

**ABUSE IN CARE ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY  
CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL CARE 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)  
Dr Andrew Erueti  
Ali'imua Sandra Alofivae

**Counsel:** Ms Anne Toohey, Mr Simon Mount QC, Ms Kerry Beaton,  
Mr Kingi Snelgar, Mr Simon Waalkens and Ms Julia Spelman  
for the Royal Commission  
Ms Rachael Schmidt-McCleave and Ms Julia White for the  
Crown  
Ms Katie Lane for a survivor  
Mr Stone and Ms Watene for survivors

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

**Date:** 3–11 May 2021

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**TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS**

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## [Waiata Te Aroha]

**CHAIR:** Thank you very much for your evidence, Maureen, it's time for us all to have a break, thank you.

**Adjournment from 11.26 am to 12.34 pm****MARYANN KARANGAHUI RANGI**

**CHAIR:** Tēnā koe Mr Snelgar. I'll just ask Ms Rangi if she would do the affirmation. Do you mind if I call you Maryann?

A. Not at all.

**Q.** I'd be happy if I could.

A. Thank you.

**Q.** Tell me the name of your supporter. Sitting there beside you?

A. Sorry, do you want me to introduce—

**Q.** It would be very nice if you introduced her.

A. This is my sister Joanne sitting next to me.

**Q.** Kia ora Joanne.

A. She's the youngest.

**Q.** Tēnei te mihi ki a koe, ki a kōrua.

A. And of course Mike.

**Q.** We know him, he's one of us.

A. Kia ora.

**Q.** So Maryann, if I just ask you to take the affirmation before Kingi asks you some questions. Do you solemnly, sincerely and truly declare and affirm that the evidence you give today will be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

A. Āe, I do.

**Q.** Kia ora, tēnā koe. Thank you Mr Snelgar.

**QUESTIONING BY MR SNELGAR:** Tēnā koe, tēnā tātou o tēnei whare he mea tuatahi ka mihi atu ki a koe, Maryann, hurinoa ki to tuahine kua tae mai I mua o te aroaro o tēnei Kōmihana. Me ngā whakapapa maha kua tae mai runga i a koe I tēnei ra huri rauna i tēnei whare ki ngā whaea, te mana whenua o konei engari ki a koutou ngā mana wāhine kua tae mai ki te tautoko i tēnei wā tātou whanaunga, tēnei wā tātou taonga, i puta mai i ngā kōrero to oranga. Nō reira, tēnā koe, tēnā tātou. Maryann, you were born in 1962; is that correct?

A. Correct.

**Q.** How many siblings do you have?

A. There was ten of us, now we're down to five.

1 **Q.** Your parents, did they pass away when you were young?

2 **A.** Yes. So 1968 my—our mother passed first, she was 38 years of age, and not long after that,  
3 or in the same year, our father passed away. I believe, or was informed, of a broken heart,  
4 but as I got older I think it was about shock of looking after ten children, because mum had  
5 done all the mahi.

6 **CHAIR:** Probably both the same thing, broken heart and ten children all at once.

7 **A.** Kia ora.

8 **QUESTIONING BY MR SNELGAR CONTINUED:** You were six years old when they passed  
9 away?

10 **A.** Yes.

11 **Q.** And your first six years, how would you describe those years?

12 **A.** Beautiful. Yeah, I felt safe. I remember at one of the homes, because apparently I was  
13 conceived in Mercer, so there was a stage when my parents and all of us had to move down  
14 there, he was on the railways working, yeah, and so when I came along apparently—I was  
15 born—I thought it was Middlemore because everybody says Middlemore, but apparently it  
16 was at National Women's where I was born. Yeah.

17 **Q.** When your father passed away you were living in Ōtara at the time, is that right?

18 **A.** Kia ora, yes.

19 **Q.** And then your—

20 **A.** Same with mum, our mother. I don't remember my mum's death, all I remember is her on  
21 one of those grey stretchers like a bench, a kitchen bench, lying on there waiting for the  
22 casket to arrive and then it arrived and they took her into the room and then the inquisitive  
23 child, or the naughty child they used to say, managed to sneak in the room and watch them  
24 put mum in the casket, in one of the State homes in Ōtara.

25 **Q.** When your father passed away, was his tangi held in Mangamuka in the far north?

26 **A.** Yes, so now mum died, we held her at the house, I remember that, and she was buried in  
27 Black Bridge Mangere, a Māori urupā there, cemetery. And I don't know why, but I think,  
28 or later on in our adulthood the reason that we left home, or Mangamuka, was because our  
29 father being the oldest and back in those days our grandparents wanted him to have  
30 someone else—our mother was married before she met our dad, lost her husband, and then  
31 our dad met and our grandfather was very no-no about that, being that is, our father was  
32 tuakana.

33 **Q.** After your father's tangi, were you in the care of your grandfather's brother, Koro Dan?

34 **A.** Yes. So when our dad died, don't know whose decision or how that happened, we were on

1 the Otene buses because they're whanaungas—I didn't realise that at that age—Otene buses  
 2 and our dad was put in the back of the bus, taken from Ōtara to Mangamuka, where he  
 3 comes from. After that we came home back to Ōtara and our house was stripped, was  
 4 empty. We got to drink out of a Marmite jar, that's right, to have a drink of water. Don't  
 5 know, not quite sure—at that time, I know now what happened. And our Koro Dan must  
 6 have found out—whom they called crazy, he's a war veteran and everybody said he was  
 7 crazy and that, but can't have been that crazy, came to Auckland and took seven of us back  
 8 to Mangamuka from Ōtara.

9 **Q.** And you stayed with him?

10 **A.** Yes, and we stayed with him, with our Koro.

11 **Q.** Did he also pass away and then you were moved again?

12 **A.** Yeah, so probably not quite two years, if I remember correctly, our Koro died on us and I  
 13 think our oldest sister who was only 12—not oldest sister, second eldest sister who was  
 14 only 12 at that time—looked after us and, yeah, trust you Koro Dan, passed away and my  
 15 sister woke myself and the brother that was a year older than me to go up to the shed at half  
 16 past 4 in the morning to let the family know our uncle, my dad's brother, and the brothers  
 17 know that uncle had passed—Koro had passed away.

18 **Q.** After your Koro passed away, did your dad's brother Bill take over your care?

19 **A.** Yes. So Koro—my dad's brother lived just around the corner with his family, his wife—  
 20 beautiful wife—and their children, just around the corner around the other side of the hill.  
 21 And he used to come around unbeknown to us, that he was in charge, because you don't  
 22 know anything when us three, my brother older than us and my younger sister, you know,  
 23 were only children.

24 **Q.** So your Uncle Bill came in, so you stayed in the home where your Koro had passed but  
 25 your Uncle Bill would come in occasionally to check on you?

