

**DARRIN TIMPSON - AFFIRMED****EXAMINED BY MS JANES**

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**CHAIR:** Yes, Ms Janes.

**MS JANES:** Good afternoon, Commissioners, our next witness is Mr Darrin Timpson. I will let the affirmation proceed before we start the evidence.

**CHAIR:** How would you like us to refer to you?

A. Darrin is fine.

**CHAIR:** Darrin is fine, that's very good, thanks Darrin. I will just ask you to take the affirmation. (Witness affirmed). Thank you, Ms Janes will be asking you some questions.

**MS JANES:**

Q. Your full name is Darrin Timpson?

A. Yes.

Q. And you have prepared a statement for the Royal Commission dated 25 September 2020. Can you confirm that is true and correct to the best of your knowledge?

A. Yes, it is.

Q. And you are here to talk about the care that you received at Bramwell Booth Home in Temuka and your redress process. But before we do that, can you just tell us a little bit about yourself?

A. Well, I'm 54 years old now, and I'm sort of just getting to understand what happened and live a normal life, so to speak.

Q. In terms of where you were born and your heritage and where you live now?

A. I was born in the Chatham Islands. I didn't stay there for too long. I came over for a medical emergency. We did go back briefly and then we ended up in Timaru from there. Yeah, that's where I came from.

1 Q. I'm going to do the traffic stop.

2 A. Sorry. I now live in Christchurch, but I've lived in most  
3 parts in New Zealand over the last 50 years.

4 Q. At paragraph 7 of your brief of evidence, which is page 2,  
5 you talk about the water on the brain medical emergency?

6 A. Yep.

7 Q. And how you were taken off the Chatham Islands, but it also  
8 had other consequences. Perhaps you could read from  
9 paragraph 7?

10 A. I don't have a lot of memories of my early life with my  
11 parents. I had a medical condition as an infant, water on  
12 the brain, and was flown from the Chatham Islands straight  
13 after birth to Christchurch for treatment. We later moved  
14 to Timaru. From what I have been told, my parents were  
15 both chronic alcoholics, both have very violent fights. I  
16 remember a couple of fights. One of my brothers holding  
17 onto me when they were having an argument.

18 I only know how I came to be in the Salvation Army from  
19 second-hand information, mostly from reading my file, my  
20 brothers and sisters were already at Bramwell Booth and had  
21 been there for various lengths of time. My parents wanted  
22 to drop me there as well, but were told they weren't  
23 allowed to as I was too young. I would have been about 4  
24 and a half. Apparently, they went to visit my siblings for  
25 the weekend and left me there, then they disappeared.

26 Q. And what happened to you after that?

27 A. I became a State ward sometime after that. The Salvation  
28 Army couldn't find my parents to get money out of them.  
29 They made an application for my siblings and I to become  
30 State wards so they could receive money for us from the  
31 State.

32 Q. And do you recall any visits from family?

33 A. Only from my grandmother and that was sort of infrequent,  
34 like a fortnightly visit.

35 Q. And how long did that go on for?

1 A. I couldn't give you a timeframe on that.

2 Q. But you thought a few years?

3 A. A few years, yep.

4 Q. And at paragraphs 12 and 13, can you read those for us  
5 slowly?

6 A. A lot of different staff came through the home while I  
7 lived there. Officers rotated through the Bramwell Booth  
8 around every 3 or 4 years. The Salvation Army had a  
9 handwritten ledger where they recorded when kids arrived  
10 and left the home. Before I left the home at the age of 16  
11 I asked to look at the ledger, so I could work out how long  
12 I'd been there. I was at Bramwell for 11 years, 5 months  
13 and 27 and a half days.

14 Q. Darrin, just taking you back to paragraph 6 where you talk  
15 about the size of the family that you came from, you've got  
16 your parents and brothers and sisters and you talk about  
17 being the youngest but with two sisters and three brothers.  
18 Were you alone in Bramwell Booth or were any of your family  
19 there with you?

20 A. That varied through the years. When I was first there, all  
21 six of us were there. I think it was a couple of years  
22 before the oldest, GRO-B, had left and then of course as  
23 the years went by, as my brothers and sisters grew older,  
24 they also left. There was a time when I was there, the  
25 only kid in my family there, but yeah.

26 Q. And from 14, paragraph 14, on page 3 of your brief, you  
27 start to talk about the abuse. Would you like to either  
28 read from paragraph 14 or in your own words go through the  
29 information from there?

30 A. I'll read what's down here. The first couple of years at  
31 the home were the worst. This was when Captain Gainsford  
32 and his wife were in charge along with Envoy Bezzant and  
33 his wife. It changed my attitude towards people and I  
34 wouldn't let anyone near me and I lost trust in people.

1 Envoy Bezzant was quite a big fellow and was very  
2 violent. I remember many occasions I was whacked on the  
3 back of the head for stupid things like having my feet up  
4 on a chair or not doing my chores on time. This was always  
5 with a piece of wood, the inside of a rail of a towel  
6 roller, he would walk around the dining room at dinner  
7 holding this stick. On one occasion this rendered me  
8 unconscious and I had to be taken to the doctor. I was  
9 taken to the local doctor in town.

10 I was also beaten when I was caught in bed with my  
11 sister. I used to creep in her bed at night when I had  
12 nightmares, but if I was caught I was given the strap or  
13 slapped around the ears.

14 I often saw other kids getting beaten and on one  
15 occasion Bezzant hit a kid so badly in the bath that he  
16 nearly drowned.

17 I have memories of being forced to wear nappies around  
18 the home and to school because I'd wet my pants and I would  
19 have been around 7.

