statement for himself. And so  
24 you've got two of them trying to show each other up and who's the toughest. It's all a big  
25 competition behind the scenes, you know, the staff, what they don't know goes on behind  
26 the scenes, they have no idea what's going on. So there's a lot of confrontation around that.
- 27 **QUESTIONING BY MR POHIVA CONTINUED:** That was typically what went on between  
28 you guys, boys at the time?
- 29 A. Yeah. Staff members too busy to see what was going on or, I don't know where they were,  
30 but we all kept it low-key and quiet and out of sight out of mind kind of thing. A lot of  
31 stuff happened that night, yeah.
- 32 **Q.** And during your time at Hodderville, you said it impacted you, it affected your head and  
33 you also started experiencing—
- 34 A. Yeah, really—that sort of stuff messes with your head going back from Epuni all the way



1 up to Hodderville. My spirit, my spirit's been broken as a child and I don't know how to get  
2 that back, you know, my mana and all that. It's taken away from me, to the point where I  
3 was—I started pissing the bed and shit like that, I feel that I'm not in a safe place and I'm  
4 always having nightmares of waking up scared as and, yeah. I miss mum a lot too. It's  
5 what's always kept my—kept me to hold my head up, thinking about my mum. Out of all  
6 this I've been through, she's the only one that's kept me strong, yeah.

7 **Q.** I'm just going to ask you to move on, Billy, if we can go to paragraph 98. You talk about  
8 the different treatment again.

9 **A.** Yeah.

10 **Q.** And that was again different treatment between what you describe as the white boys and  
11 the brown boys, and that carried on at Hodderville?

12 **A.** Yeah.

13 **Q.** And then moving on to substance abuse. You used a lot of substances there?

14 **A.** Yeah.

15 **Q.** Can you tell us about that?

16 **A.** Well, they use a lot of stuff like glue and Bostik and Ados. It just takes me away from all  
17 the pain that I'm feeling. I go to the pub and spend \$100 I don't even get drunk, I still walk  
18 out not drunk and no money. I can get me a \$8 tube and, you know, and it's a lot cheaper  
19 than wasting money buying alcohol. But, yeah, it was a place for me to feel free when  
20 I just got out of it on glue and petrol and that, I just felt like I'm in my own world, my own  
21 space, no-one can hurt me and I'm feeling good about it, yeah.

22 **Q.** So the use of substances continued on through Hodderville?

23 **A.** Yeah. Mainly at night.

24 **Q.** And there was also a demerits points system, is that right?

25 **A.** Yeah.

26 **Q.** What was that?

27 **A.** You behave, you get merit, you misbehave you get demerited, the more merits you get the  
28 more stuff you get from the canteen and you're able to take it home with you when you go  
29 home during the school holidays, yeah.

30 **Q.** And moving on, the same question about education, paragraph 105 to 109?

31 **A.** Yeah.

32 **Q.** You say that there was still no—not much cultural training or education going on at  
33 Hodderville?

34 **A.** No.

- 1 **Q.** But you do remember hopping into grey buses to go to church, is that right?
- 2 **A.** Yeah, Salvation Army would chuck us all in the bus and go to the local church in Tokoroa,  
3 yeah.
- 4 **Q.** And then—but you were supposed to go to college but you didn't?
- 5 **A.** No, no, I didn't.
- 6 **Q.** When where did you go?
- 7 **A.** Instead they sent me to a disability workshop called the Sheltered Workshop in Tokoroa,  
8 and I had to go there instead of school.
- 9 **Q.** What did you do there?
- 10 **A.** I had to participate in working with the men and what they did was make stuff like beer  
11 crates and did recycle around the town and—so I was working with all these disability  
12 older men, and working around them and, yeah, it was quite freaky.
- 13 **Q.** Quite freaky because you were still quite young?
- 14 **A.** I was still quite young and I was meant to be at college, third form or something, not  
15 working with these men.
- 16 **Q.** And you said it was quite freaky, why did you feel that way?
- 17 **A.** One time when I was working next to one guy, Māori dude, thought he was a nice guy, then  
18 one time he spun around and all I seen was the hammer, the head of the hammer coming  
19 towards my head. I just swerved my head out of the way, and he got me in the shoulder. I  
20 just took off out of there. I went to the boss of the place that ran it, fuck I said, "Hey look  
21 what's going on? This fella just did that." About five or 10 minutes she told me to sit down  
22 and calm down and that was it, swept under the carpet, that was the end of it. I felt shit  
23 scared for my life. Here's me working around these guys that have got hammers and tools  
24 with them, and they're not 100% in the head and I'm vulnerable.
- 25 **Q.** So you spent your time learning there as opposed to college?
- 26 **A.** Yeah.
- 27 **Q.** During your time at Hodderville?
- 28 **A.** Huh?
- 29 **Q.** Were there any visits from your family?
- 30 **A.** While I was there I only had one visit from my mum. It was just a random "hey your  
31 mum's going to be here in a couple of hours", yeah, so—and other than that, that was it. It  
32 was just a surprise visit. Someone had drove my mum all the way up from Porirua to see  
33 me in Tokoroa. And that was like maybe the day, in the afternoon, and I don't know why  
34 she couldn't stay overnight, would have been a long drive back for her and the other dude