26 **A.** Yeah, I remember our sister GRO-B hiding us under the floorboards so all you saw was  
 27 this big shadow of someone on a horse come over the back doorway of our—they call it off  
 28 the grid now, but it's actually probably called pōhara, poor living. Anyway, we'd see that  
 29 and she would quickly usher us underneath the floor boards, cover it up. And all we could  
 30 hear is commotion, she would say to us, "Don't come out until I tell you to." And if you  
 31 saw the state of the home it's still there today, except it's worse than what it was when our  
 32 Koro was alive. But we could actually see, you know, because it was off on the, you  
 33 know—what do you call it around the bottom of the house, boardings or anything, you

- 1 could see the horse, you could see movement and definitely, definitely heard the abuse, the  
2 yelling, yeah, from our uncle.
- 3 **Q.** When you say the abuse, was he physically beating up some of your older siblings?
- 4 **A.** Yes, so yes, [GRO-B] used to get whipped by the horse whip and yelled at to keep the house  
5 clean and, "Where are those children?" And, you know, or not "children", he didn't use  
6 those words, yeah. She used to get verbally and physically abused.
- 7 **Q.** Was there an occasion where your brother tried to protect one of your sisters from being  
8 physically abused?
- 9 **A.** Yeah. So a while after, I don't know how long, I'm not good about dates, but our eldest  
10 sister came home and it must have been Easter. Why I say that was the first time I'd seen  
11 an Easter egg, and she must have caught the bus to come home, back to Mangamuka  
12 because she came from the river where the marae is, get off at the junction and cut through  
13 the marae over the creek to where our Koro's whare was and where we were. And  
14 I remember that day our sister [GRO-B] was like, we weren't sure who that was that was coming  
15 across the paddock and then one of them must have, you know, realised, must have been  
16 [GRO-B], and said, "Oh it's our big sister, yay." Yeah, so she came on board afterwards to look  
17 after us. Yeah.
- 18 **Q.** And the incident with your brother intervening, did that involve him pointing a gun at your  
19 uncle?
- 20 **A.** Yeah, so we came—that's kind of when we went into State ward after that episode, that our  
21 Koro Dan—Koro—our uncle, was chasing [GRO-B] and she kind of made a quick dash,  
22 obviously not fast enough, and grabbed her to man-handle her. And our brother [GRO-B],  
23 who's a year younger than her, managed to grab a gun from I don't know where, and said to  
24 him to release her or, "Let her go or I'll blow you off this—face of this earth." And of  
25 course our sister [GRO-B] went to make a run through the orchard to get away and she went to  
26 dive and he jumped on the horse and chased her but caught her with the stock whip going  
27 under the fence and the fence is barbed wire, she said, "I got caught in the fence otherwise  
28 I probably would have got away, managed to get away", but yeah.
- 29 **Q.** I know you've mentioned a few names that are redacted for the hearing, I just wondered if  
30 moving forward we could just refer to them as "sister" or "brother". I know it might be a  
31 bit confusing but is that okay?
- 32 **A.** Yeah, cool. Sure.
- 33 **Q.** Okay. So eventually you were placed in Social Welfare after that incident with your uncle,  
34 is that right?

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. And that was when you were about 8 years old?
- 3 A. Yes.
- 4 Q. I think the records show you were placed in care in May 1970. Do you know if there was a  
5 complaint by your principal about that?
- 6 A. Yeah, so Mrs Harvey was the principal of Mangamuka School at that time. I always  
7 thought that all of us went for lunch from the school down to her house and as an adult the  
8 older ones laughed and teased, as we got older we spoke about these times and they said,  
9 "So was Mrs Harvey holding your hand, my hand, everybody's hand when you went down  
10 the footpath?" And I thought oh, I thought you came afterwards, you know, but no.  
11 Apparently I was a pet to Mrs Harvey.
- 12 Q. When you went into Social Welfare, I know you were placed in a number of different  
13 homes. I just want to briefly go through each of those. Was the first one in Ōtara with a—  
14 again we just can't name the aunty, but a grandaunty of yours?
- 15 A. Kia ora. Kuia, āe, I think it was our Koro, it was a brother to our grandfather.
- 16 Q. Then after a brief period of that did you go into another home of an aunty and uncle in  
17 Ōtara?
- 18 A. Yes, I don't remember being long with our [GRO-B] and  
19 [GRO-B] but yes, we went to our brother's place on [GRO-B] Avenue for  
20 a little while.
- 21 Q. And you ended up having to move from that address because one of your sisters got bitten  
22 by a dog?
- 23 A. Yes, so our aunty was great at going to housie and leaving us behind—didn't know that  
24 though, I didn't know that at that time. And my sister [GRO-B] was the one that got bitten and of  
25 course an investigation went into it and then we moved again.
- 26 Q. It seems to be a common theme, you moved through a number of different family homes, I  
27 think more than six; is that right?
- 28 A. Yes, yes, there was a common theme that we—or no, I'll speak for myself; that I thought it  
29 was my wrongdoing because that's what it felt like. And kind of as I got older they kind of,  
30 when I say they kind of made you feel like it was your fault, yeah. But when I think about  
31 it now, when I got older and thought about that, those times, I realise it was me, and it was  
32 because of events that happened because of their lack of care, even if it was whānau.
- 33 Q. The next house was in Broadwood again. I know it's hard to not say the parts that are

- 1 redacted, but you stayed with a Māori family in Broadwood for a period of time?
- 2 A. Yes, so we were removed from our dad's brother's place after that dog incident, and ended  
3 up in Broadwood with other whānau members. Am I allowed to—no, say the name?
- 4 Q. Yeah, unfortunately—
- 5 A. No.
- 6 Q. —we can't just because of the redaction. I know it's difficult.
- 7 A. Pai ana.
- 8 Q. I'll do my best to help guide the kōrero. The whaea that lived there, the lady who lived  
9 there, was she physically abusive towards you?
- 10 A. She was out the gate. Sorry, sorry for the phrase, but, you know, I know that now.  
11 I remember asking her—I guess any child would ask—"Why is your leg back to front?" We  
12 called it a club foot back in those days, that was what they called it. But to me it was back  
13 to front, and it was. Next thing I'm airborne, slapped across the floor thinking, you know,  
14 well, not thinking, crying now, and I'm out of there, that's what I thought, that's it. Yeah, so  
15 those were my first stage of running away.
- 16 Q. You were about 8 years old?
- 17 A. 8 years old.
- 18 Q. Was there other occasions where she would, if you were naughty, make you grab an  
19 electric fence?
- 20 A. Yeah, so, yeah, if she wasn't happy with, I don't even know why she wasn't happy, we  
21 couldn't even—I don't remember even speaking or her asking a question as to why you're  
22 getting punished, you know? I just thought oh my gosh, you know, and yes, so part of the  
23 punishment was grab that fence, electric fence outside and we realised, my sister and I, both  
24 her and I, realised the further away from the house the less shock, it was true. So yeah, we  
25 used to grab the fence but run away from the house, further away, or make out we did,  
26 yeah.
- 27 Q. Again, just moving to the next place you were then placed with another family in Manukau  
28 after that?
- 29 A. Yes. Because I ran away and took my younger sister who's two years younger than me, and  
30 my brother who's a year older than me at that time, made them come with me. I had no idea  
31 where I was going, but when asked a question by Social Welfare, did you know where you  
32 were going, I said yes. I didn't, but what did you expect me to say, I don't know. Yes,  
33 sorry.
- 34 Q. Kei te pai. That family in Manukau, the lady that lived there, you describe her as pretty

1 crazy?

2 A. Another out the gate crazy. And that's being polite. Yeah, she—they own a farm at  
3 Manukau and unbeknown to GRO-B and I at the time, now it's just around the corner really,  
4 well, it isn't, it's not in walking space, but get older and, you know, these areas going back  
5 and reflecting on those scenes, it wasn't actually far away. But our three brothers, three of  
6 our brothers lived there with this family on the farm and here we are thinking we're going  
7 to a better place, just seemed it got worse, yeah.

8 Q. For example, were you and your sister—there were spare rooms but you and your sister had  
9 to sleep on the ground?