20 I had 3 older brothers in the home. None of them who  
21 looked after me. We weren't encouraged to look after each  
22 other. [REDACTED] GRO-B

23 [REDACTED] GRO-B

I would have been around 7.

24 [REDACTED] GRO-B

25 Fighting between the boys was an encouraged thing. Captain  
26 Hobbs was good for this. He seemed to enjoy seeing the  
27 boys fight and let them go for it.

28 I spent a couple of weeks in hospital in Christchurch  
29 after Hobbs burnt me with a barbecue. I don't think this  
30 was intentional, he was just careless. I was standing  
31 around the barbecue with one of the boys from the home and  
32 Hobbs put more methylated spirits on it. When he couldn't  
33 see the flame it just went woof. I got burnt around the  
34 neck, it's under my beard you can't really see anything  
35 now. The other boy got it a lot worse. He was burnt quite

1 badly on his legs. They didn't take him to the burn's unit  
2 in Christchurch, they just took him to Timaru Hospital and  
3 he ended up with quite bad scarring on his legs.

4 Staff would give us some alcohol. I remember Envoy  
5 giving my brother and some of his friends a couple of dozen  
6 bottles of alcohol and letting them get blind drunk. Some  
7 of the staff would give some of the girls alcohol.

8 Punishment was often excessive. One of the favourites  
9 of the staff was to put us in the pit which was a big hole  
10 outside in the garage for fixing cars. The staff would put  
11 us in this and drive a car over it so we couldn't get out.  
12 Sometimes they left us there all day. It happened to me  
13 only four or five times. One time it was because another  
14 boy and I wouldn't eat porridge for breakfast. They saved  
15 it and gave it to us for tea, but we still wouldn't eat it.  
16 As punishment we were put in the pit.

17 Q. And then turning the page to paragraph 26.

18 A. Yep. I didn't talk to the other kids about the sexual  
19 abuse at the time. We all knew it was going on.

20 I was aware of what was happening to the other children,  
21 way before anything happened to me. I remember lying in  
22 bed at night and staff coming in and taking kids out. I  
23 may not have known exactly what was going on being at that  
24 age, but I had some idea.

25 Most of the sexual abuse I saw happen to the other kids  
26 was from Gainsford. He didn't physically abuse us. In  
27 fact, he was quite lovely towards the kids following sexual  
28 encounters. He gave us treats and we'd end up with  
29 lollies.

30 The earliest memory I have of seeing anything happen was  
31 in the back field where there was a play hut and that's  
32 where Gainsford used to take the girls.

33 We were outside the tree next to the play hut. It was  
34 me and another boy from the home. We were playing in the  
35 tree and we peaked through the side of the hut. Gainsford

1 was in there with one of the girls from the home. She  
2 would have been maybe 10 or 11 at the time. I didn't know  
3 what I was looking at. I was too young to understand what  
4 sex was. But now I know he was having sex with her.

5 GRO-B was sexually abused by Gainsford. She was a  
6 witness at his trial.

7 The sexual abuse by Gainsford led to a culture among the  
8 older kids that this was normal practice, and it did  
9 continue after he left between us kids. It was the older  
10 kids doing it with the younger. The older male residents  
11 would rape the small younger residents and they became the  
12 abusers. I didn't sexually abuse the other children, but I  
13 did bully them. It would get physical on occasion.

14 The sexual abuse that happened to me was later in my  
15 time at the home. I think I would have been about 8 or 9.  
16 I haven't told many people about this.

17 The main offender for me was Captain Hobbs. It first  
18 happened when he offered to change my room. He told me I  
19 could move out of the dorms and into a double room by  
20 myself. The room had access from the inside and the  
21 outside through the fire escape.

22 The first time something happened with him was the day  
23 he moved me into the room. He told me that I knew the  
24 price of it. He forced me to give him a blowjob and then  
25 had sex with me.

26 I never told anyone. I just shut my mouth. I'd known  
27 it was going on with other children. It felt more like a  
28 case it was now my turn. I didn't feel like I was offended  
29 against as much as some of the other kids at the time. I  
30 didn't like it, but I didn't think - I think I had become a  
31 bit immune to it.

32 In later years, I knew what happened wasn't right and I  
33 kind of knew at the time that it wasn't correct behaviour.  
34 Some of the girls in the home had told people earlier about  
35 the sexual abuse at Bramwell Booth. They just got shut-

1 down so I wasn't going to tell anyone at school or anything  
2 like that.

3 The sexual abuse from Hobbs went on for about a year or  
4 so. You couldn't predict when or how it was going to  
5 happen. It varied - on average about once a month.  
6 Sometimes you would be by yourself, other times in a group.  
7 A couple of times, there would be two or three of us  
8 together.

9 Hobbs liked to dress us up. He gave us clothing to put  
10 on, that was his kink. Sometimes he'd dress the males in  
11 females clothing and get us to have simulated sex,  
12 including with guys. He would be sitting there watching  
13 and masturbating himself.

14 One of the staff members found women's underclothes  
15 stuffed in my pillowcase. Hobbs had given them to me. He  
16 got them from the laundry. They must have belonged to one  
17 of the residents. I was questioned and it went on record  
18 that I was having psych issues.

19 Hobbs didn't want me speaking to a psychologist. Who  
20 knows what I might have told them? Instead of getting  
21 professional help, they decided I was lonely and gave me a  
22 stuffed toy. It was an easy way out for Hobbs.

23 Some of the other kids were sexually abused by one of  
24 the other staff members around this time. His name was Ray  
25 Vince. I walked in on Vince with one of the girls from the  
26 home having sex, but he never offended against me  
27 personally.

28 I was 15 or 16 at the time. They were in his lounge  
29 room. They were both naked. I was old enough to know what  
30 they were doing.

