ALISON GREEN - AFFIRMED
EXAMINED BY MR MERRICK

MR MERRICK: Our next witness today is Alison Green.
Q. (Opening in Te Reo Māori). Welcome and thank you for
being here and the work that's been done to get to this
point.
CHAIR: Can I insert a requirement of the Inquiries Act
(witness affirmed).
MR MERRICK: May I approach Ms Green to put her
microphone on?
CHAIR: Yes.
MR MERRICK:
Q. Just by way of introduction, Dr Green, can you tell us
who you are and where you're from?
A. Tena koutou katoa, (opening in Te Reo Māori). My name is
Alison Green.
Q. By way of further introduction, you've outlined in your
brief of evidence some of your qualifications. In 2018,
did you complete a PhD in Māori and Indigenous
Development?
A. Yes, I did.
Q. From the University of Waikato. Can you tell us more
about what that was about, what the thesis was?
A. Can I just go back a bit though?
Q. Sure.
A. I'd like to say that I am a mother of three grown
children, two of whom have recently had their first
babies and I am raising my 14 year old grandson who was
removed from his mother's care 10.5 years ago.
Q. Kia ora.
A. So, that's important context for me. So, I have a PhD in
Māori and Indigenous Development. I researched and compared indigenous knowledge in health legislation and policy in New Zealand and Canada. I am also currently the Inaugural Post-Doctoral Fellow at the University of Saskatchewan. In that capacity, I am researching, alongside a Cree professor from the University of Saskatchewan. We are comparing the removal of indigenous children in both polities.

Q. Do I understand it that that postgraduate fellowship, post-doctoral fellowship will effectively travel alongside the life of this Commission?

A. Yes, it will, that's right.

Q. At paragraph 4, you outline some of the work that you're doing for Ngati Awa, can you tell us about that?

A. So, I'm currently the Chair of the Ngati Awa Community Development Trust. So, we look into the issues of social development, so health, housing, education, community development in general, as well as the development and maintenance of our reo and our tikanga for Ngati Awa. But I have also done a couple of pieces of work for the tribe and so in 2007 I spent time working for Te Runanga o Ngati Awa looking at the co-production of social policy. That was an interesting piece of work. So, again we were looking at how we as an iwi might influence legislation and policy, in particular social policy, so that those worked well for our people. Whereas, historically they haven't and of course that's been the domain of the Crown and not Māori.

And the other piece of work that I did, which somewhat touches on the work of the Commission, the brief of this Commission, was looking into offending and victimisation involving Māori, both as offenders but also as victims in the Mataatua region. I was looking at how those statistics, at why Mataatua were over represented
in those negative statistics. That report was peer reviewed by Professor Tracey McIntosh who will be with the Commission in a few days.

Q. Just for those that aren't familiar, Mataatua region, can you explain that for us, te rohe o Mataatua?
A. The Mataatua region would come what is called the Bay of Plenty region, so right up the coast and then down into the bowl around the Tauranga area.

Q. You come to it later in your brief but we acknowledge it upfront, at this stage is it a piece of work that you did in 1992 for the Human Rights Commission. Can you just briefly tell us about that, that piece of work. We will go into detail later on.
A. Right. So, in 1992, I co-researched and authored a report with Pania Ellison. The report was entitled "Who cares for the kids? A study of children and young people in out of Family Care".

The report was done in two sections. So, there's a Māori section and then there's a Tauiwi, Pākehā section. And Pania and I did the Māori section which we can talk about later.

Q. Yes. And it was the Human Rights Commission that commissioned that report at that time?
A. That's right, it was.

Q. Turning back to your brief, and we're on page 2 now, sorry we're still on page 1. I did want to ask you about two things.

The first is, your involvement in claims before the Waitangi Tribunal. Can you tell us about your involvement in that Tribunal?
A. So, I am party to a claim, that's claim 2494, and we've recently - sorry, I'm party to that claim because my whānau have experienced three generations of removal involving Department of Social Welfare, then the Child,
Youth and Family Services, and most recently Oranga Tamariki. In my Statement of Claim, I'm concerned around two levels. I'm concerned about the factors which pre-dispose some Māori families to the removal of their children at rates that are far higher than our population would suggest.

And the second aspect is the way in which the removals happened, and in particular those removals happened without the involvement of hapu and the whānau more generally. Thank you.

Can I add, Chris, that we've just been advised that that particular claim and two others will be heard with urgency, and I think that speaks to the critical issues that children, Māori children, are facing right now.

So, although it's valuable to have this broader scope of the Tribunal, I think it's also important we consider the rights of Māori children now.

Q. Kia ora. We are on page 2 now, I suppose as a starting point for you to share with us your experience of going into and being removed from your whānau. At paragraph 6 of your brief, you start to talk about that and if you could start to share with us from that point, that would be great, thank you.

A. So, I am the eldest of seven children. I was born in 1958 and I was removed soon after birth and raised by Pākehā parents. My parents who raised me were recent immigrants to New Zealand. The consequence of - so, I was adopted under the 1955 Adoption Act and it was a closed adoption and as a consequence of that, I was separated from my whakapapa, whenua and whānau and those had traumatic consequences for me through my early life, and I'd say they still have consequences, they do.

Q. Did you come to learn some more about the circumstances of you being born and then adopted?
A. Mm.

Q. What could you tell us about that today?

A. Mm. So, I was adopted and around about 10 days after I was born I was taken by my adopting parents to the Far North. They were, they told me later that they were advised by the social worker to say that I had a touch of Spanish and that my parents, my birth parents, no longer wanted me.

And I was told by them that there was no way, by my parents this is, my adopting parents, that I was unable to make contact with my birth parents. In fact, I'm really uncomfortable using those terms birth parent and adopting parents. I think those are, you know, the terms themselves are probably pre-cursors as well, probably justification for removal through the closed adoption process.

The idea that you can be a birth parent but that parenting and that relationship can end at birth, and then you can pick up with somebody else.

So, yes, my parents, my birth mother, so my birth mother was Pākehā, father Māori. My father and my - my father and mother met at a dance in Tauranga. They dated for around about 8 months and then she became pregnant and out of the stigma that accompanied what was called pregnancies out of wedlock in those days, she went to Auckland to her parents where she was persuaded both by Social Welfare but also I think by her mother that it was in her best interests and mine that I be given up for adoption.

She had been told by the Social Welfare that if I was able to live my life as a Pākehā child, certainly not as a Māori child, that my outcomes would be better.