10 A. Yeah, so they had a beautiful big four-bedroom home, our brothers slept out in the bach full  
11 of fleas, I just remember catching fleas all the time off the mattress, and we thought at least  
12 one of those bedrooms was ours. They were beautiful, beautiful bedrooms, beautiful home,  
13 but no, you're in the sleeping bag on the floor in the sitting room. So that's where me and  
14 my younger sister slept. We must have had visitors because we ended up sleeping, or they  
15 made the old copper room washhouse at that time, back in the time, another bach and that's  
16 where my younger sister and I slept.

17 Q. Things that happened there, for example, were you made to get up at about 4.30 in the  
18 morning to weed the garden?

19 A. So this is the part where she was out the gate crazy. I think something was happening to  
20 her, because I remember coming back from milking and hearing her talking, don't know  
21 who to, then sneak around the house to see where she was or who she was talking to, and  
22 she used to have this big photo, our old—big huge old photo and I'm not sure who it was,  
23 even now, and she'd be like saying sorry, you know, having this sort of conversation with  
24 this photo. And so I used to share that with my brothers and they said, "She's crazy, she  
25 really is crazy."

26 But 4.30 in the morning was her way, I don't know what—she used to wake  
27 GRO-B and I up and we used to go and weed the garden. Couldn't even see the blimmen  
28 weeds let alone the flowers, yeah, and she'd be standing there doing the hope, hands on  
29 hips, yelling at us to weed the garden. Unbeknown to us our brothers would be looking out  
30 the window of the bach to see what's happening and were blown away, you know, what  
31 they saw. I didn't even know they knew that. But we sure didn't forget.

32 Q. And the lady there, she was also physically abusive to you, she used to whip you with a  
33 black hose?

34 A. Mmm-hmm. Or she would grab at us, grab our cheeks, our ears and kind of pull us up like



1 off your feet to—and really squeeze. You could see in her eyes like the—what is it—the kill  
2 look in her eyes of, you know, when she's lifting you up off your feet by your ears or your  
3 cheeks like a pay-back something, you know, I don't know, I don't know quite how to  
4 describe it then, I just remember looking up in her eyes thinking what's wrong with you,  
5 who does that?

6 **Q.** I think in your statement you said that even though it was hard you didn't want to run away  
7 because you were with your siblings?

8 **A.** Yeah. So that's the only place we never ran away, or it never came in my mind to run  
9 away, or I did run away, I used to come home from school and take off because my job in  
10 the evenings or afternoon was to get the cows in. That was like freedom, so that was my  
11 running away was to get the cows. But more importantly was our big brothers were there  
12 and they were getting ill-treated, you know, like just I used to wonder why they weren't at  
13 the milking shed giving me a hand to milk the cows. I'm 9 and I could set up the milking  
14 shed, milk cows and wonder where they were to give me a hand, you know. So later on  
15 they would say, "Oh no, if we didn't play up, we were allowed to come and give a hand at  
16 the shed", but, yeah, if they were naughty they had to go and dig wīwīs or clear scrub, clean  
17 the paddocks until the milking was over.

18 **Q.** The next home that you went to, was that a home in Ahipara in November 1973?

19 **A.** Yes.

20 **Q.** And again, because of those things we talked about, we won't name the names of the  
21 people, but were you with them—were you at that home for about three years?

22 **A.** Was I? God, felt like forever. Yeah, yeah, sorry. Yes.

23 **Q.** Kei te pai. I think that home you said that there was no real Māori culture in the house?

24 **A.** None of the homes, or even mine that I remember, had culture or Māori, or I didn't even  
25 know the word Māori actually, I didn't even know the Te Reo, even when I went to that  
26 house. They had children of their own, seven children of their own, five of them were still  
27 at home and they still took myself and my younger sister. Wonderful if life was wonderful.  
28 It wasn't. It just seems to have got worst the more you move on post to post, pillow to  
29 pillow, it just got worse so it seemed, or, no, physically as in abuse and verbally it got  
30 worse.

31 **Q.** You and your younger sister you say you were treated like slaves at that house?

32 **A.** Yeah, now you're getting older and starting to find more vocab English around describing  
33 something and, yeah, I thought must be we were just born to be slaves. Kind of accepted  
34 that because you knew nothing else.

1 **CHAIR:** Maryann, by my calculation you were about 11 by that stage?

2 A. Correct. Correct. Not having no concept of what family meant.

3 **Q.** You had the children that were there from the people that you stayed with, but you and your  
4 sister, you were treated differently to those other children?

5 A. Yeah. I just want to reflect back to the family before we ended up with the one we're  
6 talking about now.

7 **Q.** Kei te pai, yeah.

8 A. And we were treated different. So at the same dinner table we would have a total different  
9 food put in front of us compared to their beautiful, might be fish, fried fish and rīwai, potato  
10 and kūmara, and we would have something that was boiled up like a heart or a liver,  
11 Marmite in it to give taste and that was our dinner. So they treated us way different. And  
12 the things we used to do to survive, because that's all it was about for us was to survive in  
13 any form and means to do that, especially when it came to food. We sure made up for it—  
14 well, I made up for it now. More mana now but—yeah, so just going back to the whānau  
15 that you're talking about now, yeah, we were treated different. Again, couldn't understand.

16 They had two children that were younger than me, one was a year younger than  
17 me, and one GRO-B's age. And if they said, "Can you go and get that thing over there?"  
18 I remember saying no; oh my gosh, slap right off that seat to go and get it. Not by them,  
19 not by the children, but by the parent, mother. Anything they said, that's what you do.  
20 Treated differently as in clean the house, gardens, before the sunrise, before you went to  
21 school. I thought it was only me and I look over the hill and there's my sister, youngest  
22 one, on her hands and knees pulling the weeds from the garden, flower garden. Got to say  
23 we had the most beautiful flower gardens, I do remember that. And here she is weeding.  
24 And I thought it was only me. Well, it was only me in the back garden in the vege garden,  
25 but GRO-B was in the front garden, flower gardens.

26 **Q.** Was there a time where you had to take a note to school, intermediate, that said you had the  
27 flu but really was it something else?

28 A. Yeah, so there was a time when I had to stay home because I got a hiding for hitting one of  
29 the—one of her children and she came back and she used a long lead, the cords that you  
30 wind up, the long leads and used it on my back. Anyway it festered up and I couldn't go to  
31 school anyway. I could barely walk let alone go to school, and I was home for two weeks,  
32 and I must have been something that—a good target for her to pick on, because that's what  
33 it felt like with her. I used to do everything in my power to try and hide and duck from her,  
34 but she used to come up while I'm washing the dishes and pull the back of my t-shirt, which

1 was stuck because of the rawness of being hit, and pull it, you know, "Get in the F'n  
2 bathroom and clean yourself up" and oh my gosh.

3 And then she wrote a note, finally, and I thought I better behave myself, do  
4 everything in my power not to be naughty, whatever that was, so I won't get a hiding, so  
5 I won't miss school, behave at school and all that. And she wrote a letter and it was on the  
6 bus for me to give to the teacher as to why I was away. And I opened it, oh my gosh, when  
7 I think about it now, thought so dumb. I opened it, that wasn't so bad, and I threw it out the  
8 window of the bus. Anyway, if we had done something wrong and she was standing on the  
9 porch when we come home in that bus, I tell you I was crying before I even got off the bus,  
10 because I knew that I'm going to get a hiding. I knew, I knew. Sorry.

11 **Q.** Kei te pai, take your time.

