

**ABUSE IN CARE ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY  
LAKE ALICE CHILD AND ADOLESCENT UNIT INQUIRY HEARING**

**Under** The Inquiries Act 2013

**In the matter of** The Royal Commission of Inquiry into Historical Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-based Institutions

**Royal Commission:** Judge Coral Shaw (Chair)  
Ali'imuamua Sandra Alofivae  
Mr Paul Gibson

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

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

**Date:** 17 June 2021

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**TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS**

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**Hearing opens with waiata and karakia tīmatanga by Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei**

1 [9.35 am]

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

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

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

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

14 **CHAIR:** Tēnā koe.

15 **DONALD DANIEL KU**

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

21 Kia ora Donald.

22 A. Kia ora.

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

24 A. Yeah.

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

27 A. Ka pai.

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

29 A. Donald.

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

31 A. Kia ora.

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

34 A. What information?

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

9           **A.**    **[Nods].**

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

11          **A.**    Yeah.

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

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

14          **Q.**    Wires?

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

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

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

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

23          **A.**    Yeah.

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

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

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

28          **A.**    Yeah.

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

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

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

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

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

34          **A.**    Yeah.

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

3 A. [Nods].

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

8 A. Yeah.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

27 CHAIR: Tēnā koe ano Ms Thomas.

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