- 1 that brought her up.
- 2 **Q.** But you didn't know of the visit until she turned up?
- 3 **A.** Yeah, on the day.
- 4 **Q.** And just to round that up, Billy, you were 15 years old when you left Hodderville, is that
- 5 right?
- 6 **A.** Yeah, around there.
- 7 **Q.** And you went from there back to live with your family?
- 8 **A.** Yeah.
- 9 **Q.** And shortly after that you also had some short periods in Ōwairaka Boys' Home?
- 10 **A.** Yeah.
- 11 **Q.** And then Hamilton Boys' Home?
- 12 **A.** Yeah.
- 13 **Q.** But you don't remember much from those homes?
- 14 **A.** Vaguely I only can remember that Ōwairaka Boys' Home at that time I went there was
- 15 only—even though it was a short period, they actually supported you and gave you
- 16 cigarettes, you know? All the other boys' homes you weren't allowed to smoke, and I was
- 17 like far out I don't want to leave this place, they actually offer you, "Do you smoke? Here's
- 18 a smoke" every—after every dinner. So that was a—my cousin was with me at the time
- 19 and he couldn't smoke because he was younger than me. So yeah, he was gutted.
- 20 **Q.** And you remember that at the time, I'm referring to paragraphs 118 to 120?
- 21 **A.** Yeah.
- 22 **Q.** It came to times when you were about to go home but you didn't want to go home?
- 23 **A.** I think from Ōwairaka they were going to fly me down to—back to Wellington and the
- 24 staff says, "You're going back to your parents". I just broke down in tears, I said, "I don't
- 25 want to go back, I don't want—what are you doing, I don't want to go back to my dad's, I'm
- 26 shit scared of him. I feel safer in the home, I'd rather spend—send me back to Epuni, I'd
- 27 rather be there than go back and have to face my dad."
- 28 **Q.** And is that when you ended up in Epuni again?
- 29 **A.** Yeah, we went to Epuni and they must have called for a meeting and Mum and Dad were
- 30 there, and they were just discussing to my parents, we don't think it's a good idea that I go
- 31 back to them and sort something out, but he has to stay here until we find somewhere else.
- 32 And my dad sat there a couple of tears coming out his eyes and I remember him saying that
- 33 "I'm not a violent man." And saying that, he looked at me with those looks, oh yeah.
- 34 **Q.** And that obviously led to you taking your own journey after Epuni for the last time?

- 1 A. Yeah, yeah. Going back there after so many years, whole place had changed.
- 2 Q. And at that time you were 16 years old?
- 3 A. Yeah, and so when I went back there I tried to sneak in some cigarettes because they gave  
4 me some cigarettes to take from Ōwairaka. I thought far out, never had that done before.  
5 And so I tried to hide my cigarettes while I was getting searched and everything and the  
6 guy goes "What are you doing? Why are you flinching, what's the matter?" Then my  
7 cigarettes dropped and he goes "You're allowed to smoke in here, the rules have changed,  
8 it's not like the good old days." Yeah, so that was buzzy.
- 9 Q. And that was the end of your experience at Epuni?
- 10 A. Yeah.
- 11 Q. Since that time, I'm going to ask you questions about how your experience has impacted  
12 your life later on and I'm referring to paragraph 131 of your statement. You talk about  
13 anger. Can you tell us about this?
- 14 A. Yeah, yeah, when I came out of, finally came out of care, State care, I was like a loose  
15 cannon, I didn't care about anything. I was angry at a lot of things. Being forced to do a lot  
16 of things I didn't want to do whilst in care. But when I got out I was free and I just felt like  
17 retaliating. I didn't want to listen to the laws of the land or the cops or anything. I had my  
18 fingers tattooed 'FTP' for that reason, because I don't like the cops, for the way they've  
19 treated me.
- 20 Q. So you hated everything and the Police. What else were you angry about?
- 21 A. I always—we were going to church back in the day when we were younger, so later on I  
22 was angry at God, I hated—I hated God for what I've been through. I blamed—put a lot of  
23 blame on the Lord and I used to go into the churches in Porirua with a hammer and start  
24 smashing things, holy Mary mother of God, all that stuff, and I'd look straight at the cross  
25 and go "Where were you, where are you? Why did you put me through all this shit? Why  
26 did I go through all this?" And just vandalise the churches and that when no-one was  
27 around, and ask questions, "Why, why, why?" I was pissed off then, yeah.
- 28 Q. And then you start to talking about getting involved in gangs?
- 29 A. Well, my brothers were way older and they didn't—no aroha. When you see Islanders,  
30 mainly Samoans, all my soles, mates in Porirua, they awhi each other, but with us we  
31 wanted to stab each other. There was a big difference. So, I used to hang out with my  
32 mates on the streets and their families were involved with the mob in Porirua. So, I started  
33 hanging out and started hang out with them and they were my friends, they were my family,  
34 my new family, my new friends. They showed me more love and aroha than my brothers,

1 my own siblings did. And my brothers' friends would say "What are you doing hanging out  
2 with those guys? They're just bums." I said, "They're my mates". They showed me more  
3 love than my brothers ever did.

4 I love them more than I do my own brothers. To this day we're still at war. I can't  
5 stand my older brother. My mum doesn't like him and when she passes away I say, I'm  
6 going to kick him out. Tell him, "you're not allowed—where were you when she was alive,  
7 now you want to be—", that's how much hatred me and my brothers have got. Never seen  
8 eye to eye, because I was younger I was always beat down by them, but now I'm older and  
9 twice the size of them, I can sit on them now, you know? All their punches, I just learned  
10 to absorb them and smile back at them now, "is that all?" Being the youngest.

11 **Q.** And then as a—you went on to get involved in further criminal activity, referring to  
12 paragraph 135 of your statement?

13 **A.** Yeah, I didn't go around doing burgs around Porirua, noone's got no money around there,  
14 I started going into Wellington, industrial areas, golf courses. I did a lot of training with  
15 weights and they'd say "Are you going to play league this year? Are you playing in the  
16 Toke tournament this year?" I says, "No, I know where a safe is and I'll be able to pick it  
17 up, once I get strong enough I can pick it up and walk out the door and straight in the boot".  
18 And I didn't mess around with burgs. As you can see I'll never be able to climb through  
19 any window, you know, 20 years ago easy, run from the cops. Did a lot of taxi runs and  
20 had all these big Samoans, Tongans chasing me down the Centre, owing them money  
21 because I did runners from taxis and that. Wouldn't do it these days.

22 **Q.** Then you started getting in trouble with the Police?