12 **CHAIR:** Please don't be sorry, please don't be sorry, just take a breath. If you want to take a  
13 break at any time, Maryann, just say so.

14 **QUESTIONING BY MR SNELGAR CONTINUED:** Are you okay to carry on or do you want  
15 to take a short break?

16 **A.** I'm fine, thank you. Thank you. Sorry.

17 **Q.** There's just one more thing I wanted to just ask you briefly about that home and then we'll  
18 move on to the next setting. Was there a time where she wouldn't allow you to go on a  
19 school trip because she wanted you to stay home to help with housework?

20 **A.** Yeah. Yes. I got into sports and I love sports. Even if I was short, I was good at  
21 something. And anyway, I got picked for the Kaitaia College volleyball team, and  
22 Mr Matthews who was the teacher—a great teacher, many great teachers at Kaitaia  
23 College—asked why I wasn't going on this trip and I said to him, "Unless you ring up our  
24 caregiver, I won't be allowed to go anywhere." And even that I kind of knew it's going to  
25 be a no. I wasn't allowed to join sports, or I could, it had to be in school hours and not  
26 outside. So yeah, I wasn't allowed to go on any trips.

27 **Q.** You and your sister complained to Social Welfare about her treatment of you. Is that right?

28 **A.** Sorry, can you repeat that?

29 **Q.** Kei te pai. Did you and your sister complain to Social Welfare about the ill treatment that  
30 you were receiving?

31 **A.** Yes. Yes, again, this teacher at Kaitaia College, I said, "Don't ring her, ring Social  
32 Welfare", and yes, he did, he rung them. I didn't, I didn't know that if I just said that at that  
33 time to Social Welfare I wouldn't have had to run away. I think. Apparently, as I got older  
34 that's what I was told.

1 **Q.** Did you, after that, go to stay with your older sister for a few months?

2 **A.** Yeah. Yay. Beautiful. So I ran away from that home from Ahipara home, I ran away from  
3 them, I just picked up the courage and I'm not getting off the bus, just carried on on the bus.  
4 And I don't know, I think wow, I don't even think anybody noticed that I never got off the  
5 bus. And carried on and went to stay at one of the maraes on Roma Road, Ohaki Marae.  
6 I thought I'll go and stay at that marae. Never been there before but I knew it was there.

7 And across the road from that marae, Ohaki, one of the houses there was a kuia.  
8 My best friend, she was living with her grandmother and I told her my plan and, like young  
9 girls, freedom. Not that she had any problems with home. I told her, "I'm going to go and  
10 stay at the marae" and she goes, "Okay." She already knew about how I was treated at this  
11 home. I think a lot of people did. But we were also threatened not to say anything, that  
12 "Doesn't matter where you go in this world we will get you, we will catch you and you'll be  
13 sorry." So at that age you just think okay, yeah.

14 So anyway, I ran away and stayed at the marae and I stayed there for three nights  
15 on the marae, I took the louvre windows out the back of the marae and it's now the stage for  
16 the tūpāpaku, but it used to be the room for the mattresses at Ohaki. And I climbed through  
17 the window, crept under the mattresses and slept. And I remember sleeping like I never  
18 slept in my life, slept three days without waking up to a punch in the face or a slap in the  
19 face to get up. It was the most beautiful—and I remember that in all my life from a child—  
20 it's the most beautiful sleep I ever had.

21 And my good friend used to come over before she went to school and drop me off  
22 lunch. She used to make lunch at her kuia's house, drop me off lunch and then come home,  
23 get off the bus, come over to the marae and we used to sit in the mattress room playing  
24 cards, just playing cards, and her doing her homework.

25 **Q.** After those three days, were you dropped off at the Social Welfare office in Kaitaia?

26 **A.** After three days and a great sleep, best sleep at that time, I decided to visit another friend  
27 down the road and they were Pākehās, yeah, good friends. And they had heard that I'd run  
28 away, that, you know, they were checked on to see if I may have been around for if they  
29 had seen me. And my friend's father said, "We're going to have to take you" and, you  
30 know, I said, "Yeah, yeah, I'm ready." Yeah, so they dropped me off at the Social Welfare  
31 in Kaitaia. And I got a good slap across the face for running away from the head of Social  
32 Welfare at that time.

33 **Q.** Did your brother find out about this and say, "Don't touch my sister"?

34 **A.** Yeah, yeah, so he visited, I don't know where he came from, but out of the blue and he saw

- 1 me sitting there and he said to him, "If you touch my sister again, look out." Yeah.
- 2 **Q.** Was there some official meeting with Welfare and then were you placed with your older  
3 sister?
- 4 **A.** Yeah, yeah. I couldn't believe it with that slap came following nice gestures which made  
5 me happy as he said—got one of the social workers to take me to get some clothes and to  
6 take me back to where he lived to have a shower and to have a yummy kai. He even asked  
7 me what would I like to eat. I can't remember what it was, but I just remember him being  
8 really nice after that big slap across the face. And then saying, "Would you like to go to  
9 your sister's place?" So that was my elder sister, our elder sister. Couldn't believe my ears.  
10 Wow.
- 11 **Q.** You were, at that time with your sister, you were in 4th form at Kaitaia College?
- 12 **A.** Yeah, must have been. Yes, yes, I was.
- 13 **Q.** I'm just looking at the time. Maryann, if you wanted to have a cup of tea break, do you  
14 want to keep going for a little bit longer? I'm mindful we've been going for about an hour.
- 15 **CHAIR:** It's up to you, ki a koe te tikanga.
- 16 **A.** Yeah, let's go and have a cup of tea.
- 17 **Q.** Good idea. We'll take about 15 minutes if that's okay?
- 18 **A.** Thank you.
- 19 **Adjournment from 1.22 pm to 1.44 pm**
- 20 **CHAIR:** Thanks Kingi. Have you had your cup of tea?
- 21 **A.** Yes, thank you.
- 22 **Q.** Good.
- 23 **A.** No, a drink of water.
- 24 **Q.** Oh, whatever you wanted, that's good.
- 25 **A.** Thank you.
- 26 **Q.** Thanks, Mr Snelgar.
- 27 **QUESTIONING BY MR SNELGAR CONTINUED:** Thank you. Maryann, we were talking  
28 about the time that you were staying with your older sister and you were going to Kaitaia  
29 College.
- 30 **A.** Correct.
- 31 **Q.** At the 4th form was there an incident at the school?
- 32 **A.** Yeah. So I was living, I thought, this wonderful life with our elder sister, in fact probably  
33 the best time of my life since our parents had passed away. And then I got in a bit of a strife  
34 at school, actually I went to step up to save another student who was getting picked on just

1 before the bell, lunch bell went, and by a prefect. And I sort of was running past to go to  
2 my class and I said to her, "Pick on someone your own size." And she looked at me like –  
3 she's bigger than me, and told me to mind my own business, and not like that, but "piss off"  
4 and I thought – and I kind of ran but slowed down and stopped and looked at this person  
5 that she was picking on, I said, "Pick on someone your own size" and I said it again. And  
6 she said, "What are you going to do about it?". Well, because I was – didn't think about my  
7 actions, I just up and hooked her and told the one that she was picking on, "Run, go to  
8 class." And then just took off back to class after having that scuffle.