And so, I guess a touch of Spanish kind of accounted somewhat for the fact that I was a small brown round dark
haired child and they needed some way to account for
that.

Q. Are you aware of the practice at the time of establishing
a hierarchy in terms of the adoption system?
A. Yes.

Q. And do you have any comment about that and how that on
reflection has impacted on you in your circumstances?
A. So, again, so my adopting parents told me that they had
been - because they were recent immigrants, recent
British immigrants to New Zealand, that they were given
the bad babies and the hard to place babies. And the bad
babies were the Māori babies and the hard to place
babies, in the case of my adoptive sister who was Pākehā,
were babies that were not expected to live and that was
her situation. In fact, she did live but that was the
hierarchy as it was explained to them.

Q. At paragraph 9, you've made reference to growing up in
Aotearoa without whakapapa, whenua and whānau.
A. Mm.

Q. I'd like us to unpack that a little bit in your own
circumstances. And as a starting point for that, can I
ask you how societal attitudes of that time, much like
what I'd describe as a racist hierarchy of adoption
system, how that impacted on you growing up across the
board, schooling, that sort of thing, in terms of your
identity?
A. So, I want to liken this to, my experience, to the
pipiwharauroa. The pipiwharauroa is a migrant bird, the
shining cuckoo and migrates from the Bismarck
archipelago, so from Papua New Guinea and Melanesia. In
spring it migrates to New Zealand and it looks for the
nest of the riroriro, the grey warbler. It lays its egg
in that nest and then it flys off and the riroriro
raises the pipiwharauroa chick but here's the rub and
here's the Māori understanding of the situation, is that the
pipiwharauroa is always a pipiwharauroa. The pipiwharauroa does not become the riritori.

So, for me I was raised in a nest by Pākehā parents but I remained myself.

Q. Kia ora.

A. And there is a sense, no it's more than a sense, there is a belief in this country that when children are removed and raised by somebody else that they will become somebody else. I can tell you that it's not so. But what you're left with are remnants of who you could be and who you would be had you been raised in the environment, in the nest, that you should have been, that you belong to.

And so, I had a very unusual, I had an unusual childhood, in that I knew that I was adopted and I knew that I didn't belong in this nest and that I belonged somewhere else, and that journey of finding out where I came from and where I belonged was a lifelong journey.

So, that requires a lot of hard work on my part not to lose focus of who I was meant to be. And importantly, the original instructions of my people for their people and for us going forward.

So, without those original instructions, which I'll talk about later, Chris, but without those, it's hard to find the path. You don't really - the path doesn't open up naturally for you. So, in order to reach one's potential, happens much later, I think, than if the child is raised where it belongs, in the whānau, in the hapu and with the iwi.

So, things like, so I know now, for example, you know, when I go to my home territories, there is a feeling about standing on those lands, about seeing, looking through my eyes at the view that my tipuna would have seen. Those are powerful feelings that I wasn't
able to access during the early years of my life and only
later when the Adult Adoption Information Act 1985 came
into being, and then I could begin that journey back.

Q. And so, looking at that journey back, what did the Adult
Adoption Information Act 1985 allow you to do? What
happened from there for you?

A. Yes. Before that, I had approached Social Welfare on at
least two occasions and asked if I could be given, even
non-identifying information but information that would
allow me to say, in answer to the question "Nō hea koe?"
I could say, "Nō Tauranga ahau, nō Whakatane ahau" and
that would be at least some sort of toehold into that
journey of belonging but I was refused on both occasions.

So, finally when the legislation changed, I was I
think fairly well forward in the queue of people writing
to Social Welfare to ask for my file and it was my good
fortune that my birth mother hadn't heard about the
legislation and so hadn't had an opportunity to prevent
access to the file. I don't know whether she would have,
I'm unsure about that, but certainly it made it much
easier.

So, that happened in 1985. I think in 1987, it
might have been, that I first spoke to her and as we
spoke, we corresponded first and then we talked on the
telephone. She was able to provide me with the
information that I needed. We had contact with each
other for a period of time but she experienced
posttraumatic stress syndrome related to the adoption,
she was having flashbacks and panic attacks, so we
stopped further communication. But I found out that she
had another child after me to a Māori man and she kept
that child, despite the pressure to give him up. And for
her, that was a healing point for her.

Q. And so, do I have my math right, I always get it wrong,
by that stage you were 21, around 21 years of age before
you've had that opportunity to access that information?

A. Yes, yes.

Q. And prior to that, you've been denied that?

A. Yes, I was. So, I moved from Epsom Girls Grammar where I
did my secondary schooling and I got there through a
Māori Affairs scholarship in the boarding school and then
went to Victoria University and did a degree in Te Reo
Māori and anthropology. And, of course, this was the days
following the land march and general Māori, sort of,
 arising, an uprising of Māori across the country. And
so, we were concerned that the Crown had not honoured the
Treaty of Waitangi, and of course Te Tiriti o Waitangi
most importantly, and so we were involved, I was involved
in Māori activities all through my university
undergraduate degree. You know, the question was asked
of me all the time, "No hea koe?" And I didn't have the
answer as an 18 year old student. And for that reason
Professor Hirini Moko Mead and his wife made a tremendous
offer to whangai me in order to provide some sort of
resolution, albeit temporary, to that trauma of being
removed and not having whakapapa and whānau and whenua.

Q. Can we turn now to tō taha Māori, your Dad's side,
tell us about exploring that avenue and finding
out that side of yourself?

A. Yes. So, when I found out the name Mason, I immediately
contacted my professor, Professor Mead, and said to him
naively, do you know the Mason whānau from Tauranga? And
he said to me, well, actually, they're from Whakatane but
there are some Masons in Tauranga. And he said, actually
your koro sits in the office next to me, he's a whakapapa
expert, he is the person you need to talk to. This is I
think where the Pākehā western world with its
objectivities and its focus on what can be seen and what
can be measured and described and the Māori world separate.

So, there was - the fact that Professor Mead had come to me and made this offer, the fact that we were already closely related but didn't know, to me was evidence of those things that are unseen which for us are as important, if not more so, than what can be seen and described.

So, the rest of my years have been spent building the relationships that I wasn't able to build as a child, as a young person growing up with my whānau.

My aunties, so my father's sisters and brother were so generous, so welcoming, of me as the eldest child of my father who had passed by the time I went back into the family. But their generosity of spirit, on my Ngati Ranginui side and on my Ngati Awa side, was so reassuring and grounding for me.