31 Sometime around 2008, I read that they had arrested  
32 Vince and that he was charged with historic sex offences.  
33 I went to Nelson Police Station and I gave a statement to  
34 the Police about what I had seen Vince do.

1 Q. And, Darrin, there is a document reference there, 6002, but  
2 we'll actually come back to that a little bit later. If  
3 you can carry on reading from 46.

4 A. Right. I would have gone to trial to give evidence, but  
5 Vince pleaded guilty to all the charges and there was no  
6 trial.

7 I ran away from the home a couple of times. The later  
8 years at the home weren't that bad but the damage had  
9 already been done. I didn't trust any staff members and I  
10 wouldn't let any of them get close to me.

11 I was made a State ward sometime after arriving at  
12 Bramwell Booth, but the Department of Social Welfare didn't  
13 play much of a role in my life. They used to come in once  
14 a month to Bramwell Booth to see the children that were  
15 State wards. I didn't have a lot of memories about it.  
16 Apparently, they talked to me or maybe they talked to the  
17 staff about me, because I don't remember seeing them that  
18 often. I only know that they came monthly from reading my  
19 file. There are notes about their visits.

20 At 16 I left Bramwell Booth and I was sent to live with  
21 an uncle and aunty in Christchurch. I had never met them  
22 before, but I had no choice in this.

23 They were both alcoholics with five children of their  
24 own. They were obliged to take me as I was expected to  
25 leave Bramwell Booth at that age.

26 I was there for about a year and I didn't go to school.

27 There was no physical or sexual abuse. More than  
28 anything, they were neglectful. The house was a hovel. I  
29 think I was there to be an extra kid to clean up. I was  
30 only taken in for the extra money that they would receive  
31 from the State.

32 I started to get with some wrong people and I didn't  
33 want to be at home. My uncle and aunty were always drunk.

34 I had a couple of encounters with the Department of  
35 Social Welfare after I left Bramwell Booth. One time they



1 gave me some clothing. The next time I remember seeing  
2 them I was signed off.

3 Q. Before we go on to the effects and the impact of the abuse  
4 on you, there's just a couple of issues in previous  
5 evidence that it would be useful to just have a quick look  
6 at.

7 A. Yep.

8 Q. The Salvation Army would probably be surprised to hear  
9 about children being given alcohol. You've mentioned that  
10 that was your experience. Can you just tell us a little  
11 bit more about that and what you remember or learned later?

12 A. Is that in reference to my hospital discharge?

13 Q. Yes.

14 A. Sometime later on, I requested I spent some time getting  
15 different medical files of mine. One was from Timaru  
16 Hospital, knowing I'd been in hospital a couple of times  
17 there. And when they replied to my inquiry on that, they  
18 said that the files had all been destroyed because of the  
19 period of time. So, I wrote back to them asking if I could  
20 get any records of discharge and they sent back to me  
21 discharges but one of them included a discharge from Timaru  
22 Hospital for alcohol poisoning when I was around 11 years  
23 old.

24 Q. And in terms of where you accessed the alcohol, what is  
25 your clear recollection about where that came from?

26 A. To be honest, in this case I couldn't really tell you. I  
27 don't actually have a memory of being discharged from  
28 Timaru Public Hospital for that.

29 Q. So, not necessarily that particular incident, but at  
30 paragraph 24 you talk about -

31 A. Oh, absolutely, yeah, I was plied with alcohol early on, it  
32 was available to us. One of the favourite places for us to  
33 go drinking was something called a pigsty back in the  
34 paddock, an old pigsty. We would all go in there and hide  
35 and do a wee fire and that type of thing.

1 Q. And did the alcohol come from other residents or elsewhere?

2 A. Both, it came from staff a couple of times and from  
3 residents. There were sometimes where staff took residents  
4 down to get it.

5 Q. Do you have any recollection when you obtained your files  
6 about whether the alcohol incident, alcohol poisoning  
7 incident, had been reported to the Department of Social  
8 Welfare?

9 A. No. There's no reference on my file of it whatsoever. As  
10 I said, when I did read my file, I found nothing and it  
11 wasn't until I contacted Timaru Hospital that I found out  
12 anything about this.

13 Q. And you've talked about the incident about where you felt  
14 you might have needed counselling and got the teddy bear?

15 A. Yep.

16 Q. What would you want to say about that and whether that  
17 could or should have been reported to Social Welfare and  
18 you given help that you needed at that time?

19 A. I think it would have been quite important, given the age I  
20 was at the time, yeah. I mean, I can't say the way to be  
21 honest, but I think it may have made a hell of an impact.

22 Q. And we understand from the Salvation Army that when they  
23 got your evidence, they were surprised to read about  
24 Captain Hobbs and sexual abuse?

25 A. Yep.

26 Q. They were aware of physical abuse. We will go to witness  
27 Exhibit 2. In 2008, that's going to come up on your screen  
28 shortly, we'll just orientate, if we can call out the  
29 highlighted paragraph. It's a statement made to the Nelson  
30 Police on the 26th of May 2008. Do you recall making that  
31 statement?

32 A. Yes.

33 Q. And the circumstances you made that statement?

34 A. Yes.

1 Q. And you talk about that in your evidence, about how you  
2 heard about the trial and went to the Police Station?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. So, this is a statement in relation to Envoy Ray Vince and  
5 sexual offending while at Temuka?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. If we can just turn over, there are paragraphs highlighted  
8 on page 2. We will just quickly cover these because they  
9 are relevant to your evidence. So, we'll call out the  
10 first one, thank you. Can you just slowly read through  
11 those?