9 About 20 minutes probably into our class one of the teachers comes to the door,  
10 knocks on the door that I'm in, the classroom I'm in, and says my name, "Come with me to  
11 the office." So yeah, like okay, so I go to the office, I asked why, she said "Just follow  
12 me". So we get to the foyer of the reception and she tells me to sit there and I'm waiting,  
13 waiting, no-one's saying anything, talking, I see them on the phone. And I asked what's  
14 happening, you know, why am I here? – "Just sit down and wait." I said, "I want to go to  
15 the toilet, you know, I need to go", because at that time I had my period and she said, "Just  
16 sit down, just wait there." That's what you do, just sit down and waited. So it would have  
17 been a good hour, and one of the social workers arrived and they have a little bit of a  
18 conversation, the head mistress and the social lady, I'm thinking 'what's happening?'.  
19

20 Next thing it's, "Come with me", and you stand up and see. She goes, "Hop in the  
21 car", I said "Oh, can I go and get my school bag please?". You know, because I got my,  
22 well, they weren't pads, we didn't have pads, it was called rags for – that's what we had.  
23 And she wouldn't, she goes "You won't need it where you're going." And I thought what?  
24 So I just got in the car, the social worker's car and we're heading to the airport. Didn't  
25 know that we were heading out the other side of town and I'm thinking – I looked at her and  
26 said "What's happening?". She goes, you know, sort of like you're a waste of time talking  
27 to, and she still wouldn't say anything, just if you don't know, you know, doesn't matter  
28 telling you. And then we're heading up to the airport and I thought, 'What? Where are we  
29 going?' You know, just thinking.

30 We get to the airport, she says you know, "Follow me" and we're going in. And  
31 I still didn't click, even then, that I'm going on the plane. And I'm thinking, you know, still  
32 wanting to go to toilet but you haven't got a school bag to grab stuff. Just told to stand  
33 there. Then there was this man, I can't remember, anyway, he was told – he was going on  
34 the plane and the social worker, the lady social worker says to him, "Keep an eye on her",  
you know, and I kind of looked and then they kind of moved away from where I could, you

1 know, hear. And I'm thinking why are you keeping an eye on me? Still didn't click that I'm  
 2 going on the plane. Anyway, it's time to walk out on the tarmac, I'm thinking oh my God,  
 3 now I'm crying because I'm like holy heck. And then I hear this yelling from the fence  
 4 looked up to my, yeah, to the right sort of and there's my sister, elder sister just pulled in  
 5 yelling out and I couldn't actually hear what she was saying because I was crying that  
 6 much, because I didn't know what was happening, and she's yelling out and then sort of  
 7 waving and I'm thinking what the hell? Get in the plane, ushered in the plane, and I got my  
 8 period and I'm just like feeling like the lady said, "You're just dirty filthy" and I'm feeling  
 9 like that now.

10 Anyway, cried and I remember crying just about all the way to Auckland, get off  
 11 the plane and I use my cardy to wrap around, you know, wrap around me and this man  
 12 comes at the arrival of us and he sort of must have spoke to that guy and said blah blah, and  
 13 he sort of says "Follow me", you know. No, you know, you're like wow, "I want to go  
 14 toilet." And he goes "Where we're going you can use the toilet, so you just hold on, hold  
 15 on." And we're driving and I said to him, "Where are we going?" And he said "Well,  
 16 there's no use telling you, you won't know the place if you don't know." So –

17 **CHAIR:** Maryann, just a small question from me. The social worker who picked you up from  
 18 school, did you know your social workers?

19 A. No, no, not really. I know there was one, or maybe a couple that I wanted to punch up, that  
 20 I do know.

21 **Q.** Yeah, but this one who picked you up, it was a woman?

22 A. Yes.

23 **Q.** Was it someone you knew or was it a different –

24 A. Yeah, I remember her face because she tried to force me, this episode where I had to go and  
 25 get my clothes before I went to my sister's place and I told her I don't want to go to that  
 26 house to pick up my clothes and she forced me, so I just jumped out of the car, you know,  
 27 and then – and went to somebody's house just down the road, and yeah, they picked me up  
 28 and took me to my sisters.

29 **Q.** The point being, she wasn't a total stranger, she knew something about you and your  
 30 background, didn't she?

31 A. Yes.

32 **Q.** Thank you for that, sorry to interrupt.

33 A. All good.

34 **QUESTIONING BY MR SNELGAR CONTINUED:** Eventually, Maryann, were you taken by

1 this man to Bollard?

2 A. Yes, yes, I was.

3 Q. And you were there, I think, admitted, the documents say 1978?

4 A. Yeah, yeah.

5 Q. When you first arrived, did you ask some of the staff for some sanitary products?

6 A. I remember going up the driveway of Bollard, thinking 'whoa, what the heck is this place?'.  
7 Then going around the back and you can see like the doors, they got the big tin doors, you  
8 know, and bars. When I saw the bars I really started, you know, the railing, the bars – jail.  
9 I really started freaking out, you know, like kind of thinking I must be going to jail, you  
10 know, thinking, yeah, what have I done to go to – to be in a place that's got blimmin' bars,  
11 you know? And then I went in and they're sort of like having their conversation, you're  
12 standing there bleeding and I said "I would like to go to the toilet please." They said "Get  
13 in the shower", you know. So basically, get in the shower, you think, I said "I've got my  
14 period", they said, you know, like "Just get in the shower."

15 They gave you a gown, and I thought oh my God, am I going to – they're going to  
16 see I'm dirty, because that's all I know about having a period, and I was told that's all you  
17 are. And then when I came out I had this gown on and then they tell you to get up on the  
18 table and you're like holy shit, you know, what's happening, and "We need to have a look  
19 and see if you've got" whatever they said was – I had no idea what that was, and afterwards,  
20 or as an adult find out that it was VD was the word used – "or any diseases down there."  
21 I thought oh my God, they're going to see how dirty, because I had my period.

22 I remember putting my – climbing up, there was three of them, three of them in  
23 there getting on the table, "Just lie back", you know, like holy hell, "open your legs",  
24 I thought are you kidding me? You know, just – and I remember just putting my hands  
25 over my face and then prodding and talking like you were dead, like you didn't even exist,  
26 and I'm saying "Ouch, it's sore", they just continued to poke and prod, you know, I thought  
27 oh my god. All I had in my head was, that they're going to class me as filthy and dirty  
28 because of my period. That even today I won't even go for a scan because of those days.  
29 Sorry.

30 Q. Kei te pai. When you say scan, is that a cervical smear?

31 A. Yes, yes.

32 Q. And that examination that I think you said they used metal tongs as part of that process?

33 A. Yeah, I still see them, I thought it was a big silver spoon at first. I just wanted to hide my  
34 face, hoping that they'll never remember my face so I just hid my face.