Q. You have spoken about the importance of the unseen and you also just mentioned the passing of your father and you've talked about that in your brief.

A. Yes.

Q. Have you got some things to say about that aspect of your brief?

A. Well -

Q. Your korero, your story, your life?

A. Yeah. So, as soon as I knew - so, to go back, when my father passed, he passed a few kilometres from where I was at boarding school and I knew he'd passed. Don't ask me how but it was there and as there have been many other things that have happened since then - sorry, Chris, I've lost my place.

Q. That's fine. One of the things that you've talked about in your brief is the extent to which you have, through your father's connection, learnt about the whakapapa of
your whānau.

A. Mm.

Q. And if I can describe it as the breadth and depth of it.

A. Yes.

Q. That's described at page 3 of your brief.

A. Yes.

Q. In particular, you've talked about some of your tupuna, some of your ancestors?

A. Yes.

Q. Can you tell us why you chose to include them in your brief of evidence and in your korero for us today?

A. So, anyone who knows anything about whakapapa would know how tricky it is to come to understand the different lines of your whakapapa. So, if you were talking about your whakapapa and you were in a particular area of the country, you might use another line of your whakapapa than you might were you at home, and that's in order to indicate the relationships that your tupuna have with the people of the land on which you're standing.

So, I wanted to show that it takes a number of years to amass that information. You gather it from people who are respected in your whānau and I was very lucky on my Ngati Awa side, so that's my grandfather's side, to have Koro Jo Mason as a source of my information, and of course it's always useful to go to the Native Land Court minutes to read about one's tipuna. And then on my grandmother's side, which is my Ngati Ranginui side, my father's youngest sister, Te Iwi Pearson, gave me that whakapapa.

The other point of having the whakapapa in my brief of evidence was to highlight, for today anyway, two members of my, two tupuna who were well respected and well-known in my tribal areas.

So, Te Monotahuna on my Ngati Ranginui side was a composer of
waiata and to this day Ngati Ranginui sing and perform
the waiata that she wrote for her illegitimate daughter
Matatu Monotahuna and she wrote that. I mean, the term
"illegitimate" is a western term. For whatever reason,
Monotahuna didn't name the father of her child but she
wrote this waiata to celebrate the absolute adoration
that she had for her daughter. And my new mokopuna, so
my eldest daughter's child, she has named her Matatu
after Matatu Monotahuna.

So, on my Ngati Ranginui we have Monotahuna and on
my Ngati Awa side I have referred to Pouawhā Meihana, my
great great great grandfather. His statue stands on our
marae. His claims and his counterclaims are through the
Native Land Court minute books from the period from the
1880s. He was a stalwart and a forthright defender of
the mana of Ngati Awa me te mana o Ngati Pukeko.

So, that was my tupuna and it absolutely horrifies
me that from the 1970s onwards the State saw fit to
remove three generations of children from whānau of
respected tupuna. And so, that is the point of having
that information in there, to provide that contrast.

Q. We're going to head in that direction shortly but before
we move away from our korero about whakapapa, I wondered
if you had any comment about, given the time that you
were effectively disallowed to live in that whakapapa, to
really experience it, and now having learnt all of that,
if you've had any reflection about the lived experience
of being part of that wealth, cultural wealth and whānau
wealth, whānaungatanga compared to having to come in
later and learn about it and experience it later in life.

A. Well, of course, the whakapapa is, as Rawiri said this
morning, it is relationships. And so, while I have the
words here and the names, some of the richness can never
be retrieved, you know. I wasn't party to conversations, to events, to tribal gatherings where people were regularly talking about the deeds of our tupuna. So, I've come to that much later in life and that's something that cannot be regained. And for that reason, I have made it pretty much my life journey to make sure that my children and my mokopuna, so the children of my siblings and their children, that they never experience what I went through because although I went through it in a closed adoption system, effectively those who have been removed by the State from the 1970s and 1980s onwards are also experiencing that poverty of relationship connected to whakapapa.

Q. Kia ora. We are now at paragraph 16 of your brief of evidence. Can you share with us your thoughts about the impacts of colonisation with your whānau hapu iwi context?

A. Yes. So, on my Ngati Ranginui and Ngati Awa side, there are the reports to the Waitangi Tribunal that document the confiscation, the raupatu of thousands of acres of land that both of my iwi experienced. And the effects of that in a socioeconomic sense but also in terms of a lack of political authority or mana within our region.

So, those breaches, so the Tribunal found for the claimants, so for both tribes, and were very clear with the Crown that they had breached articles 2 and 3 - well, had breached Te Tiriti o Waitangi. I'm alleging, I will do this in my claim to the Waitangi Tribunal that that breach of Te Tiriti has extended, that the Crown has seen itself as able to breach the Te Tiriti o Waitangi in relation to the removal of our children. So, the Crown has seen itself as having the right to remove our children, either through closed adoption or through uplift and placement or placement, yeah uplift, and that view is a breach, I believe, of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
Of course, Puao-te-Atatu, this is an original of the document, recommendations 1 and 2, which I can talk about later, but certainly highlight the right under Te Tiriti o Waitangi of Māori to care for and raise our taonga, our children ourselves within our authorities.

So, I'd also like to comment on the part that racism has played in my adoption but also in the removal of my nieces and nephews and grandchildren.

So, it seems to me that there's a shameful silence in this country, that those of us who have been removed from our families under the adoption legislation, that we have laboured under that shameful silence, and in fact we have adopted that silence ourselves. There has been very little about the impact of closed adoption on Māori children, on the loss to hapu and iwi. And that to me speaks to racism in this country.

I think that if the same were happening for Tauiwi that there would be a public outcry, both about the removal of children by Oranga Tamariki and also the closed adoption system and the loss of potential of children to Pākehā families. But because we are Māori, that has happened with very little interruption until recently.

Q. And when you say Tauiwi you mean non-Māori in that context?
A. Yes.

Q. In your brief of evidence from paragraph 18, you talk about some factors that you would argue have created whānau vulnerable to child removal?

A. Yes.

Q. In your summary, what are some of those factors in the context of your whānau, your hapu iwi?
A. So, years and years of legislation and policy and poor practice across the whole range of social and economic
and political, across those spheres, the cumulative
effect of that, part of which is dealt with in the
Waitangi Tribunal reports but the more recent material
has not been dealt with. But it is that legislation
policy and practice across the social, economic and
political spheres that have reduced some Māori families
to the point where we are extremely vulnerable to the
removal of our children.