23 **A.** Yeah, I started thinking that 'F the Police', I started actually wanting to get their attention.  
24 I've been in a couple of Police chases around Wellington, all my mates in the back thought  
25 they were hard but they acted like little puppies when we had about four cop cars behind us.  
26 We were in a little Cortina and the only way they stopped me was smashing me into a bus  
27 at the Basin Reserve. It would have been a mean Police 10/7 scene. Would have put us on  
28 the map.

29 **Q.** So then you also talk about your experience with Police, also social workers and lawyers  
30 and the courts?

31 **A.** Yeah.

32 **Q.** And I think you mention that no-one ever asked you what happened to you growing up, is  
33 that right?

34 **A.** No, not really, no. Everyone's too busy to sit you down and talk about you as a person, as

- 1 an individual, yeah.
- 2 **Q.** And you started going into the adult court, to the adult jail?
- 3 A. Yeah, I guess I graduated to bigger and better things at the time. Jail was like a second  
4 home, you know, you go in there during the off season, then you come out ready to play  
5 rugby and you're all fit and everything, you know, from all the training and the healthy  
6 eating in jail, yeah, that was a good thing about it.
- 7 **Q.** Over your years, Billy, you had reflected a lot about your activities and I understand that  
8 you have—you wrote a poem about your life?
- 9 A. Yeah.
- 10 **Q.** Of this experience. Can I get you to share that with us?
- 11 A. Yeah, this poem I wrote while I was locked up in jail. I just wrote it down and it's stuck  
12 with me and I've never been able to get rid of it. It's something that you just can't—you just  
13 can't forget, eh, and these are one of the—I've had this for about 30 years and I wrote this  
14 30 years ago and it's something I wrote passing time while I was locked up.
- 15 **Q.** Can you share that with us?
- 16 A. Oh yeah. *Us crims lead a life of hope, hiding our feelings by smoking dope, hiding away  
17 our feelings and thoughts, dreading the day we go to court. Noone understands what we all  
18 go through, but we all stick together through and through. We all stand so staunch on that  
19 day, until we are sentenced and taken away. Oh how I wish this was a dream and not real  
20 life, why, my brothers must we fight, fight, fight.*
- 21 **Q.** Thank you Billy.
- 22 A. I just want to have a drink eh. Too bad it ain't Cody's.
- 23 **CHAIR:** Sorry it's only water.
- 24 A. I hope I don't get pulled over on the way home eh, might be over the limit. But then again  
25 Police 10/7 might be following so I'll be a real star then. Always wanted to go on Police  
26 10/7, I said to my mates in Porirua when I was—point in my life I was on meth and I says  
27 to them "I'm going to go to Auckland and if I see a cop car behind me and the cameras  
28 jump out, I'm going to reverse my tow bar into a cop car and they won't be able to chase me  
29 after that.
- 30 **CHAIR:** I didn't hear that.
- 31 **QUESTIONING BY MR POHIVA CONTINUED:** Billy, while we're on the topic when you're  
32 ready, can I just ask you about your experience going into your use of drugs and alcohol,  
33 and that's paragraph 139 of your statement.
- 34 A. Glasses are only \$10 from the warehouse, I still can't see.

- 1 **Q.** You can bring it up closer if you want.
- 2 **A.** One three what?
- 3 **Q.** 139 of your—paragraph 139 of your statement.
- 4 **A.** A couple of pages behind.
- 5 **Q.** You're basically trying to get high still and was drinking alcohol a lot.
- 6 **A.** 139?
- 7 **Q.** Paragraph 139 which is page 25 of your brief of evidence.
- 8 **A.** Oh yeah, sweet. I was trying to find ways to get high, I was drinking a lot. I tried drugs,  
9 escalated to Class A. I was just sick of all the hurt, the sorrow, the pain and that was my  
10 way of getting—ignoring it, getting away from all the shit that I've been through. I've had  
11 enough of everything. Just wanted to be in a place where I—there wasn't any hurt. Getting  
12 into a zombie-like state of mind really made me feel relaxed and it was different, different  
13 experience anyway. Sometimes I would sit in the pine trees down the road and just look at  
14 the sun and just enjoy the—in the moment, eh, by myself.
- 15 **Q.** And you'd carry on that later in your life?
- 16 **A.** Yeah.
- 17 **Q.** You got addicted basically?
- 18 **A.** Huh?
- 19 **Q.** You got addicted to it basically?
- 20 **A.** Yeah, I got addicted.
- 21 **Q.** Can I ask you about, so moving on to paragraph 144, you talk about paranoia and your  
22 social interactions. That's page 26 of your statement.
- 23 **A.** Oh yeah.
- 24 **Q.** Can you talk to us about what happened there?
- 25 **A.** There was a point in my life where I was paranoid, I couldn't talk to anyone, I didn't want to  
26 look at anyone eye to eye because I'll start getting paranoid about what they were thinking,  
27 what their thoughts were. I used to wear a trench coat, I used to have a machete under my  
28 coat, and it wasn't for being violent, was just because I felt safe. I felt safe. I didn't know  
29 what other people would think. Mates would look at me and say "Don't you think—why  
30 are you walking around like that? Why do you act like that?" Because they're staring at  
31 me, but you don't even know what the guys are thinking, you know? Just paranoia, I don't  
32 know, must have been the come downs, I don't know.
- 33 **Q.** And you found it difficult to communicate with people?
- 34 **A.** Yeah, I wouldn't talk to anybody. All the family would be drinking, having a good time, I'll

1 just sit there like a muppet going like that, not even smiling. I didn't—I had no emotions.  
2 Some—a cousin reckoned some girl tried to hit on me. I didn't even know what that was,  
3 didn't even know how to react to it. Haven't been in that situation.

4 **Q.** So you got into trouble a lot—

5 **A.** Yeah.

6 **Q.** —because of that?

7 **A.** Yeah, because of that. I was a play up.