- 1 **Q.** After that examination were you put into a secure cell?
- 2 **A.** Yes. Yes, I was put in the cell that had a little glass window to the door that they could see  
3 through and see when they come and knock at the door, whoever, you have to stand up at  
4 the bottom of your bed and they would come in. I remember thinking that no way, I'm over  
5 this, I'm happy to die, I hope I die.
- 6 **Q.** In that cell you talked about did it only have a silver toilet, a bed and maybe a sink in it?
- 7 **A.** Yeah, yeah, it did.
- 8 **Q.** And you weren't given anything to do like reading while you were in that cell?
- 9 **A.** No. I didn't even – I didn't even look around, I didn't even care what was in there. All  
10 I know is I hope, I hoped that I never survived. 'I hope I just die', that's all I can remember  
11 and thinking 'yay, it's a good day to die'.
- 12 **Q.** When you were put in that cell, no-one had told you why you were at Bollard or what was  
13 happening?
- 14 **A.** No. They never spoke to you, no-one when I arrived – except "do this", "do that",  
15 "shower".
- 16 **Q.** And you were in the cell for three days, is that right?
- 17 **A.** I was in the cell for three days, only because I wouldn't get up and stand at the end of the  
18 bed. And they would yell, I could hear them yelling, but I didn't care, I just stayed lying on  
19 the bed. They only came in on the third day because I hadn't eaten, I hadn't had a drink and  
20 I was covered in blood. I didn't care. But the third day they came in and sort of ushered me  
21 in, pulled me off the bed to get in the shower. I didn't care actually, I just retaliated, you  
22 know, they pushed me in the shower, closed the door. I got to say I did enjoy that.
- 23 **Q.** You say closed the door, so fully clothed?
- 24 **A.** Yeah, yeah.
- 25 **Q.** And was there a time where a Māori woman was sent to tell you what was happening?
- 26 **A.** Yeah, anyway they put me back in the cell, once I had my shower, they – it was another  
27 cell, and then this Māori woman came, a staff member. She was beautiful, I knew she was  
28 nice, I felt that, and she said to me that, "Maryann, I don't know why you're here, but I will  
29 speak to the head lady about your situation and ask why you're here." She also told me,  
30 because I didn't know – I thought the cells was the only part of the building, about the top  
31 house. So you slowly worked yourself into the top house, yeah, the house where all the  
32 other girls are, if you do as you're told. And so, yeah, I got taken up there and then I wasn't  
33 there long. I got picked on, and so I retaliated and beated on her and then I got locked up  
34 again.

- 1 **Q.** That first time in secure, just going back a little bit, you were there for a total of five days,  
2 is that right?
- 3 **A.** Yeah, I didn't realise it, I didn't count days, you know, I just knew I was happy to stay there  
4 forever, I didn't know behaving could go to other places or out of there. And they were  
5 saying I was the first to be in security for so long. So --
- 6 **Q.** You didn't eat at all during that first five days, is that right?
- 7 **A.** Pardon?
- 8 **Q.** You didn't have any kai during your first five days there?
- 9 **A.** No. Yeah, I think that's why they really got nice because probably looked like, dare I say,  
10 yes, because I was pretty weak by then.
- 11 **Q.** You talked about the fight, but in your statement you say there was a bit of a hierarchy at  
12 Bollard of kind of, who was the top dog?
- 13 **A.** Yeah. I laugh when I watched that on TV. Then when I reflect on my time it was actually  
14 happening in the top house, so they had top dogs, 'top dogs' they called it, yeah.
- 15 **Q.** You say you got into fights. Would you end up back in secure after a fight?
- 16 **A.** Yes, yes, I was put back pretty quickly – smartly. And I just think, thought to myself, 'I'm  
17 not finished with you lot, I'm going to be good', so I could get back up there and beat them  
18 up. All of them.
- 19 **Q.** Is that eventually what you did?
- 20 **A.** Yeah, pretty much.
- 21 **Q.** I think you say in your statement you realised – you didn't really realise it, but you kind of  
22 became the top dog after a period of time?
- 23 **A.** Yeah, I didn't know that, yeah, I just wondered why they stopped picking on me, mmm.
- 24 **Q.** And how would you describe the staff generally, I know you've talked about the Māori  
25 lady, but the other staff, how were your interactions with them?
- 26 **A.** She was – the Māori lady that I knew, she was on duty and I knew it, that she would trust  
27 us to move around the dorms and that's when I absconded with another friend.
- 28 **Q.** And just we'll go on to that when you absconded very soon, but generally at Bollard did  
29 they have, kind of, no cultural activities when you were there, no acknowledgment of  
30 Māori culture?
- 31 **A.** No, no.
- 32 **Q.** And were most of –
- 33 **A.** No, some of the other girls went to school. We had a choice, well, I think we had a choice,  
34 of going to school because we were underage I think, and I chose not to go to school. And

1 I was allowed to not go to school, or what they – I think, they just let me wander around in  
2 the courtyard, we had, or in the activity room. They had, you know, a gymnasium, pool  
3 room.

4 **Q.** Were most of the girls there Māori or Pasifika?

5 **A.** Yeah, yeah, I don't remember seeing any Pākehās there, only the staff actually. When  
6 I think hard about it, I thought oh, yeah.

7 **Q.** When you were there did you have any visits from anyone from Social Welfare?

8 **A.** No.

9 **Q.** And you talk about the time that you ran away with a friend?

10 **A.** From Bollard.

11 **Q.** From Bollard?

12 **A.** Mmm, we jumped out the second-floor window, could just – I must have lost a lot of  
13 weight because I was able to fit through the little windows that open so far, and we slid out  
14 of those.

15 **Q.** Where did you go after you left Bollard?

16 **A.** Okay, so I was on the streets in Auckland, classed as a street kid. They all said I was a  
17 dumb-dumb street kid. I wasn't very clever because they had a hierarchy also on the street,  
18 those street kids, where they done theft, you know, and I never done that in my life, until  
19 I met them. My job was, because I was so dumb, was one of the markers on the corner of  
20 one of the streets and I said, "What am I, you know, what am I going to do? What do  
21 I do?". They said, "If anyone asks what you're doing, you say you're waiting for a ride to  
22 be picked up". I thought that's easy. But what I didn't know is that I was letting them, next  
23 one that was way down, wave, a certain wave, that someone was coming that way, coming  
24 along the road. So I was a, what was it?

25 **Q.** Look-out were you?

26 **A.** Yeah, that's it.

27 **Q.** And the street kids you talk about, were they – were a lot of them from Social Welfare  
28 backgrounds?

29 **A.** I don't know, I don't know. But I do know that they didn't have a home, that we stayed in  
30 empty homes and under the bridge, yeah, the bridges here, some of the bridges in town  
31 here. And one of our safe place and meetings was – back in those days they had blue light  
32 or something where the Police ran this – yeah.

33 **CHAIR:** Disco.

34 **A.** That's it. They ran that, but it had like swimming pool showers, all us kids used to go there

1 and have our showers, get our new clothes allocated, you know, we had Levis on the street,  
2 brand new, and Amcos, yeah, they were the in style back in those days, still are actually I  
3 think, yeah. But that's where we met, and our job for doing what we did as far as theft go,  
4 was we got shouted lunch or food at McDonalds or takeaway area. So yeah.

5 **QUESTIONING BY MR SNELGAR CONTINUED:** Were a lot of the kids you were staying  
6 with, were they Māori?

7 A. Yeah, I think so, yeah, yeah. I didn't know, yeah, I didn't – yeah, I had to think about that.  
8 Yeah, I would say they were all Māori, I didn't see any, well, no, there might have been a  
9 couple of fair ones there, yeah.

10 **Q.** After a while did you bump into a friend from Kaitaia when you were in Ponsonby?

11 A. Yes, so on the street and it had to be a school holiday, I bumped into my friend that lived  
12 across the – that looked after me when I ran away and stayed at the marae. She's from  
13 Ahipara and Whatuwhiwhi. Yeah, she saw me and asked what I was doing and I said, "I  
14 don't know", she goes "Come with me, stay with my sister". Her eldest sister stayed – lived  
15 in Auckland at that time, and she was down for a holiday.

16 **Q.** Did you eventually go with her back to Kaitaia?

17 A. Yes, so I went back to her house and she said, "On Sunday we're going back home to  
18 Ahipara, you come with us." "Yeah, yeah, of course", yeah.

19 **Q.** When you got back to Ahipara, did a Police Officer come and speak to you?