This didn't happen overnight. My nieces and nephews
who have had their children removed, they were not in a
position where they had assets and resources as part of
their daily lives, knew where they were from, well
grounded in it their tikanga and reo. They did not
suddenly find themselves with Oranga Tamariki knocking on
their door. They, themselves, were removed from my
siblings, who were removed from their families, and the
poverty that – so, poverty, addiction, living in
neighbourhoods where there's high levels of crime and
violence, most recently the availability of
methamphetamine, these are antecedents to removal of
children. But it didn't happen overnight. Successive
governments allowed this situation to come to this point
and that is the point that my nieces and nephews and my
grandchildren find themselves in today.

Q. And what you've begun to touch on there is the move from
the papakainga to the cities, from the home base to the
cities, and at paragraph 24 of your brief of evidence
you've touched on that in terms of your earlier korero
about the loss of land in your home?

A. Yes. Can I read? In 1891, Pope described the lands of
Ngaitamarawaho as "little in quantity and poor in
quality. These Natives live a miserable existence at
Huria, endeavouring to get some return from their
ungrateful glebe, or working precariously for
neighbouring Europeans...or wearing out their constitutions on the gumfields".

So, that is a report about my hapu Ngaitamarawaho in 1891. Things were that bad. We've had nearly 200 years of legislation and policy and that poverty has been further entrenched.

Q. Coming back to your siblings. You've discussed their entry into the State care system from paragraph 27 of your brief of evidence. Can we pick up from that point?

A. So, after my father died, he died at 32 years of age, and suddenly, after he died my children's mother made the decision to leave the Papakainga at Huira, Ngaitamarawaho lands and take my siblings with her to Wellington. She moved for work reasons but without the support of whānau, of elders, people who knew not just the negative things about ourselves, as was written in 1891, but also the strong and positive things. Without that, my siblings, my sisters and brothers, faced many, many challenges, to the extent of being put into homes and foster care. And through that separation from our home lands, although they are fiercely proud of being from Tauranga and of being Māori, the specifics around whakapapa, whenua and whānau in its Māori sense, not just Mum and Dad but whānau in a Māori sense, that information has not been available to them.

And so that, in combination with poverty and a school system that failed all but one, you know, failed five out of six, their lives, the trajectory of their lives was set for real difficulties.

And I've made the point in my brief of evidence, you know, that this was a time when New Zealand was experiencing its good years. This was the pavlova paradise. We were not part of that. That is racism.

So, the culture and relationships of gang life,
addiction, poverty, became constant features of my sisters' and brothers' lives and those have remained.

MR MERRICK: I will just turn to the Chair now because we are close to 1.00, Sir.

CHAIR: Yes, I think that might be a convenient moment for us to take an adjournment. The stenographer has been in full action for a lengthy time, so Dr Green if you don't mind, we will take an adjournment now and we will return to your evidence at 2.15.

A. Thank you.

Hearing adjourned from 1.02 p.m. until 2.15 p.m.

MR MERRICK:

Q. Dr Green, just before the break I think where we ended was you were talking about your siblings and the role that State care had in, I think the words you used, their life trajectory.

A. Yes.

Q. We hear a fair bit about the path from State care to prison and I wanted to ask you whether that was a path taken by any of your whānau?

A. Thank you, Chris. Yes, it is a path that two of my siblings have found themselves or are on. And, given the harsh circumstances of their lives, it isn't surprising. But it's also trajectory that I'm concerned some of my nieces and nephews may also be on, so these are children who were removed from my siblings' care.

So, yes, that pipeline is well and truly established in my whānau.

Q. Before we go on to talk about your nieces and nephews and
their tamariki, I want to pause on a period of around 1988, and you have referred to Puao-Te-Ata-Tu in your brief of evidence.

We heard yesterday about reports being shelved, gathering dust, things like this and Puao-Te-Ata-Tu is said to be one of those. Did you want to share with us today your thoughts about that in the context of your journey?

A. What we know about Puao-Te-Ata-Tu is the engagement between the advisory Committee that developed the report and Māori communities across the country was a close one. So, they were, I think there may have been 65 or more hui held with Māori and the voices of Māori are absolutely, you can see them in the report, they're reflected in the recommendations of the report. At the time, the support from Māori communities, once the report was released was strong. But after that, there was a silence and then I had occasion to be doing work for the Human Rights Commission and the tangata whenua, the Māori communities that we were consulting with, were saying well what about Puao-Te-Ata-Tu? We told everybody what we thought needed to happen in order to make sure that hapu and iwi had authority with regard to tamariki Māori but what is happening in practice is light years from our recommendations.

Q. Before we go on to talk about that report, the Human Rights Commission report which you describe at paragraph 30 of your brief of evidence, have you got some things to say about Puao-Te-Ata-Tu in the context of closed adoption?

A. I have got things to say about closed adoption but also about the removal of my siblings, their children and my nieces and nephews.

So, in relation to closed adoption, Puao-Te-Ata-Tu
was very clear that any decision about the placement of Māori children, and they actually said including adoption, should be made with hapu and iwi. The 1955 Adoption Act is exactly as it is now, as it was then. So, we know that Puao-Te-Ata-Tu had no influence over that particular piece of legislation.

And then in relation to my nieces and nephews and those who have been removed from our family, again the – actually, recommendations 1, 2 and 13 referred to the kind of systemic changes that legislation should create in Aotearoa in order to remove the burden of poverty, of failed education, of lack of housing, of Māori engagement with tikanga and Te Reo. Those Puao-Te-Ata-Tu recommended that legislation should address those issues.

And I contend that had subsequent legislation addressed those issues, that some of my nieces and nephews may not have been removed because poverty, drugs and alcohol, exposure to violence and abuse, would have been addressed through those systemic changes but they weren't.

Q. And so, that leads me now to ask you about this Human Rights Commission report that you co-authored, the Māori research component. If I could just pause there because that report has only just come to hand and I just want to check that has been circulated to the Commissioners?

COMMISSIONER SHAW: Will it be sent electronically to us?

MR MERRICK: There is an electronic document that I thought would be circulated by now.

COMMISSIONER SHAW: You just touch on it briefly and we
will look at it later.

MR MERRICK: Thank you.

Q. Can you, Dr Green, outline the background to that report which is called *Who Cares For the Kids: A Study of Children and Young People in and Out of Family Care*?