12 A. Yep. "Yes. I witnessed incidents. I saw about 5 actual  
13 rapes. They were quite graphic and I don't really want to  
14 talk about them in detail. You have to understand that  
15 there was a culture within the Salvation Army Home that I  
16 was in because Gainsford had been sexually offending for  
17 some time - about 2 years. He was reported and nothing  
18 happened. He was moved on."

19 Q. And then if we call out the next paragraph, highlighted  
20 paragraph?

21 A. "A culture had developed of that's just how it is and if  
22 you didn't do as you were told there were consequences.  
23 There was a pit in the garage for fixing cars and they  
24 would put you in the pit, then drive the van over the pit  
25 so you couldn't get out. He put boards across it so you  
26 were stuck in there. We all knew what was happening. We  
27 didn't discuss it or anything. Sometimes we did talk but  
28 it was part of the place".

29 Q. And then the final paragraph? You don't need to read this  
30 because you've put it in your statement, but it refers to  
31 that incident where you had had a nightmare, gone into bed  
32 with your sister for some comfort and were scared you would  
33 be found and physically abused?

34 A. Yes.

1 Q. And just turning over the page, to page 5, that's fine,  
2 thank you, you can pull that down now.

3 So, in that statement, there is no mention of sexual  
4 abuse by Hobbs. When you think back about who you told and  
5 when you told and why you told about sexual abuse, what  
6 would you say to the Salvation Army about not disclosing  
7 about Captain Hobbs at that time?

8 A. You're meaning within the statement I made to the Nelson  
9 Police?

10 Q. Yeah or to Murray Houston later on in the redress process.

11 A. For me, it was because Hobbs was my abuser and the  
12 statement to the Nelson Police had nothing to do with me in  
13 that sense. I wasn't complaining.

14 Part of the other reason I've never mentioned Hobbs, the  
15 first time I ever really mentioned Hobbs is now with the  
16 Commission. It's never really come up. I didn't really  
17 want to speak about it to the Salvation Army at the time  
18 because he had passed on, so it was sort of like I would be  
19 flogging a dead horse with them and didn't think it would  
20 be taken seriously.

21 Q. Thank you. I think later on in your statement you do  
22 similarly cover that, but it was useful to just highlight  
23 that at this point.

24 So, then looking at paragraph 55 of your brief, we start  
25 looking at the impact of the abuse on you.

26 A. Yep.

27 Q. If you'd like to read from there.

28 A. Looking back, I can sit here and say that I would have  
29 liked a lot of things to be different. My time in the home  
30 and abuse I experienced shaped my entire life. It still  
31 affects me today. I don't go out. I stay at home. I feel  
32 a need to control my environment. I don't go where people  
33 gather, theatres, swimming pools, pubs, I hate having  
34 anyone standing behind me and I struggle to form  
35 relationships with people and still I don't trust anyone.

1 I don't have contact with my parents. I don't know  
2 where they are or if they're still alive.

3 I have limited contact with my brothers and sisters.  
4 Even today, I don't have a close, loving relationship with  
5 them. I know where most of them live, but don't have their  
6 phone numbers and I wouldn't just pick up the phone and  
7 give them a call.

8 GRO-B

9 GRO-B

10 I don't trust anyone, especially people in authority and  
11 I keep everyone at arm's length.

12 I haven't had any lasting relationships. The longest  
13 relationship I had was probably 3 weeks.

14 I am now 54 and I first went to prison at the age of 17  
15 or 18. I have spent much of my adult life in prison.

16 My time at Bramwell Booth prepared me to go to jail. I  
17 learnt to be quiet, not to trust people, not to go in a  
18 darkroom alone. Prison was like home, but without the  
19 abuse. I got told when to go to bed, when to wake up and  
20 my meals were provided. It was easy and I got told what to  
21 do.

22 I was mostly sent to prison for fraud and dishonesty  
23 offences and some theft. I got told that I came into the  
24 top 1% of New Zealand criminals because I had amassed over  
25 500 convictions for dishonesty offences.

26 **CHAIR:** You are also one of New Zealand's fastest  
27 criminals.

28 A. Sorry. Slow down, yep.

29 **CHAIR:** Take a glass of water, Darrin.

30 A. They did teach me to read well.

31 **CHAIR:** They certainly did. You're doing really well and  
32 we really appreciate it. I am sorry we have to keep  
33 slowing you down.

34 A. That's all right.

35 **MS JANES:**

1 Q. You are saying it's not really a distinction you're proud  
2 of.

3 A. It's not really a distinction I was proud of. I was never  
4 a violent offender. I didn't want to repeat on anyone else  
5 what had happened to me. I knew how it made me feel at the  
6 time and how it screwed me up.

7 I think early on my reoffending was related to the  
8 desire to return to prison. I felt unsafe outside of  
9 prison. It wasn't until late 2000, after I received some  
10 counselling, that I decided to move forward and try and  
11 stay out of prison.

12 I don't think I would have gone to prison if I'd had a  
13 different upbringing. It was an easy place to hide.

14 I have struggled to get full-time employment. People  
15 see my conviction record and don't want to hire me. I have  
16 had jobs off and on, like truck driving, but it has been  
17 difficult for me to find stable full-time employment.

18 I have also found it hard to deal with government  
19 departments. Things like going and getting a benefit were  
20 difficult for me. My time at Bramwell Booth left me with  
21 no trust of anyone in authority.

22 I started having panic attacks at 8 years old.

23 I first received counselling in prison. Some of it was  
24 mandated counselling. Most of the counselling in prison,  
25 I'd just gone along to appease the system.