8 **Q.** And just turning over the page to paragraph 149 which is page 27 of yours. That also  
9 impacted on your relationships with—your personal relationships and your relationship  
10 with your children?

11 **A.** Yeah, later on in life I met a girl, we had three kids, she showed me a better way of life and  
12 bringing a child into the world was—I didn't think I'll have kids until I started having kids  
13 with her and it was a real experience, holding a baby and bringing a life into the world.  
14 That really slowed me right down when I started thinking there is a better life out there,  
15 there is—instead of being a play up and always going over the law and there is a better  
16 way, and she showed me that you don't have to go and steal, she taught me to stop doing  
17 what I was doing and support and get a job and yeah. It was real tough at the time because  
18 my convictions, my history is thick as a bible, you know, I've got a lot of convictions  
19 behind my—a lot of—a big record and well-known to the Police in Wellington and Porirua,  
20 and from going from one point in my life totally changing it into now into getting a job and  
21 looking after—having responsibilities and that, it just blew me away, yeah.

22 **Q.** And you talk about you not wanting to—your children to go through what you've been  
23 through?

24 **A.** Well, what I've seen in life, what I've experienced of my mum and dad, I mean they done  
25 their best, you know, I'm not holding any grudges against my dad for how violent he was,  
26 but I don't want that cycle to go through me to my kids, and so I tried to—tried my best to  
27 bring them up.

28 **Q.** And when you were trying to bring them up I understand that you also had to teach yourself  
29 to help them?

30 **A.** Yeah, I—later on when they were going to school and come home with homework and they  
31 would say "Can you help me with homework?" And I'd be like fuck I don't even know, this  
32 is out of it, I had to teach myself to learn how to do their homework and then teach them as  
33 well. It was a whole learning experience and I reckon I handled it quite well.

34 **Q.** And that's an amazing experience for you to pass on.



- 1 A. Yeah, it was, yeah.
- 2 Q. Moving on to things or ways in which you have been able to cope with things, and that's at  
3 paragraph 156 to 161 of your statement, have you got it?
- 4 A. There were a lot of low points in my life and times where I was going through custody  
5 battle and all the stress about not seeing my kids and marriage and all the stress about being  
6 locked up as well. I couldn't handle it, couldn't cope by myself.
- 7 Q. So you were going through a lot of that stuff and you talk about going back to drug use?
- 8 A. Yeah.
- 9 Q. And that also affected your brothers and sisters and how they—how you interacted with  
10 them?
- 11 A. Yeah, course it did, they were against me. Started—I first tried meth when I was about—in  
12 '93. My boss did it, sold it to all of us. Go to work and your boss is saying who wants to  
13 take up a bag, pay it on pay day, you know. Everyone in our company smoked it.
- 14 Q. You also talk about your health.
- 15 A. Huh?
- 16 Q. You also talk about your health and how things have led to you having significant health  
17 problems, is that right?
- 18 A. Yeah, all the meth that I've smoked the doctor reckons “your two heart attacks are because  
19 of what you're doing”, yeah.
- 20 Q. And there were a lot of quite low points throughout, or since your time in care?
- 21 A. Yeah.
- 22 Q. And just moving on, Billy, you mentioned earlier at the beginning of your evidence that  
23 you never were taught to speak Tokelauan?
- 24 A. Huh?
- 25 Q. You weren't taught to speak Tokelauan or taught the Tokelauan language, is that right?
- 26 A. Yeah, I wasn't taught to speak fluent Toke, but I know the old, you know, I know all the  
27 swear words and all that, all the basic stuff of Tokelau and that. But I'm not like my older  
28 brother who tries to be a knowitall and speak Toke and he sounds plastic. It's just sad that  
29 we—when my cousins, we all get together and I can't understand, I only understand so  
30 much, but I'd love to—I would have loved to be able to communicate back to them and in  
31 Toke, but yet I always get cheeky in a typical island style.
- 32 Q. And then later on in your life you had an experience at church. And I'm referring to  
33 paragraph 166 of your statement, that's your page 30.
- 34 A. Yeah, my ex-girlfriend, we split up and she took the kids to Aussie, and so I was left alone

1 with a hole in my heart and felt like someone just shot me in the heart, walking around like  
2 lost and my aunty dragged me to church and says, "Come to church, we're having a feed."  
3 Food is always my weakness eh, you know. And so, I went to church and the pastor, the  
4 pastor and his sons were playing—when I walked in there it sounded like Metallica was  
5 playing, you know, but it was the pastor and his three sons. And he used to—it was like he  
6 —that attracted me to the church as well, yeah. I enjoyed it, it was—I gave my life to the  
7 Lord and—yeah.

8 **Q.** And you mention in your statement you stopped being angry at God, is that right?

9 **A.** Yeah, I started asking for healing, and I started really getting into the Bible and church and  
10 asking God for a lot of forgiveness throughout my time in care and everything I went  
11 through. I no longer had any hatred towards God or anything that anyone had done in the  
12 past. Maybe when I gave my life to the Lord I'm covered with the blood of Jesus, so it  
13 gives me the right of—it's so easy to forgive and forget, mmm.

14 **Q.** And you talk about during the time you were learning more about the Bible, you realised  
15 you could learn?

16 **A.** Yeah, I didn't go to school, I went to Porirua College for one day and didn't go back, but  
17 later on when I was locked up I started reading the Bible, getting into it, started copying it  
18 down in a book, on the paper when I was locked in the pound. Pound is a place in jail  
19 where you play up, eh, send you to the pound, no window, no light, only a dim light. So,  
20 I sat there with a bible copying this thing out and started realising it's not so—it's —I'm  
21 starting to teach myself how to read and write. My writing became better and better as the  
22 further I kept writing, the longer words were—that were hard to say, became easier to write  
23 without just like that, and so, yeah, didn't realise it was so easy once you put your mind to  
24 it, eh, who knows I could have been a doctor.

25 **Q.** And shortly after that period you went on to get your first job, is that right?