A. I could do that by reading the first paragraph, I think. The aim of the report was to examine the issues concerning the placement of children and young people who, for various reasons, are being cared for outside their immediate or extended families. Information is gathered about how and whom decisions are made for out of Family Care placements and what happens during and after placements.

The report also describes the perceptions of young people themselves.

Q. And that report was commissioned by the Human Rights Commissioner and the foreword signed off by the Human Rights Commissioner at that time?

A. Yes, that's right.

Q. Can I refer you to page 1 which is under chapter 1, Introduction, and there's reference there to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. But in particular because of what you're talking about in your evidence today, I just thought it might be useful to read paragraph which outlines article 30 of UNCROC, we can use that abbreviation.

A. So, article 30 of UNCROC addresses indigenous rights. It states that children who are indigenous shall not be denied the right in community with other members of his or her group to enjoy his or her culture, to profess or practice his or her own religion or to use his or her own language.

Q. You spoke earlier about Article 2 of *Te Tiriti o Waitangi*, have you got some views about how the two sit
together?

A. So, the Māori understanding of Article 2 would be that children are taonga and that they, in relation to hapu and iwi members, should not be denied their own culture, their language, or any other practices or beliefs that they have. But, in fact, that is what happened. So, that has happened for those of us who were part of the closed adoption process and it's happening now for Māori children removed from care.

Q. Can I pick up on one piece of feedback that you have included in paragraph 30 of your brief of evidence? I'll just read it out. It's touched on in the report. In that you've said, part of the feedback was it was found had resulted from the corporate plan of DSW and that had resulted in a lack of commitment by DSW to any real bicultural development. Instead, a superficial involvement in such development exists, one that generated more negative than positive responses. And you've referred, this is where I want to pick up on our discussion about Article 2 and article 30 of UNCROC is where one participant says "Māori concepts like Aroha have been hijacked by DSW, trivialised and then used against us". And that's found on page 91 of the report we're talking about.

My question for you is, the answer is probably obvious but discussion is important because of this question of who is best placed to ensure that rights conferred in article 30 to indigenous children, taonga, mokopuna under Te Tiriti, Article 2, who is best placed to ensure that those rights are nurtured?

A. So, of course, Puao-Te-Ata-Tu were very clear that those best placed to make those decisions, and in fact to then implement those decisions, were hapu and iwi, of which whānau are a part. Puao-Te-Ata-Tu made a distinction
between what might narrowly, what in the west might be
called parental rights, they describe those as being best
considered with regard to the rights of the collective.
So, not necessarily one or the other but certainly not
simply the rights of the State, nor the rights of
parents, but the rights of the collective.
Q. Can I take you now to the Māori section of your report
which I note you co-authored with Pania Ellison?
A. That's right.
Q. That's at page 75. The title of that is "Te Murunga
Tamariki Ki Kainga Tauhou", what have you put as the
English title for that?
A. So, the term Muru is used to, in some contexts and it's
been used this way in this context, to refer to
confiscation, as in which has a sense of punishment.
So, raupatu and muru are often discussed in this way.
The report is called Te Murunga Tamariki, so the
confiscation of children. Ki Kainga Tauhou, Tauhou means
strange or unusual or different. So, the title
altogether means the removal or the confiscation of
children to the homes of strangers. And that was - the
title was proposed by well-known kaumatua Ani Delamare
but it was supported by the Advisory Group that was
involved with this project.
So that, there's an English translation as well.
It's not a translation. An English interpretation, so
the subtitle is, "Mis-placed Māori children in out of
Family Care". That comes from a quote by Naida Pou, who
some of you will know. Naida said at one of the
consultation hui that we held with tangata whenua, "Our
kids are not being placed in out of Family Care, they're
being taken off us and misplaced". That was 1992, the
same practices are happening now. And this was after
Puao-Te-Ata-Tu. Nothing had changed in that period
between the production of this report and the work we did in 1992. So, I think what we can see there is a solid line of continuous action of hapu and iwi being denied a right in the care of their children and taking, a confiscation form of punishment of our Māori communities, taking our children and placing them with strangers.

Q. In terms of tangata whenua consultation at page 81 of that report, you list that hui were held with tangata whenua groups and you have listed those groups (reads groups and names from page 81 of report).

Can I take you to the bottom paragraph of that page because there was somewhat of a prophetic feedback, wasn't there, from Ngati Koata and Ngati Kuia?

A. That's right.

Q. Can you read the portion stating, "The only"?

A. "The only hui tangata whenua not to propose recommendations was the hui at Whakatu Marae, Nelson. Some weeks after the hui, researchers were told that the people at the hui in Nelson were so disillusioned by the powers that be, that they did not think it a worthwhile exercise for them to propose recommendations which would not be heeded".

Q. Because it was one of the goals of your group to come up with recommendations from each of the hui tangata whenua?

A. That's right.

Q. And you've included those in the report, haven't you?

A. Yes, we have.

Q. You said just before that some of the things that were said, that have been said now about this issue, are what was said back then. Do you have a summary for us of some of what that feedback was during this report?

A. So, some of the issues that came from the tangata whenua hui were actually as I've just described. Although Whakatu marae withdrew, they decided not to make
recommendations, the other groups made recommendations
that were very, very cynical of the likelihood that the
Crown would make changes. So, they made those
recommendations but they were very cautious that it was
unlikely that change would happen. So, that was the
tangata whenua hui. Parents who we interviewed about
their children who had been placed in out of Family Care
had a number of recommendations. For example, they
commented that in their interactions with the Department
of Social Welfare, Child, Youth and Family, that the
emphasis was always on removing the child. There was no
emphasis placed upon what support the child would receive
once it was removed, what support the whānau would
receive once the child was removed and what outcomes
could be guaranteed that would be better perhaps than
those of the child's situation right now.
So, parents had low levels of confidence about what
was happening for their children but they had no right,
no ability to prevent their children being taken.

Q. What about the views of the young people themselves? Did
you canvass those?
A. Yes, we did. We met with young people. It was a difficult
exercise because, you know, asking young people
questions, there are ethical responsibilities that
researchers have not to over-promise. And in fact we
were — so, when you asked a young person, so I recall two
young people that we interviewed at Weymouth, which was
like a Correctional facility for young offenders, they
were, I remember the young woman saying that she was
worried about what was happening back home and whether
people would be all right, everybody at home, were they
all right, because she had no communication with her
family. And I remember a young man who I felt gravely
concerned about. His perspective was what's the point in
me saying anything? No-one has ever listened to me. I expect, you know, my uncles, I've got more family in prison than I have anywhere else and that's where I expect to be. As a researcher, and as a Māori first and foremost, one could not dissuade him of a situation which actually he'd predicted fairly accurately.