26 The first effective counselling I had that really made a  
27 difference, was with Paul Oxnam. It was only really with  
28 Paul that the counselling really impacted on me. I wanted  
29 to make a change and try and get my life sorted. It was  
30 also a pivotal moment in my life. Since then, I've only  
31 been back to jail one other time and on one charge. I have  
32 learnt to cope with it a lot better and understand jail  
33 wasn't the answer. It was the first time I told anyone  
34 about the sexual abuse but, even then, I didn't talk about  
35 everything that happened to me.

1 Q. Darrin, we will go to Exhibit 3 because in your evidence  
2 you've talked about initially the counselling being  
3 something that you did to appease the system?

4 A. Yep.

5 Q. But this one making some real change for you?

6 A. Yep.

7 Q. So, to have the Commissioners know a little bit more about  
8 your life experience, I thought we'd go to some highlighted  
9 passages in this one. If we can call out the first one?

10 A. "Firstly, at the age of 4 Mr Timpson was sent by his  
11 violent parents to live in a Salvation Army Home where he  
12 suffered traumatic abuse over a 10 year period at the hands  
13 of persons entrusted with his care".

14 Q. And then?

15 A. "The nature of Mr Timpson's mental health difficulties  
16 negated his attempts at forming stable and meaningful  
17 relationships and led him to feeling unable to seek  
18 assistance from government, welfare and health agencies  
19 that could have assisted him to manage his mental health  
20 concerns and avoid engaging in criminal activity".

21 Q. We don't necessarily need to go to it, but this document  
22 also talks about what you've talked about, the need to  
23 control your environment and your beliefs of the world  
24 being a dangerous place.

25 A. Yes.

26 Q. And being unable to trust people and you've mentioned that  
27 a couple of times.

28 If we go to page 2 of this document, and if we go to the  
29 first highlighted paragraph.

30 A. "As has been documented earlier, Mr Timpson previously felt  
31 unable to talk about his difficulties due to a combination  
32 of a sense of shame and a fear of his personal information  
33 being used against him."

34 Q. And then the final paragraph on that page?

1 A. "Perhaps the most significant life event to have occurred  
2 during Mr Timpson's 12 month involvement in therapy was the  
3 trial and conviction of the man responsible for the abuse  
4 Mr Timpson and others suffered as foster children in the  
5 1970s".

6 Q. And then if we turn the page and call out the first  
7 paragraph?

8 A. "Moreover, the very public coverage of his abuser's trial  
9 has allowed Mr Timpson to begin the reconciliation process  
10 with family members whom he felt had in the past been  
11 disbelieving of his experiences".

12 "Moreover, the outcome of the trial has opened the door for  
13 Mr Timpson to pursue financial redress that will help him  
14 provide both a heightened sense of personal validation and  
15 a greater degree of economic stability".

16 Q. Just asking you in terms of the redress process, one of the  
17 elements of redress is about investigation and prosecution  
18 of abusers. Reading this document, it sounds that event  
19 was quite pivotal in your life. Do you want to explain why  
20 that was so important to you and you being able to move  
21 forward in healing and making a better life for yourself?

22 A. Personally, for me, it was because finally we'd been  
23 believed. We'd already told people earlier and we were  
24 never believed but finally somebody had acknowledged it and  
25 somebody had actually been convicted of what's happened, so  
26 I thought somebody is finally believing me or will believe  
27 me, believe the others.

28 **CHAIR:** Did you give evidence in the trial?

29 A. No.

30 **CHAIR:** You just made a statement to the Police which they  
31 used?

32 A. Not in the first trial.

33 **CHAIR:** That's right, because he pleaded guilty?

34 A. No, no, no, not in the first trial. The first trial was  
35 John Gainsford. I had nothing to do with it. Just GRO-B ,



1 I think, and I know the children involved in it. The  
2 second trial, I gave the statement to it, but it wasn't  
3 required because he pleaded guilty.

4 **CHAIR:** Thank you.

5 **MS JANES:**

6 Q. Thank you. We will go back to paragraph 73 of your  
7 statement.

8 A. The first attempt I made to take my own life was in my 20s.  
9 I fell through the cracks in the system. There were a  
10 couple of more suicide attempts over the years. I was in  
11 jail, and a lot of what happened in my past was sitting in  
12 the back of my head. I felt like there was no real outlet  
13 and that no-one was really listening to me.

14 One was a very serious attempt, the other two not so  
15 much. They were all related to my time in care or the  
16 effects that it had on my life and I felt that my life was  
17 a waste of time. And I started to ask what the point of it  
18 was.

19 I don't drink alcohol at all, but I've taken a few drugs  
20 over the years, but I've never been a user. Bramwell Booth  
21 taught me one thing, and that's to control my environment.  
22 Don't let people get close and being under the influence  
23 didn't let me do that, so I don't drink.

24 I'm not getting any help now. There is no help anyone  
25 can give me. I've talked it all out to a degree. I am now  
26 in a position with my life that I have accepted what's  
27 happened and I can't change it.

28 Q. And then in your evidence you go on to the actual redress  
29 process that you went through and you started that in 2003,  
30 as you note at paragraph 77.

31 A. Yes. In 2003, while I was in prison, I met with Murray  
32 Houston from the Salvation Army.

33 I didn't tell him about all the abuse. For years I had  
34 been told that nothing would happen to those who abused us  
35 because of the uniform they wear. It wasn't until the

1 Gainsford trials in 2003-2004 that I felt I would be  
2 believed or even that some of my memories were real. That  
3 it did actually happen.

4 When I was released from prison in 2003, I was put up in  
5 the Salvation Army Home for around 2 weeks. They  
6 eventually rented a flat for me and helped me with  
7 furniture, bond and some rent.