26 **A.** Yeah, I—after I sorted my life out and decided to walk in God's grace and I done my CV  
27 up, I went and got a job and started working and worked for Fletchers Wellington, worked  
28 there for 10 years, yeah. Started as a labourer, ended up being a crane—a dogman for the  
29 crane operator. They gave me the radio because the other dogmans are too dangerous.  
30 Yeah, I carried on, I went to Whitireia, I had enough of building because there was a lot of  
31 lick asses in that company trying to make their way to the top, so I moved on. I went to  
32 Whitireia, got my truck licences and I studied the book and the hard stuff in the road code  
33 and in the truck book to get your class five and that. I would just hang it around the walls  
34 at home in the kitchen and around my room and memorise all the hard ones and then—so

1 when it came the day for the test to get my class five and that, it wasn't that hard, it was a  
2 lot easier. I just told everyone else, you do your homework then you'll be able to succeed.

3 So I started driving these truck and trailers, Tūrangi swap, my cousin drove for  
4 Mobil. Even though I wasn't getting paid I just—I wanted the experience. So, he'll go and  
5 get drunk and play golf with the boys because he's a sookie like that, he didn't want to miss  
6 out. And he'll come and pick me up, wreak of alcohol, jump on that side and turn the  
7 heater up and tell me to drive to Palmy, 50,000 litres on the truck, 30 on the trailer driving a  
8 Mobil tanker, yeah. Good experience. The way I see it I've come a long way. Still trying  
9 to better myself now. I'm not an angel. I've been through a few relationships. But—

10 **Q.** You have succeeded, Billy, because you managed to get all your certificates and licences  
11 for the job, is that right?

12 **A.** Just a piece of paper with your name on it saying.

13 **Q.** And from your perspective you started learning and you found that it was easy for you once  
14 you put your mind to it?

15 **A.** Yeah. And I ended up running my own crew. There was a digger operator, truck driver  
16 and a spotter. The boss comes and said, "Who wants to run this crew because we need  
17 someone that knows how to read plans." Noone put their hand up, so I did. So he taught  
18 me for about a week and a half how to read plans and big drawings and that and I ran my  
19 own crew. Too bad they didn't get the pay rise that went with it. Yeah.

20 **Q.** So I understand you also—you're currently in emergency housing?

21 **A.** Yeah, I've been there since 2017. I had—I gave my job up to look after my mum fulltime,  
22 bedridden, and—hang on. Before my dad died about 15 years ago, as much as all the hate  
23 and the fights and the hidings and everything I've been through, I still love my dad eh. And  
24 before he died he says "Puka, you're going to be the man of the house." I was working on  
25 the wharf doing the discharge to Mobil, doing the tankers, I got a phone call about 8 o'clock  
26 in the morning, we just finished a 12 hour and I got a phone call and he says, "Bro your dad  
27 just died." And I finished the nightshift, I don't know, although we had a lot of bad blood  
28 in the past, I always looked after my dad and mum. The other brothers didn't —weren't  
29 nowhere to be seen. Even to this day my mum's at the rest home in Porirua, they never go  
30 and see her. There's going to be a lot of fireworks when she passes.

31 **Q.** So you've given up a lot to care for your mum.

32 **A.** Yeah, yeah I told my boss I said "Hey, to pay my leave I've got to look after my mum. My  
33 sister's looking after her at the moment, they're partying, my mum doesn't—is not right.  
34 I just want to—pay my leave and I want to—I've got care for my mum." So we—I took her

1 into my care and we've been in emergency housing since 2017. But WINZ, MSD have  
2 only earlier this year, they got my mum into a rest home in Titahi Bay, Porirua. So that's  
3 freed me up. Now I can work on my health and getting myself back on the road straight  
4 and narrow.

5 **Q.** And I understand that you're still working through those difficulties right now?

6 **A.** Yeah.

7 **Q.** And, thank you.

8 **A.** It's all right.

9 **Q.** Thank you, Billy, for sharing that with us. I'm just going to ask you, because we're getting  
10 to end of your evidence now.

11 **A.** That's good. We've been working on this for about the last couple of months. I'm going to  
12 miss the lunches too.

13 **Q.** Paragraph 184.

14 **A.** Yeah.

15 **Q.** You shared with us some thoughts about how you would change things for the future and  
16 I'll let you find your place.

17 **A.** Not that anyone will pay attention. 184?

18 **Q.** We're here to pay attention.

19 **A.** Mmm?

20 **Q.** So paragraph 184, have you found it?

21 **A.** Yeah, yeah.

22 **Q.** Can you share with us your thoughts?

23 **A.** Kids in care. They should get a lot of attention, especially the ones that play up. Got to  
24 catch them before they fall through the safety net. Most of us growing up had no-one to  
25 care for us, no-one, nobody cared for us. These are the ones that need to be—to be caught  
26 before they fall through that safety net.

27 **Q.** And you also talk about the people working in State care?

28 **A.** Yeah.

29 **Q.** And how they should be trusted with—

30 **A.** Of course, there's a lot of trust that goes into supervising kids eh. Can't pick whoever off  
31 the street and say come and—people in State care are the ones who have got the most trust,  
32 supervisors that supervise the kids. They need to go through some sort of screening,  
33 whatever they do to—background checks or, I don't know, whatever they do, eh. Safety  
34 measures have got to be put in place. No-one's perfect. We always—we all know that.

1 People in care need to know their background. They need to know their kids that they're  
2 caring for. Have hui every so often. If you see a kid on the streets or in strife you need to  
3 approach that child and sit them down and ask them what's going on and caregivers who  
4 need people who have been there before, been there done that, they'll probably be the ones  
5 that are most experienced, the ones like what I've been through in my stress, what I've been  
6 through. No-one's going to come out of Whitireia, out of the school and say this is what  
7 the, you know, just read books and then you're an expert at this kid. I'll probably know a  
8 lot more and talk to that kid a lot more than what someone from Whitireia would, even  
9 though they're master degrees and this and that.