And interestingly enough, Chris, this report has not received very little attention in the public eye. It took me a while to get a copy. I didn't have my own copy, so it took a while for me and for the Human Rights Commission to track it down. But I think that it behaves us as people involved in this area of work to, as Rawiri said, make sure the light shines on the voices of these young people and family.

Q. That being said, did you want to produce that report as an exhibit in this hearing?

A. I would very much like to do that, thank you.

MR MERRICK: Can that report be exhibited at Exhibit 3?

CHAIR: Thank you.

Report produced as Exhibit 3

MR MERRICK:

Q. Earlier, you touched on lack of intensive support or wraparound support within the whānau. Removal response and a response that's required in a whānau to support. Is that a theme which comes out if we were to look at the story, the life of your nieces and your moko?

A. So, again, the focus has been on the uplift of Māori children and certainly not, at least on Oranga Tamariki's part, certainly not a focus on how to alleviate inter-generational poverty and all of the issues that go with that.

So, if one interacts with Oranga Tamariki around these issues, the focus, the response is usually something along the lines of that's not something that we...
can address, thank you for bringing it to our attention.

So, no advocacy and when I think about my nieces and their children who were removed. So, you know, children are taken 10.5 years ago from one family that I'm thinking of, three children, a two week old baby, a two year old and a four year old. They're taken to the bottom of the country, miles and miles away. The parents are told that they can keep in contact with the children but over the years the phone calls dwindle, the letters dwindle. The correspondence from Oranga Tamariki about the welfare of the children doesn't reflect at all the children's reality which has since come to light. So, the children were reported as thriving but I would dispute that.

So, yes, and you know the mother is asked to go on a parenting course, repeated parenting courses, with no hope of ever having those children back. How inhumane is that?

Q. One of the things that comes out in your brief around your nieces, nephews and mokopuna, is the issue of what happens on transition back. Would you have some things to say about that, on returning home and the Department saying, yes, you can go home and what happens or doesn't happen?

A. Mm. So, just going back a bit, so, you know, if we think about those antecedents to the removal of children, those are systemic issues, they're multi-generational. So, poverty for one, poor housing, violence and abuse, those issues sit within families but there's no attempt to work with whānau, hapu, to address those issues so that by the time the children return there's an environment which is more conducive to the kind of parenting that traditionally Māori, that we did.

And so, you know, Oranga Tamariki returns children,
it's like the Mr Bean picture, they're dropped into a location, nothing has changed around it because there has been no support or resources or advocacy for change. And then Oranga Tamariki, it seems to me, watch and wait. And then the inevitable happens, which is things go wrong, both for the children who have not had a relationship with the parent for over a decade, and for the parent who's stuck in the poverty trap, so things go wrong and then Oranga Tamariki sweep in and uplift again. It's devastating.

Q. Shortly I want to ask you about your hopes for this Royal Commission as which come to near the end of your evidence today but before then, I just wanted to offer you the opportunity to add anything more which you'd like to say on any of those matters, particularly in relation to current practice, the impact that it's had on your moko, your nieces and nephews?

A. In terms of closed adoption, a change of legislation is required. So, Māori children, we should not be seeing Māori children put into or adopted outside of their whānau or hapu or iwi. So, there's lots of scope there for placing children when Mums and Dads make the decision. And really, this shouldn't require State intervention as it is now. And so, in my mind, you know, so I'm not a fan for tinkering on the edges of legislation. I think what is required is substantive change in the way that power is held at the level of government and also then who gets to make legislation and policy and who practices that in this country.

So, I would like to see, I think it's important for Māori that Māori have the opportunity to overhaul how adoption happens for Māori.

There are some - I talked about the shame and the silence that has accompanied Māori who are adopted out of
their family. And so, because of that shame and silence, I think we have to have a thorough engagement around the issue, perhaps something akin to a Commission of Inquiry specifically for adoption.

There are some hangovers for those of us who are adopted. Te Ture Whenua Māori Act needs a real good look. So, discussions need to happen within Māori communities around the issue of succession of land interests for Māori who have been removed from families. It's not an easy process to be able to succeed under the current legislation, so even if you know your whakapapa, it may be that the parent, that the Māori parent died and that there's insufficient, and that it's difficult to bring together information to support an application for succession. So, that needs to be dealt with.

In terms of removal of children from care, again I would say that the Crown, in removing Māori children, is breaching Te Tiriti o Waitangi and we need to look at, reconsider the issue from the perspective of Te Tiriti, and I know that my colleague, Moana, will talk in more detail about this.

In relation to that, those antecedents to the removal of our children urgently need addressing because unless those are addressed, the burden of poverty, the burden of marginalisation, of violence, of abuse, will continue to fall on our families. And, as I've argued, this is not because we are more likely to fall into this area but because government policies have pushed us in that direction.

Q. Kia ora. Just to finish, at the head of your brief of evidence you've included a whakatauki, a proverb, would you care to share that with us. Please explain why it is you've used that proverb in particular?
A. So, it's spring, well we're starting to move into summer,
and at this time of year the kuaka or the Godwit returns on a journey of 18,000 kilometres direct from the Arctic to Aotearoa. And the Godwit has been doing that for thousands of years and the map for how to return home is in it, it is part of its makeup. So, although it's born, so the eggs are laid in the Arctic, the bird hatches there but it knows how to get to Aotearoa. So I chose a verb which is about the Kuaka or the Godwit. "Te kuaka marangaranga, kotahi manu i tau ki te tahuna: tau atu, tau ra." And I chose that because the whakatauki speaks to one Godwit arriving from across the ocean and landing on the sand bank and as soon as we see one, we know that more will come and we know that it will happen around this time of year. I've likened that to the small, to the voices that we have here at the Royal Commission of Inquiry hearing. The voices are, you know, there's a small number of voices but eventually the voices will grow and this country will become aware of the injustices that have been done. And so, I'm hoping that those of us who have given evidence will be like the early Godwits and we will all be followed by others and that altogether change will come. Kia ora tatou.

Q. Kia ora (addresses in Te Reo Māori). Thank you for that, thank you very much. I will just pass over now to the Chair.

CHAIR: Thank you, Mr Merrick. Have any counsel conferred with you, Mr Mount, about cross-examination of Dr Green?