20 A. Yeah, so anyway, we get back to Kaitaia and then we head out to Ahipara. My sister was  
21 living around the forefront of Ahipara and she dropped me off and like, yeah, like friends  
22 do, see you, like I'm all good, I thought I was. Yeah, and I went to my sister's place, but she  
23 wasn't home. So I decided to walk back to the Ahipara Primary School where my niece was  
24 going to school, my sister's girl was going to school, and I saw her and I thought cool she's  
25 there. So I knew that she's going to be home soon because my niece is going to be picked  
26 up.

27 So I went back around the forefront and thought like a dumb-dumb, and sat at the  
28 beach and then the Police came along. I don't know where he came from, but he came  
29 along, and I kind of – he goes, "Hello", I kind of looked shocked as to what the, Police  
30 doing around here now. And he says, "What are you doing here? Aren't you supposed to  
31 be at school?" You know, like this. I said, "Oh yeah." And he asked me my name but  
32 I gave him my first name, but there was also another Maryann and I gave her surname not  
33 mine. And he kind of – I saw his face kind of like, you know, and I thought stuff it, I'll just  
34 tell him who I was. And he says, "Oh, yes, we've got a – we have been looking for you for

1 a while now." And he says, "You can come with me". I said I really want to wait for my  
2 sister." He said, "No, I think you have to come with me" and took me back into Kaitaia to  
3 the Social Welfare.

4 **Q.** You were eventually placed with a family in Panguru?

5 **A.** Kia ora.

6 **Q.** And you said that this was a lovely family, is that right?

7 **A.** Yes, yes.

8 **Q.** You weren't treated like a slave or given any beatings?

9 **A.** No, no. So head of Social Welfare said that if I behaved myself I wouldn't be out there for  
10 long and I was thinking Panguru, bloody coljits(?), you know, like – then I thought I guess  
11 it's better than Te Kao, another coljits, wop wop. Nah, sorry, I love these places. I love all  
12 my whanaunga.

13 **Q.** How was your time in Panguru?

14 **A.** I loved it, I was free. I was allowed to ride the horses – was one of my favourite run-away  
15 times. I looked after the farm, yeah, the dry stock and feeding the pigs and quite a few  
16 jobs, the house cows, milking by hand, we had two of them.

17 **Q.** Your social worker filed, which we've seen and I won't bring up, but it says in the records  
18 you were a totally different lass to which you had been like and very stable. What do you  
19 think was the reason, when you reflect on what made you more stable at that place?

20 **A.** Probably because I promised, I'm going to behave myself so I'm going to be out of there.  
21 That was the promise that I was told that if, you know, wait for this time, it took this long to  
22 do a training, so he was going to put me on a training course in Kaitaia. I thought I'm going  
23 to behave, I'm going to be the best.

24 **Q.** You eventually did go to Kaitaia and do a training course?

25 **A.** Yes, yes, I did. Didn't even know how to read.

26 **Q.** You were eventually discharged from Social Welfare in 1980, is that right?

27 **A.** Correct, wow.

28 **Q.** I know we've covered a lot of the different settings and there are many that you have been  
29 in. But is there anything else you'd want to say about those before we move on to your life  
30 after care? And kei te pai, we can always come back to it later if you want.

31 **A.** Yeah, I just want to acknowledge you for giving us this opportunity to share, you know, to  
32 share something I never ever thought – and only my sister and my family would share and  
33 laugh and cry about, something so horrific. And I know with whakapapa comes  
34 behaviours. I'm sure a lot of us didn't need added trauma, to create not very good

1 behaviours. Yeah, I'd just like to acknowledge all those other speakers for having the  
2 opportunity to share, just, you know, after all these years you kind of think, 'really? Is it  
3 worth it, what about it?' But I had and I've been blessed, we have been blessed, my family  
4 and I, with the opportunity of having, or had a beautiful sister-in-law that spent her last  
5 three years looking after me, babysitting me, training me to see a better light, a better life.  
6 And reminding me that when you become an adult, or when did you, that you are going to  
7 be the one in control and no-one else can tell you otherwise. So we're going to be  
8 responsible for our own actions. I loved that. No-one, no-one shared with us that there is a  
9 vision, that there is trials and tribulations and that we can survive this, that we can come out  
10 better for it, and I believe I can do that. I believe –

11 **Q.** Kia ora Maryann.

12 **A.** That I've got to that space. And all thanks, I tell you, my sister-in-law played and played a  
13 big part in my life, and my younger sister, to give us hope.

14 **Q.** I know in your statement, Maryann, you talk about your ex-husband and your time, difficult  
15 times you had there, but the Commissioners have a copy of your statement, so if things that  
16 we don't talk about today, they have your full statement –

17 **A.** Kia ora.

18 **Q.** – in front of them. But is there anything you wanted to say about that or would you want to  
19 move on?

20 **A.** Yes. As I said, it never got better, it got worse. You know, choice of having a tāne, never  
21 was told about how that looked or what you look at. And he's – I guess when I met him it  
22 was more like a father figure because he's 11 years older than me. But again, the abuse.  
23 Now if there was ever a time I got afraid, that was it, in my own marriage from my own  
24 husband. And I used to tell and share with a couple of people in my life that I could trust  
25 and they used to say to me "Why don't you leave?"

26 You know, even today I can't even tell you why I didn't leave earlier. I couldn't  
27 even sort of, you know, like I thought maybe it's because I used to be staunch and convince  
28 my own brain that 'heck, what about my children, I don't want them to have no parents'  
29 because I never had that. I don't want them, you know, while we're still walking on this  
30 earth, to be deprived of a mum and dad. Even though I didn't know at that time, I didn't  
31 even know what a mum and dad was or what it looked like. So yeah, yeah, I got raped by  
32 him, beaten then raped, and thought 'oh my gosh'.

33 **CHAIR:** Maryann, do you mind if I ask you a question. Just going back, you talked about your  
34 sister-in-law and your other family members who have helped you and nurtured you and

- 1 brought you up.
- 2 A. Yeah.
- 3 Q. And supported you.
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. Did you have any experience of that sort of awahi during the time that you were under  
6 Social Welfare care?
- 7 A. No, no.
- 8 Q. Not one?
- 9 A. No, no. No. I guess maybe 18 when I was freed out of State ward, I went to live with my  
10 brother and his wife, my sister-in-law, and oh my gosh, I got a job and –
- 11 Q. But that was after you'd left State care?
- 12 A. Yes.
- 13 Q. But while you were – during the time you were in State care?
- 14 A. No.
- 15 Q. Nothing?
- 16 A. No.
- 17 Q. Thank you. Thank you for that.
- 18 A. You're welcome.
- 19 **QUESTIONING BY MR SNELGAR CONTINUED:** I was going to ask Maryann some  
20 questions about your later life and reconnecting with your culture now, unless there's  
21 anything else you wanted to add about, just remember that the Commissioners have your  
22 full statement in terms of the abusive relationship with your ex-husband. Is there anything  
23 else you wanted to add or are you okay to move on to some of your later life?
- 24 A. He's still alive. Oh. Sorry, no moving forward.
- 25 Q. Kei te pai. And you reconnected with your taha Māori later in life and you also got a social  
26 work level 6 in suicide prevention in your 50s?
- 27 A. Yeah, 50-plus, OMG.
- 28 Q. And you've also become heavily involved with your marae and your culture within the last  
29 I think you say about five years, six years?
- 30 A. Yeah, ten actually.
- 31 Q. Ten years?
- 32 A. Mmm.
- 33 Q. You're a beneficiary of your marae at Mangamuka?
- 34 A. Yes.