10 **Q.** So what you're saying there is that you can't just learn about it?

11 **A.** Yeah.

12 **Q.** It's good to get people who have been through it?

13 **A.** Until you've been in their shoes and walked the walk, talked the talk.

14 **Q.** And then you talk about staff, Māori and Pacific Island staff?

15 **A.** Yeah, a lot of us are PIs, Māori and Pacific Islanders and we will communicate a lot easier  
16 to Māori and Pacific Island staff I reckon. I mean I'm not being racist or anything towards  
17 Pākehās and all that, but just don't know how we roll eh, you know?

18 **Q.** And you had a nan or a person you called nan that was like that?

19 **A.** Yeah, in Epuni there was one Pākehā elderly lady, she was the one, she was the best staff  
20 member out of all of the staff there. She had time for us, sit next to us, talk to us, and  
21 I could open up and adapt to her and not like the other staff members.

22 **Q.** And when kids have trouble or complaints?

23 **A.** When kids are in doubt and they got complaints and they find it hard to talk to staff, you've  
24 just got to be there for—be there for when they, you know, when they open and express  
25 themselves, you know, it must be a lot of patience just to put an effort into one kid, one  
26 person, one child, got to have a lot of patience and that. I didn't have a voice when I was  
27 going through my stages of Epuni, Arbor House, Hodderville, Ōwairaka and all that,  
28 I didn't have a voice. You go here, you go here, I was like a number. I didn't feel like I had  
29 any say of anything because I was only little, I was only young.

30 **Q.** So you believe they should have talked to you about what was happening to you?

31 **A.** At least tell the kid "Hey this is what's going on, what are you doing, what's happening?  
32 We're going to transfer you to Wellington, you're going to go here", not the silent treatment.  
33 Half the time I wondered what was happening when I—every time I was getting hauled  
34 away back to Epuni from my parents, "Why are we going back to that place? I hate it there.

- 1 Mum, what's going on?" All she could do is have tears in her eyes.
- 2 **Q.** You also talk about a favourite staff member or having a favourite staff member, is that  
3 right?
- 4 **A.** Yes, where's that, is that over the page?
- 5 **Q.** Yes, your page 35.
- 6 **A.** Favourite staff members. That would be the best ones to communicate and they'll be able  
7 to read the body language when the kids are in stress or in strife or they're not doing—  
8 something's wrong. Each kid has a favourite, that staff member will be able to read the  
9 body language of that child and pull him aside, pull her aside, him aside.
- 10 **Q.** And you also said food was a good tool to use?
- 11 **A.** Yeah, look at me. Food is a good medicine, so is laughter.
- 12 **Q.** Just moving on, you also mentioned something about social workers. Can you tell us about  
13 that?
- 14 **A.** Social workers should, you know, they say a lot, they mean a lot, but talk a lot of crap eh.  
15 Bottom line. You have a hui and they're sitting there with their books out and all their  
16 folders and they're doing all this and that, and their time to speak they've got a lot of good  
17 suggestions but there's no follow through. Selling dreams. Social workers have got to, you  
18 know, they don't get paid to go to work and money for jam, you know? They've got a job  
19 to do, do it. My dad taught me, as much of an A-hole he was, he taught me if you do a job,  
20 do it once, do it properly. And so, I'm at work, I'm doing jobs properly and, you know, I  
21 have to bark at all the young fellas because they're too busy texting. I said "I'm going to  
22 stick that phone up your ass in a minute if you don't put it away", you know, play ups, I get  
23 tired of working with young fellas, rather work on my own.
- 24 **Q.** And you also talk about having, when people are dealing with kids or working with kids to  
25 have a refresher?
- 26 **A.** Yeah, well every job I've had we've always had toolboxes eh, you should always have a  
27 refresher every once a week or twice a week, you know, just keep everything fresh in the  
28 mind, keep everybody real and keep them on their toes. That's what I'd do if I had a crew,  
29 I'll always—I'll hold a hui and just so it's not like if you have a meeting once a month, that's  
30 too far apart. Everything is done weekly, daily, you've always got to have a—get your  
31 ducks in a line first and then everything will just follow suit. Good job, well done and  
32 everything. But if you're just going to be hōhā and can't be bothered then that's where  
33 things happen, kids falling through the safety net, that's when all that shit is going to start  
34 happening.

- 1 **Q.** So catch them early you're saying?
- 2 **A.** Yes.
- 3 **Q.** Thank you very much, Billy, for your evidence. Before I hand it over to the  
4 Commissioners, is there anything else that you want to add to your evidence? You don't  
5 have to, but if there's anything else?
- 6 **A.** No, I'm good bro, thank you.
- 7 **Q.** Thank you very much for your evidence. I'll now handing it over to Madam Chair.
- 8 **CHAIR:** Do you mind taking questions from Commissioners if they ask you?
- 9 **A.** Fire away.
- 10 **Q.** Fire away. Paul, do you have any questions? This is Paul Gibson.
- 11 **COMMISSIONER GIBSON:** Thanks Billy, thanks so much for sharing your story, so much of  
12 your life. You talked right from your young, about your mother's mental illness, you didn't  
13 know it at the time and then you cared for her later in life, recently as well.
- 14 **A.** Yeah.
- 15 **Q.** Was there a time when you think she experienced good care, care that was right for her and  
16 right for the whole family?
- 17 **A.** Good care, at home or at—
- 18 **Q.** At home or in a facility, or support anywhere for her and her mental illness?
- 19 **A.** While she was unwell, yeah, of course we had—we looked after mum as best we could  
20 when she was unwell.
- 21 **Q.** The good care came from you as family. Was there good care from any professionals or  
22 any support people or anything like that?
- 23 **A.** No, I didn't see anybody—any nurses or visits from any doctors or nurses or anything, no.  
24 When mum got released from the ward there would be no follow up or nothing. Dad was  
25 the main one and that would have put a lot of stress on his head.
- 26 **Q.** What keeps you going and supporting her over the years? What makes you the carer that  
27 you are?
- 28 **A.** Straight up? She wiped our ass when we were kids so I only feel the need to pay her back.  
29 Is that—
- 30 **Q.** That's—
- 31 **A.** —good?
- 32 **Q.** —great, that is, it's clear.
- 33 **A.** That's the way I see it, mum looked after us when we were babies. She tried her best, she  
34 tried her hardest while she was sick. A couple of times she said that she went cleaning one