8 We never had a written agreement. The Salvation Army  
9 assistance was cut-off after a time.

10 In 2006, I contacted Cooper Legal. I heard about them  
11 through word of mouth and I heard that Sonja Cooper was  
12 doing a whole lot of legal stuff with abuse in care.

13 I didn't tell Cooper Legal everything about the sexual  
14 abuse by Hobbs at the Bramwell Booth. In my opinion, I  
15 didn't see the need to go into details. And Hobbs was  
16 dead. I didn't see the point. I've gone into details in  
17 this statement now, as I hope the Royal Commission would  
18 possibly help someone in the future to not be in my  
19 position.

20 I was frustrated by how long the redress process took.

21 In 2009 I had an interview with Murray Houston and  
22 someone else from the Salvation Army in Wellington. I  
23 think it was retired member of the Army.

24 I didn't tell them everything about the abuse. Murray  
25 didn't seem too interested. My impression was that they  
26 just wanted to get it over and done with. Don't get me  
27 wrong, I wasn't forthcoming, and I was a bit hostile. I  
28 didn't, and still don't, have any faith in the Salvation  
29 Army.

30 I wanted compensation and to see photos of the home and  
31 to get copies. I had already been through counselling and  
32 I didn't want any more.

33 I was offered around \$20,000 and the Salvation Army were  
34 not willing to negotiate. In the letter of offer from

1 Murray Houston to Cooper Legal it was made clear that this  
2 was not a negotiation.

3 I knew others had got more. I ended up with around  
4 \$16,000 after legal fees.

5 At the time I needed money. It was made clear that it  
6 was take this or get nothing. I had spent most of my adult  
7 life in and out of prison and owned very little and I also  
8 had a few debts.

9 I don't remember getting an apology. I wasn't too  
10 fussed about getting an apology. I wouldn't have believed  
11 it even if they came up to me to say sorry. More than an  
12 apology, I want an acknowledgment by the Salvation Army  
13 that the abuse happened while children were in their care.

14 Looking back now, I wish I had taken them to Court. I  
15 want people to see what they had done and were doing and I  
16 wanted them to pay.

17 Q. And we'll very quickly have a look at some documents that  
18 look at the redress process. The first one is Exhibit 5.  
19 This is a letter from the Salvation Army to your lawyer at  
20 Cooper Legal. It's dated 14 September 2009. It's a letter  
21 that clearly has a number of claimants, but we've left only  
22 your name, as you'll see in the highlight.

23 If you just call out the first two paragraphs. It talks  
24 about that the Salvation Army doesn't believe they have any  
25 legal liability at all to any of the claimants because of  
26 at least limitation issues and in some cases, Accident  
27 Compensation issues as well.

28 They go on to say that "Nonetheless, we have also taken  
29 into account the seriousness of the allegations made,  
30 comparable claims and the agreed settlements and the  
31 effects of any abuse on claimants. And in the interests of  
32 certainty and finality and for economic reasons, we are  
33 prepared to make without prejudice settlement offers  
34 as follows". And then we see the next highlighted part  
35 where it's your name and \$20,000.

1           So, we don't need to go there, we've done that. We'll  
2 go to the final one, thank you.

3           Darrin, if I can have you read that particular  
4 paragraph?

5 A. I haven't seen this before. "We are not prepared to make  
6 any offer of compensation to [GRO-B] or to [GRO-B] In the  
7 [GRO-B], on investigating their claims further we were  
8 surprised to discover that their allegations exclusively  
9 involved punishment that was normal and acceptable at the  
10 time."

11 Q. How do you feel about that, reading those words?

12 A. Yeah, no, yeah, no.

13 Q. No words?

14 A. (Shakes head). "It would save both of us a lot of time and  
15 effort and expense if you could obtain sufficient  
16 preliminary information to enable you to filter out clearly  
17 untenable claims like this first".

18 Q. Just to make it clear, that doesn't relate to your claim,  
19 it relates to other claims, otherwise your name would be  
20 one of those blanked out ones.

21 A. Yep.

22 Q. And then if we can go to Exhibit 6, the next page. This is  
23 the discharge form that you've signed when you settled.  
24 So, we see in paragraph 1, that you agree to accept  
25 \$20,000, full and final settlement, and you release and  
26 discharge the Salvation Army from all liability. That's  
27 your recollection?

28 A. Yep.

29 Q. And then at paragraph 5, can you read that to us, please?

30 A. "The parties will keep the terms of this agreement  
31 confidential to themselves and their advisers".

32 Q. Do you have any sense of why that formed part of your  
33 discharge document?

34 A. I have my own opinion as to why that was there, yep.

1 Q. Was it discussed with you at the time that that was going  
2 to be a condition of your settlement?

3 A. No.

4 Q. And you had legal advice at the time before you signed  
5 this?

6 A. Yep.

7 Q. Just talking about the redress process, you've spoken in  
8 your evidence about, at paragraph 79, things that the  
9 Salvation Army did for you when you were discharged from  
10 prison at a particular time and there was a flat and some  
11 furniture?

12 A. Yep.

13 Q. And some bond. And you talk about it being cut-off later.  
14 Can you just describe what you thought at the time and what  
15 that process meant for you and whether it was meaningful or  
16 not?

17 A. At the time, it was just a way to get out of jail and to  
18 take something for nothing from people I believed owed me.

19 Q. So, there was a recognition that there was assistance from  
20 the Salvation Army?

21 A. Oh yeah, yeah, absolutely.

22 Q. And when it was cut off, were there any discussions at that  
23 stage about your circumstances at that point?

24 A. No, I don't think so. I think part of the cut-off process  
25 was also partly me and my sort of engagement with them at  
26 the time. You know, I wasn't willing to engage totally  
27 with what they required. So, I think the cut-off was more  
28 mine.