- 1 **Q.** You also are involved with supporting the taumata and the kitchen with the various hui that  
2 happen at your marae?
- 3 **A.** Yes, and other maraes, and everybody's marae. I know how to run all the maraes. Kia ora?  
4 My whānau over there, they know.
- 5 **Q.** And one of your kaupapa at the moment is campaigning for drug and alcohol-free marae?
- 6 **A.** Yes, that's one of – yes, I can't wait to dig my toes in there. I did – so that started from our  
7 own marae, okay. And our people needed to know that child molesting and rape is still  
8 happening on our maraes. That was one of my big pushes and issues, because one of my  
9 whānau came and told me and I was always trying to find a way to put that across to our  
10 trustees without mentioning names, yeah. But can I just say, because of the – our trustees  
11 being not very educated themselves, I realise that now, and just forced into being trustees,  
12 their lack of education and well-educated and alcohol and some of them drugs, you're never  
13 going to get a good response, just have to find ways to move forward.
- 14 **Q.** And just another topic, have you ever been in touch with MSD or ACC about compensation  
15 for your time in care?
- 16 **A.** Yes, I have. Not – sorry, not for my time in care, but I have been on MSD as a solo parent,  
17 and I have had ACC for a broken leg while in work, while being at work.
- 18 **Q.** And just to the final topic that I wanted to cover with you, Maryann, was looking forward  
19 to the future. If there are any things you wanted to – I know you've talked a bit about the  
20 future already, that you think are important for the Commissioners to hear based on your  
21 experiences?
- 22 **A.** Yes. Like I said, thank you for giving us this opportunity. I think the wider Aotea needs to  
23 know and hear our stories and that I see a vision where us as caregivers or – that would take  
24 our tamariki under our arms, are aware that we know about things that happened. I think  
25 that's – if that makes sense? That this is a good way of making awareness to the public, to  
26 the wider people, because we know, you know. We probably would never be good readers,  
27 although I know we do have tohungas out there that do train well, or practitioners we call  
28 them, that have a feeling about the wairua, about who is it and how would we know that  
29 they're safe, these tamarikis are in safe hands.
- 30 I've been a survivor of those days, honestly didn't know that we could think for  
31 ourselves until I was 18. So how my patai is, how is the tamariki supposed to speak their  
32 truth, when do we believe them, when do we get that opportunity to believe a child? We  
33 don't, but I believe you are heading in the right direction to keep that awareness, keep us  
34 aware that we will not put up with that behaviour. So yeah, I just acknowledge that. We've



1 got a lot of people that sit up the front that are in control of Oranga Tamariki or just child  
2 care, a lot of Māori organisations that are out there. And I've got to be honest, I've been to  
3 a few just on the reception and I'm saddened by the nature, the attitude. And if your front  
4 door is going to talk down to you, what is your back like? How does it look at the back?  
5 And I think in all the jobs we do, that's something we need to look at.

6 **Q.** Kia ora Maryann.

7 **A.** Kia ora.

8 **Q.** Is there anything else? I know we've covered a lot, and as I said the statement will be with  
9 the Commissioners. Is there anything else that I've missed that you wanted to talk about?  
10 Or are you okay to whakakapi i ngā kōrero ?

11 **A.** Ka kapi.

12 **Q.** Ka pai. Tēnā pea tuatahi ka mihi ano ki a koe, hurinoa te whare nei ki to tuahine, nau nei  
13 hakatakoto to ēnei kōrero ki runga te whāriki kōrero, nau nei i taria mai ngā kōrero mai  
14 rātou manga mōrehu i hara e ora ana i tēnei wā. Nā tō kaha, nā tō maia ka puta pea, ki te āo  
15 mārama, ki a rātou ma i roto i te kawana i ngā mahi he. So mihi to you, and thank you, I'll  
16 hand it over to the Commissioners for their final words.

17 **[Karanga me te waiata]**

18 **CHAIR:** Tēnā koe te whaea koutou ma.

19 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Tēnā koe e te whaea. Tēnei te mihi nui ki a koe. Ka nui te mihi  
20 aroha ki a koe me to whānau, e mihi ana ki a koutou katoa to waiata ki a mātou. Ki a koe  
21 hoki, GRO-B, ki te tautoko to tuahine, tēnei te mihi mahana ki a koe. On behalf of the  
22 Commission, I want to thank you for coming and speaking with us today, bearing your  
23 heart and soul and recognising your strength and courage and the mana you displayed today  
24 by coming and trusting us and talking about the, you know, those dark chapters of your life  
25 that are very private to you and having to do that in a public domain. It's really important  
26 too for us for having wāhine Māori come and speak, and by you having the courage to  
27 come forward means that others will come and speak with us as well and to get your unique  
28 experience as a Māori woman in these homes out into the public domain. So, no reira, ka  
29 nui te mihi ki a koe, ki a kōrua, ki a koutou. We might have a waiata lined up.

30 **MR SNELGAR:** Tēnā pea kei konei, ta tātou kairakuraku. We're just seeing if our guitarist is on  
31 their way.

32 **COMMISSIONER EUETI:** I think counsel --

33 **CHAIR:** Mr Stone?

34 **MR STONE:** Mai te timatanga tai noa ki tēnei wā, ka tima te mai tēnei nohonga i te

1 karakia. Kaore ano ki a tae tinana mai ta tātou rangatira, tō tātou kaumātua, mena ka  
2 whakae koe e te kai whakawa, kia tukuna ahau, hei whakakapi kia tū tonu ahau kii te  
3 karakia ki tō tātou runga rawa.

4 **CHAIR:** Āe, tēnā koe.

5 **MR STONE:** Heoi i te tuatahi, ka tautoko ngā mihi kua whārikihia ki a koe e te mareikura e hika  
6 ma. Kaore e kore to kōrero e tihaehae I te ngākau o te tangata, ahakoa he Māori ma, he  
7 Pākehā ma, e te māreikura ānei tāku mihi aroha ki a koe. Ki a koutou katoa mai te  
8 timatanga tae noa i tēnei wā rātou katoa koutou katoa. Kua whārikihia o koutou  
9 kōrero. Ko te tūmanako ma te wā, mā te pōari nei e whakakapi e whakapai. No reira, kei  
10 runga i tera whakaaro e te mareikura, e te tēpu, e te whare, me inoi tātou.

11 I tātou a kaharawa anei mātou a pononga ka tukua mātou whakawhetai ki a koe i  
12 tēnei wā. Homai to wairua tapu kei runga i a mātou i tēnei wā. Whakapai rātou ngā  
13 kaikōrero rātou kua whārikihia a rātou mamae, a rātou kōrero, a mātou karanga pani. E te  
14 matua kaha rawa, whakakapi a rātou inoi ki a koe.

15 Whakapai a rātou hinengaro a mātou wairua. Whakakaha a hoki rātou te tēpu i  
16 whakarongo mai ngā ki ngā kōrero whārikihia. Whakakaha a mātou hinengaro katoa, a  
17 mātou pokohiwi, a mātou wairua, a mātou ngākau mo te kōrero , e te atua kaha rawa anei  
18 mātou inoi ki a koe ka tukuna ki roto i ... tō tama a ihu karaiti, to mātou kaiwhakaora,  
19 amine.

20 **[Waiata]**

21 **Hearing adjourned at 2.41 pm to Thursday, 6 May 2021 at 10 am**

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