1 night, the people on the bus turned around and started picking on her because they thought  
2 that she was drunk, but she was getting unwell, and they didn't realise that mum was—had  
3 an illness. And a couple of times, yeah, they picked on her thinking that she was  
4 intoxicated. Not even, it was her—

5 **Q.** Not enough understanding out in the community about these things, mental illness?

6 **A.** Yeah, not back in those days, OSH wasn't even invented. There was no safety measures  
7 back in those days, unless you paid extra to catch up and follow-up, but yeah, doubt it. My  
8 dad didn't have any support. Probably the way he was. Go to work, go to the pub, get  
9 drunk, come home and play up.

10 **Q.** Thanks for your sharing and your caring.

11 **A.** Sweet.

12 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Tēnā koe.

13 **A.** Kia ora.

14 **Q.** Kia ora Billy. So today a prominent theme has been these young tamariki, young boys  
15 today who are 10, 11, 12, 13 in the residences and Lake Alice.

16 **A.** Oh are you talking these days?

17 **Q.** Today, yeah, we've been hearing about how they are treated differently, the Māori and  
18 Pasifika kids.

19 **A.** Yeah.

20 **Q.** From the Palagi kids. Mr TY earlier was talking about how they had the hardest chores  
21 and, you know, the way they were—

22 **A.** Bum work.

23 **Q.** Yeah, and spoken to like they were dumb, or couldn't understand basic instructions and you  
24 too have talked about the racial slurs, the N word and the treatment that you had at such a  
25 young age. And so my question is just to think about as a young person that young being  
26 treated that way and talked to that way, what sort of—how did that make you feel, what  
27 kind of effect did that have on your well-being?

28 **A.** Sorry mate, you lost me, you took so long to explain, I've forgotten how to answer you  
29 now.

30 **Q.** Okay. In short, to have the N word used I think you put it?

31 **A.** Yeah, oh to be—

32 **Q.** To be talked to like that as a young boy, what did that do to you, what did it make you feel?

33 **A.** Oh you know, if I saw those same guys today I wouldn't have any problem pulling out a  
34 machete and using it on them, that's how much hate and how much hurt I had towards all



1 that sort of stuff back in the days. Going to Greytown Primary, you know, it was—it was  
2 like a nightmare everyday, being treated like the nigger in the class. I was the only black  
3 fella in there and there were all these big guys in there, way older than me, they were form  
4 two, but they were like six foot something. Nah.

5 **Q.** Ka pai.

6 **A.** Yeah.

7 **Q.** Ka pai, thank you Billy, kia ora, ngā mihi.

8 **A.** Shot bro, thanks.

9 **CHAIR:** Billy, a quick question from me, I hope it's quick. When you left Epuni for the last time,  
10 you said you met other kids, other young people in the gangs and that's where you felt  
11 comfortable, safe.

12 **A.** Yeah.

13 **Q.** Amongst friends.

14 **A.** Because I was meant to go back to my parents.

15 **Q.** Yes.

16 **A.** But I was shit scared of all the hidings I've had in my past, I didn't want to go back to 'here  
17 we go again'.

18 **Q.** Yeah. So my question is, when you went there, were there some people there who'd  
19 already been to Epuni or some of the other boys' homes as well in the gangs?

20 **A.** No, we don't go around asking "Where you been bro?" We don't do that sort of shit, we  
21 never did that. We just go in there, "Where are you from?" "Porirua", "Oh you're one of  
22 those fellas."

23 **Q.** So being in the gang was enough to—

24 **A.** I wouldn't say it was a gang, it was just like mates.

25 **Q.** Okay. Were you on the streets?

26 **A.** Yeah, course I was. I felt safer to sleep under the bridge with my mates than at home with  
27 the old man.

28 **Q.** Right.

29 **A.** But my older brother says two of them, they caught me up Canons Creek and they says  
30 "Come, let's take into Wellington, we've got to take off, Dad's got a baseball bat and he's  
31 looking for us."

32 **Q.** So it was safer to be on the street than be at home?

33 **A.** Course it was.

34 **Q.** And better to be on the streets than at Epuni or one of these other places?

1 A. Yeah, I felt—I said to the staff at Ōwairaka, I started crying my eyes out saying, "I don't  
2 want to go back", "Oh he's being transferred back to his parents", I started crying even  
3 more. They said, "Why is that?", "Because I don't want to go back, my dad's going to  
4 waste me". Last hiding I seen him give my older brother was, my brother was in the corner  
5 of the room and the old man had all his weight on his throat and he was like just, you know,  
6 that was my older brother. I got big hidings but they got—he got WWF styles as well.

7 **Q.** Thanks for sharing that. I'll pass you down the line, two more to go.

8 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Talofa Billy.

9 A. Malo.

10 **Q.** Were you able to get support in any of those homes, like maybe counselling or did they  
11 offer you any support?

12 A. No.

13 **Q.** A safe person to talk to?

14 A. I didn't go into any special room and get any special treatment. It was harden up or—yeah.

15 **Q.** Was that because they didn't offer it or you didn't know to—or just didn't—able to ask?

16 A. We didn't even get offered any support. We were so young, at that age when you're nine,  
17 10 or 11 and you're in care, you just get told, you don't—"Oh Billy, you want to come in  
18 the room, we've got a specialist in here." None of that.

19 **Q.** None of that?