29 Q. Okay, thank you.

30 **CHAIR:** Do you mind if I ask, why did you not or was it  
31 that you didn't want to or you weren't able to? Are you  
32 able to perhaps expand on that a little bit?

33 A. It was more that I didn't want to with them, I didn't trust  
34 them at that time. I was still in the mindset, you know,  
35 like, I hadn't met Paul Oxnam at the time so it was all pre

1 that, and my mindset was the criminal mindset, I was out to  
2 get out of them whatever they could give me, knowing that I  
3 could play on the history as well. So, that's what I was  
4 meaning.

5 **CHAIR:** Thank you. That's a very frank assessment,  
6 self-assessment and thank you for that.

7 A. That's all right.

8 **MS JANES:**

9 Q. In our discussions, without wanting to lead you, you had  
10 talked about a sense of where you were in that life, what  
11 had happened to you and that there may be something owed to  
12 you; do you want to talk about that or does that  
13 encapsulate what you would say?

14 A. Well, I think it sort of encapsulates it, you know. I had  
15 the attitude that they owed me and kind of owed me big  
16 time.

17 Q. And you talked in your evidence about not recalling seeing  
18 an apology. If I can take us to a document SAL ending  
19 1846. Just take a moment to read through that and then  
20 I'll ask you how you felt when you received it and what it  
21 did or didn't mean to you?

22 A. I've actually never read it. I do remember receiving it,  
23 but I've never read it. It didn't mean anything at the  
24 time. Not worth the paper it was written on.

25 Q. And in terms of not wanting to read it or not feeling that  
26 it had any relevance to you, I know it's going back a  
27 little while, but can you remember why you might have felt  
28 that way?

29 A. Yeah. It occurred because of what happened during the  
30 Gainsford trial, when it was discovered that there was  
31 evidence missing and it had been removed or whatever by the  
32 Salvation Army of the day, not back at the time when the  
33 event was going on but of the time when the trial was going  
34 on. So, I had colluded in my head and colluded that the

1 Army was still doing the same thing, so the apology didn't  
2 mean anything.

3 Q. So, it coincided with receipt of this and therefore wasn't  
4 relevant or meaningful for you?

5 A. (Shakes head). But can I just clarify, that's not to say  
6 the people writing that or the people doing that wasn't  
7 meant with good intention, that was just the way I received  
8 it.

9 Q. And the space that you were in at that point in your life?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. If you read it now and you put the Gainsford trial to one  
12 side, if you call it out that might make it easier.

13 What I'd like to ask you when you read it, is if you  
14 received it in a different time of your life, in a  
15 different frame of mind, would that have met your  
16 requirements for an apology?

17 A. No, not mine.

18 Q. Why is that?

19 A. Because what I'm reading here is more like a form letter  
20 sent out to 39 kids. It's not addressing me individually,  
21 if you understand what I mean, my experiences. And it's  
22 the same for every other child, they're all different but  
23 this is just like a form letter.

24 Q. Do you recall being asked in the redress process what might  
25 have been meaningful for you, in terms of what you needed?

26 A. They could have but I think during that redress process,  
27 you know, it was still the same mindset, that I'm into the  
28 Army to get out what I can.

29 Q. And if you were asking for an apology now, what would you  
30 need it or want it to address, acknowledging your personal  
31 circumstances?

32 A. No, personally for me it's too late and that's not to say  
33 I'm against the Salvation Army anymore, it's just that I  
34 don't think it would matter in terms of my life.

1 Q. And if one were looking at redress processes and standing  
2 back, is there anything that could have been done  
3 differently that would have made an impact for you?

4 A. Yeah, absolutely. If they took more of the cases as an  
5 individual case, you know, looked at it like, looked into  
6 mine and spent time talking to me, instead of the office  
7 business-like, get in, get out, sign this, sign that, type  
8 of thing. It's hard to explain what I'm mean but it was  
9 more, okay, you're another one of the kids, we'll get you  
10 into this folder, bang, bang, bang, get this through and  
11 done, it's over and done with. Whereas, there was no real  
12 consideration for my experiences as opposed to other  
13 people's, if that makes sense.

14 Q. And you've talked about the counselling, that you were  
15 offered counselling but there was a distrust about going to  
16 a Salvation Army counsellor. So, from your perspective,  
17 what would have worked better for you in that regard?

18 A. I think I couldn't answer that. I mean, there would be no  
19 way I'd go to the Salvation Army one at that time. Yeah, I  
20 couldn't answer that in any way. I think, I mean I didn't  
21 think Paul Oxnam would be any good, you know. He was the  
22 son of a cop and here I was a recidivist criminal, so,  
23 yeah, I think it was just circumstances, time and  
24 circumstances. And, of course, my mindset had changed a  
25 wee bit with the trial happening and Paul Oxnam came along  
26 and it happened to work.

27 Q. Thank you. Anything else that you want to say about the  
28 redress processes, otherwise we'll move on to the ACC  
29 aspect?

30 A. Yep, no, no.

31 Q. I will have you then read paragraph 92?

32 A. Another lawyer did my ACC claim. Every couple of months I  
33 get some money from them.

34 I was also a State ward. I never got any compensation  
35 from the Department of Social Welfare.



1           Just on that there, I understood, when I did go with  
2   Cooper Legal that we were taking a case against the  
3   Department of Social Welfare but the case came back and it  
4   was declined, for some reason I was going to be put in the  
5   same category and it would take years to fight, so I just  
6   decided "forget it".

7   Q. And you talk about that at paragraph 95.

8   A. Sorry.

9   **MS JANES:** Just for the Commissioners' information, that's  
10   the White trial. It's the White brothers.