MR MOUNT: No, they haven't.

MS SKYES: I conferred through Mr Merrick, I sent emails on Sunday.

CHAIR: Certainly, please proceed.
Q. (Speaks in Te Reo Māori). There's two matters I'd like to explore because I think that most of the others have been covered.

The first is a matter of cultural prejudice that arises from land dislocation for those that are in closed adoptions. One of the concerns, and it's been an ongoing concern, is Te Ture Whenua Māori Act and even the fisheries settlement processes can actually work for those that have been taken out of their whakapapa and placed into placements with strangers, so that they aren't entitled to benefits that are being accrued by some of the processes that address the colonisation. Are you familiar with that kind of cultural dislocation and prejudice?

A. Yes, I am. Less so the fisheries settlements process but certainly Te Ture Whenua Māori.

Q. Can you elaborate what that means by someone who is Māori, has been adopted but cannot claim ancestral rights or benefits?

A. So, if you can't locate yourself and be part of the life of your hapu around a piece of land, then the relationships that come from being involved with that land are not formed.

So, one might intellectually know that they're part of Taikawhaia or Pukeko but unless one is actively involved and recognised in that process then it's a name but is not a relationship and that relationship is what whakapapa is.

Q. There's actually case law, there's been Court cases,
hasn't there, that have determined that without
independent validation or verification from an ancestor,
you cannot claim entitlement?
A. That's right.
Q. Have you any personal experience of that?
A. Yes, there is. I was fortunate though that before my
aunt passed away, she was able to make a statement to the
Court that she knew my mother and of course my father,
her brother, and that she had heard some years later that
my mother had had a baby to my father and that I was that
child. And so, that was what I needed but if my aunt had
died before I'd got that statement, I would not be able
to succeed.
Q. And in inquiries and I'm going to move to your report,
that disconnection becomes permanent, doesn't it, because
of course the Native Land Court, now the Māori Land Court
becomes the place of your entitlements to your land, then
to your whānau, to your hapu's origins and of course it's
that basis for Treaty settlements quite often, isn't it?
A. That's right. It is permanent, it's permanent not only
for me but for my descendants as well.
Q. In your report, and I only want to focus on pages 182,
183 and 184, first of all it's a long time since I've
read it but I want to acknowledge the women that were
part of your team, the late Miria Simpson, the late Anne
Delamere were certainly Māori women extraordinaire. They
were stateswomen in their own right, founding members of
the Māori Women’s Welfare League with Dame Mira and
devoted their lives to child welfare. So, I would just
like to acknowledge them.
And then I look that you're reporting to Dame
Elizabeth Murchie who is another great woman in the Māori
world. This report given it came after Puao-Te-Ata-Tu
and the Children Young Persons and their Families act
would be seen as a milestone in the Māori world the way
it was constructed biculturally and who it was reported
to
and I think with mana from Te Ao Māori or Wahine Māori anyway; would that be fair?

A. That would, thank you.

Q. Now, you talk in there about the last resort justification. I just want you to think, perhaps it's now moved to the first resort justification, and I would just like your comment?

A. Yes. So, I don't have the statistics in front of me, Annette, but the number of Māori children who were placed in institutions when this report was done in 1992, are tiny compared to the numbers placed now. So, what we've seen, so despite the report and despite the mana within which this report was regarded in the Māori world, there hasn't been a change, in fact there's been a worsening of the situation. So, the burden absolutely falls with Māori because at the same time, the number of Pākehā placed out of family care has reduced.

Q. So, we've got increasing disproportionate number of Māori children?

A. We have.

Q. Being placed in out of care arrangements. I looked at your recommendations which were to try and put a pathway which I would like you to look at which is on page 183, there's two kind of sets.

Your recommendations really I thought if they had been put into place, certainly they were received by the Human Rights Commissioner. Who were they given to after that because these recommendations seem like good steps to avoid where we are today and I am just trying to figure out why?

A. So, my understanding was that the report - that the Human Rights Commissioner presented the report to the Ministers, so that would have been Social Welfare, Justice and Education in this case, I think that's right.
Q. So, a theme in the report which is then developed at the bottom of page 183 and 184 is tino rangatiratanga, of course we contextualise the report post Te Runanga Iwi Development Act and some of those social developments that were occurring between Māori and the government.

But a strong theme is that Māori were seeking control and care for their children and using the vehicles of iwi development options, iwi authority or a Runanga at that stage, for structural dimension or giving force to that. How come that hasn't happened because, I mean, even whānau ora now, if we look at it and that's why I'm trying to look if you can guide us from this report until now, what's been the barriers for implementing that? Given it was signalled so early that that kind of structural relationship was required.

A. So, thinking about the barriers that Governments face, that would be the vote. So, Governments, Ministers, want to retain their seats and in a racist New Zealand it takes an extraordinary Minister to go up against an electorate most of which would not support Māori control.

Q. But a humane society, if we can move it from the discourse of governments, society, communities, would surely want, as your report recommends, people to be adequately refunded, to be adequately resourced, to ensure the full potential of young people and children is able to be obtained; wouldn't you agree?

A. Yes, logically one would think that, you know, people do cost-benefit analyses, for example, and it would seem, apart from the humane angle, that even if you went down the cost benefit line, that it would be beneficial to put resources in early into whānau. But let's not forget the machinery that operates, in terms of prisons, in terms of State institutions for so-called care, those machinery and our people fill those and provide jobs for people,
for other people, not ourselves and profit.

Q. Because it strikes me, given our discussion it strikes me if you look at some of your recommendations, it was a forward thinking report?

A. Mm.

Q. It contemplated the tyranny of democracy, if I can use that term, but it actually gave practical steps, based on mutual respect and understanding, and the Puao-Te-Ata-Tu understanding as a way forward. Do you think those are important flagships or moments in time that should be guiding this Inquiry?

A. I think this is the opportunity that the Commission has which is to put things back on track and to stay clear of tinkering around the edges of control and power and legislation and actually go back to even the recent work on the constitutional review, to go back to that work and start to look at how we might pull together the threads of our country so that everybody benefits and that the burden is not with Māori.