20 A. No.

21 **Q.** And Billy, part of the things that we're looking at is redress, so redress is how do you right  
22 the wrong, right?

23 A. Yeah.

24 **Q.** So, you've been beaten up and you've suffered a lot of abuse in the different places that—

25 A. We were a punching bag.

26 **Q.** You've described that really beautifully for us in terms of what happened, you're very  
27 descriptive, right?

28 A. Yeah.

29 **Q.** Have you brought a claim against any of those agencies?

30 A. Well, one of the bros, my last job was working for Nelson Underground Drilling in  
31 Wellington and we did all the fibre, and one of the boys on the job was saying "Hey,  
32 brother, have you been into the boys' home?" I said, "Why's that?" I said "Yeah, course I  
33 have, back in the days." This is when it all started about three years ago. He says "Well,  
34 here's a number, bro, Sonja Cooper Legal, Cooper Legal. They deal with people that have

1           been in care." I says, "Oh yeah, pass that here" whatever. So I rang them up about a week  
2           later. That's where I started—they says—they got my—it took about a year before they got  
3           my records from MSD, and they says well we've got a case here, you've got like 400 pages  
4           and it's been like two and a half years now, and they've just gotten all my paperwork back  
5           and sent it off to MSD and another claim with Salvation Army.

6   **Q.**     So that's still going through a process?

7   **A.**     Yeah. I mean I don't—you know, far I don't expect to be a millionaire, I don't care about  
8           money. It does help though, it's right up there with oxygen, eh.

9   **Q.**     Yeah.

10 **A.**     I wouldn't mind a new V8.

11 **Q.**     The only other comment I wanted to make was you sound to be a very good son—

12 **A.**     Huh.

13 **Q.**     You sound to be a very good son to your mother.

14 **A.**     Oh yeah, you know, been through a lot with the old lady. My older brothers, one's in  
15           Aussie, all he can do is ring up and say "Oh hey you better be" —I said "Shut your ass,  
16           you're over there being an Aussie mate", you know? The other brothers are driving around  
17           Wellington and Auckland and I don't see him—we saw him about a month ago eh, showing  
18           me his photo because his girlfriend got paid out through Imperial Tobacco, she got a big  
19           lump out of them, he's shown all these photos of \$100 bills and I'm sitting there rolling my  
20           eyes.

21 **Q.**     Thank you very much, Billy, for your kōrero this afternoon.

22 **CHAIR:** And just one more, Commissioner Steenson.

23 **COMMISSIONER STEENSON:** I don't have any questions, Billy, but tēnā koe whanaunga, uri  
24           o Ngāti Whātua ki Ōrakei, e Billy.

25 **A.**     Yeah, we—because we were brought up in Porirua on my Toke side, I don't really know  
26           my Māori side up here. I only went for a visit to that marae down the waterfront maybe  
27           once or twice in about 40, 50 years. If Mum was up here she'll get a lot more support,  
28           because that's our iwi, that's our marae over here.

29 **Q.**     Yeah, it makes me feel sad that you weren't, you know, in the impacts of colonisation  
30           means that a lot of our uri were disassociated.

31 **A.**     I see a lot of them on Māori Television, must be my cousin, that must be my cousin, pretty  
32           eh darling, eh. I don't know them.

33 **Q.**     Well, e mihi ana ki te kaha ki a koe. Ki te kōrero i te kaupapa nui i tēnei rā, nō reira tēnā  
34           koe. I want to thank you for your strength in coming forward and speaking about the

1 trauma you've endured in your life.

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. Even before you entered into State care, you were traumatised by your home life and  
4 circumstances.

5 A. Hell yeah.

6 Q. And then to be put into Epuni, a jail for children and other residences that you suffered so  
7 much horrendous abuse that, as you've said, attacked your wairua and diminished your  
8 mana.

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. Ka aroha, ka aroha. And despite all of that, all the impacts you've continued to deal with,  
11 you still find love in your heart for others looking after your mum, love for your father and  
12 encouraging others when you see them having a hard time. Ka rawe, and teaching yourself  
13 how to read and write in the most unlikely situation and going on to give yourself an  
14 education is just inspirational. And as I say, I feel really sad that the separation from our  
15 iwi, from your uri meant that you and your mum didn't get the whanau support. But I want  
16 to say it's been a privilege to hear your kōrero today. We've been absolutely paying  
17 attention and taken on board your recommendations for change, incredibly insightful. On  
18 behalf the of the Royal Commission I thank you and I want you to know we're truly  
19 grateful for your coming forward.

20 A. Thanks.

21 Q. Nga mihi.

22 A. Choice. Thanks again and my darling over here, her name is Te Rangimarie, she's from  
23 Napier, she keeps saying, "The one in the red is giving you a dirty look, stop laughing, stop  
24 smiling" You know. I said take it that way whatever, I don't care. This is how I am. I live  
25 by three things, and I've always stood by them; treat people the way I want to be treated; be  
26 yourself don't be anybody else; and there's always someone tougher around the corner and  
27 by those, yeah, thanks.

28 Q. You being you, thank you.

29 A. Thanks to Semisi for all the homework we done in Lower Hutt and Wellington, all the  
30 hours you spent, headache, rolling your eyes relaying it back to me. Like I said before I'm  
31 going to miss all the lunches you shouted me eh, because me and my cousin are going to  
32 miss the lunches.

33 **CHAIR:** I think it's only appropriate, I don't know if we have anybody from Toke, from Tokelau  
34 here today do we? Why don't we sing Te Aroha for our brother here. [Te Aroha song]

1 Just before we leave, we're starting at 9.45 tomorrow morning. We have a lot to do. Thank  
2 you. And our final prayer.

3 **MR POHIVA:** Just putting on my Tongan ordained minister's hat, let us pray. [**Prayer in**  
4 **Tongan]**

5 **Hearing adjourned at 5.10 pm to Wednesday, 28 July 2021 at 9.45 am**

6

7