Q. Where is the place of Te Tiriti or the values of Te Tiriti in that?

A. That's the framework. Te Tiriti is a framework. If we ignore that, we'll reproduce this situation in 10 years time.

Q. Thank you, I have no further questions.

CHAIR: Thank you, Ms Skyes. Any other counsel? Thank you.
COMMISSIONER ERUETI: I have a couple of brief questions. I wondered whether, just on the subject of adoption, your views about whether it could have made a difference if, under the Adoption Act 1955, there's no scope for recognition legally of whangai, and that's been the case as I understand for most of the 20th Century. But if there had been within that Act recognition, legal recognition, acceptance of the practice of whangai, whether that might have made a difference for tamariki Māori who ended up being placed in forced adoption?

A. It may have made a difference. I would be reluctant though to suggest that the State become involved in the whangai process because of course it wasn't. Whangai, the whangai, the practice of whangai was something which whānau and hapu practice. So, I'd be reluctant, very reluctant to extend the power of state into that domain.

COMMISSIONER ERUETI: Kia ora. My final question is about your experience, your personal experience with your niece and you describe in paragraph 44, the intervention of Te Whakaruruhau as providing wraparound supports that you thought your niece and her children needed. Is that the type of extensive wraparound support that you think is needed to be provided to break the cycle, if you like, and keep the whānau safe?

A. We're still talking - I mean Te Whakaruruhau provided excellent support for our whānau at that moment but we're
still talking about an ambulance at the bottom of the cliff. So, I would really like to see the span of intervention sort of going right back and right across the social and economic domains so that we didn't have situations arising. But given that, that we haven't, then that intensive wraparound service with high level strategic arrangements between the Chief Executive of Te Whakaruruhau, the Police in the Waikato, Oranga Tamariki helped to provide some stability within which some healing could take place. But it was important that those systemic issues were addressed, not just - so that the focus wasn't just on my niece and her boys but that we had some understanding at the high level of organisations that were involved in their case, that there was an understanding there about what the family required, what the direction was, what the practices were that would support the whānau.

15.10

COMMISSIONER ERUETI: Kia ora.

COMMISSIONER SHAW: Thank you for such a powerful personal story, combined with your intellectual and academic knowledge and your traditional knowledge of Māori tikanga and it's much appreciated.

15.11

I wanted just to turn to a small part and if you don't feel comfortable answering these questions, please say so because you've only glanced at this issue but it is one that comes within our Terms of Reference, and that is the plight of the unmarried mother i ngā wa mua who had a very tough, tough time and I think maybe your mother was one of those. Would that be correct?

A. That would be correct, yes.

COMMISSIONER SHAW: Do you mind just briefly giving us some details about it? I mean, please say if you don't want to.

A. No, no, that's fine.
COMMISSIONER SHAW: First of all, how old was she when you were born?
A. She was older than my father by a year, so she was 19.

COMMISSIONER SHAW: She was just a girl.
A. Yep, she was. So, the stigma that women experienced, it's women here that are experiencing the stigma, from society but the stigma that they experienced was awful. It followed them in many cases to the grave and it affected their families and their position in society.

So, those were - so, my mother was a cleaner in Rosall Hospital Maternity Home on the North Shore. She cleaned and had her board for free, in return for my adoption.

COMMISSIONER SHAW: That is what I was really wanting to hone in on. Did she become the cleaner during her pregnancy in order to sustain herself and then to come towards the adoption? Was that all part of a package or was she already a cleaner there?
A. No, she was not a cleaner. She approached Rosall then looking for a place where she could hide essentially.

COMMISSIONER SHAW: Exactly.
A. And in return for hiding her and arranging the adoption, she cleaned. And she gave birth to me outside, in a hallway unattended. She was told to keep her voice down because the married mothers would be distressed and, yeah, she was alone.

COMMISSIONER SHAW: That is a very sad story. And you say that it was the nursing home and the Department of Social Welfare which arranged the adoption. Do you know any detail about that, how that was?
A. What kind of detail?

COMMISSIONER SHAW: I am just wondering how the nursing home became involved with this. I can sort of understand the State coming in but the nursing
home, do you know anything about that?

A. Yes. One of the cooks in the kitchen knew of a family who were after a child and told the nursing home of this family and they contacted Social Welfare and made the arrangement and it was to that family that I went.

COMMISSIONER SHAW: Thank you very much for that piece of detail and just to signal that that is an area well within our Terms of Reference and we are looking, and I know the stories are there, it's important to grab them when we have the opportunity, so thank you very much indeed for adding that piece of information for us.

COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE: Thank you also just for the courage to share the stories of you and your wider family. The question I really want to ask you is around you've really been able to articulate very well for us one of the big giants that fall right within our Terms of Reference, the systemic issues and how we deal to that. One of the things that I gleaned from your evidence is that actually in many respects for Māori the work has been done. The reports that you refer to, Puao-Te-Ata-Tu, the human rights report, the uptake, and thank you to Ms Skyes for the highlighting of the report. Māori can put their weight behind things and it's not reciprocated.

And so, I guess my question really is around in many respects it's around the courage to actually revisit those and to implement them and whether or not there would be tweaks required for today's context?

A. Thank you for your question. Māori pretty much have been saying the same thing about everything since, you know, a long, for a long time now. So, we risk - I think if we don't have regard for the work that's being done and the important information that's produced, then I think the
Commission risks a strong backlash from Māori, in terms of, you know, we've told so many people this, the information is here already. So, I think you kind of need to balance that. And as well I'd say there are some complexities that are here with us right now that we may want to visit but essentially, and I know that Moana will deal with this, essentially we need to look at what's being produced, what the recommendations are and I think look at how to integrate those into the findings of the Commission where it's clear that we're talking about apples and apples.

If we're talking about a new phenomena, then I think you'll need to take information as it comes to hand through the Inquiry and then meld them.

**CHAIR:** Dr Green, I have a question too which arises from your statement just a moment ago, of having regard to the work that has been done.

If you look at page 7 of your brief, paragraph 33, there's reference to Puao-Te-Ata-Tu. I have a direct question. Do you think that Puao-Te-Ata-Tu is fit for purpose for discussion now again?

**A.** Yes, I do. I think that we have had - we now have the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, for example, that wasn't in force at the time. So, there is going to need to be some positioning of that document relative to our current situation but I think it's a powerful report and I think that there are components of that report that most Māori leaders would support.

**CHAIR:** Thank you and thank you for your evidence. It seems, Mr Merrick, that this might be, although a little early, a convenient time, if you don't have any further questions, to suggest that we have the afternoon break now.
MR MERRICK: Agreed, Sir, thank you.

Hearing adjourned from 3.20 p.m. until 3.35 p.m.