11   A. Was it? Yeah, it was brothers, I knew that.

12   Q. No, you were right on the but on.

13   A. Right, sorry. My initial understanding when I signed with  
14   Cooper Legal was my claim was against the Department of  
15   Social Welfare.

16           They didn't follow through with that because there was a  
17   case that went to trial and didn't succeed. It was two  
18   brothers. They were a different institution. I heard back  
19   that, apparently, they couldn't proceed against the  
20   Department of Social Welfare because of some legal reason.  
21   As I remember, the claim for them didn't go ahead.

22   Q. Then you have some final concluding remarks if you'd like  
23   to read those and if there's anything else that you would  
24   like to say, just add that at the end.

25   A. So many of the kids I knew from the Salvation Army are  
26   dead, from suicide or drug abuse. A lot of them are doing  
27   life lags in prison, well a few of them.

28           I have been through a lot and I can't change what  
29   happened to me. It screwed me up but maybe telling my  
30   story will help some of the kids coming through the system  
31   now. I think part of it with the Salvation Army was their  
32   focus on the financial aspect of having children in their  
33   care. They spent more time chasing money than taking care  
34   of me. There needs to be more oversight. I don't really  
35   know what the full answer would be.

1 I don't know what else to say. Just one anecdote I  
2 have, you know, and I think this affected me in a bigger  
3 way than I thought over the years, it's something since I  
4 initially started this process with the Commission, it's  
5 come in my head. It is a story on the day I was leaving or  
6 the day before I was leaving. The Captain in charge, I  
7 don't know if I can say his name, I used to do a milk run,  
8 I did it for about 3 years, I think, before I left. And  
9 I'd saved up \$60. Two days before I left Temuka, I broke  
10 one of the bikes which was donated. The Captain made me go  
11 down to the bank and withdraw my \$60 and kept it. When I  
12 left the home, I left with nothing. I think that's one of  
13 the biggest things that affected me.

14 Q. Are you able to explain why that was such a powerful event  
15 for you?

16 A. I think at the end of the day after everything that  
17 happened, the Army left me with nothing.

18 Q. Thank you for sharing that.

19 A. That's all right.

20 Q. Before checking if the Commissioners have any questions,  
21 just looking at the cultural heritage of the Moriori  
22 cultural background, how important was that in your life  
23 and did it help or hinder at any stage in your life course?

24 A. It actually helped, surprisingly enough. I don't  
25 quite - not quite the way people would think. It was  
26 actually quite beneficial having that linkage to Moriori,  
27 to survive the jail. Without being too rude or thing about  
28 it, the majority of the population in jail is Māori and  
29 having that link to Moriori enabled me to survive through  
30 that a lot easier than a lot of other people.

31 Q. And would there have been anything meaningful that could  
32 have been offered in terms of taking you as an individual,  
33 is there anything cultural that would have made a  
34 difference to you?

35 A. I don't know, I'm not sure.

1 Q. Thank you, I just wanted to check whether there was  
2 anything that we should think about as an Inquiry.

3 **MS JANES:** That concludes the evidence that I have for  
4 Mr Timpson. If the Commissioners have any questions?

5 **CHAIR:** I will just ask my colleagues if they have any  
6 questions for you.

7

8

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1  
2 **DARRIN TIMPSON**  
3 **QUESTIONED BY COMMISSIONERS**  
4  
5

6 **COMMISSIONER STEENSON:** Tēnā koe, thank you for coming and  
7 speaking today.

8 Just looking at what you've mentioned around the  
9 financial aspects, the focus by the Salvation Army in  
10 saying they spent time chasing money rather than taking  
11 care of you. Can you just expand on that for me?

12 A. Yep. When I requested a copy of my Department of Social  
13 Welfare file, a lot of my earlier years, my first two or  
14 three years there was a lot of paperwork between the  
15 Salvation Army and that trying to hunt my mother down so  
16 they could get money, which I found quite, you know, okay.  
17 It just seemed over-focused in my file.

18 **COMMISSIONER STEENSON:** Okay, thank you. And then just one  
19 other question, if that's okay?

20 A. That's all right.

21 **COMMISSIONER STEENSON:** It's just around ACC. Had most of  
22 your dealings been with a lawyer with ACC?

23 A. All of them.

24 **COMMISSIONER STEENSON:** And so, why did you choose to do it  
25 through a lawyer, rather than directly?

26 A. Because I didn't know there was another way to do it.

27 **COMMISSIONER STEENSON:** Okay. Thank you.

28 A. I thought that's how you did it.

29 **COMMISSIONER STEENSON:** Tēnā koe.

30 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Darrin, just one point of  
31 clarification for me. It took 6 years, I think, to  
32 actually get to settlement? You first contacted them in  
33 2003, 2009 you settled. Now, with the benefit of  
34 hindsight, because it was such a frustrating process for

1 you, what do you think would be a reasonable timeframe for  
2 these types of settlements?

3 A. Depending on the case but it shouldn't take over a year, to  
4 be honest.

5 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Up to at least 12 months?

6 A. Yes.

7 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Thank you.

8 **CHAIR:** I think I have asked the questions that I needed in  
9 the course of your evidence, so thank you, Darrin, I have  
10 no questions and I will leave you with Commissioner Erueti.

11 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Tēnā koe, Darrin. I just wanted to  
12 follow-up a question from Hanne, Counsel Assist, about your  
13 Moriori heritage, about whether the staff at the home knew  
14 that you had Moriori whakapapa?

15 A. No, I don't think they were aware of it or anything, I  
16 don't think that was an issue.

17 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** Okay, thank you. Tēnei te mihi mahana  
18 ki a koe, he uri nō te iwi o Moriori, kei te mihi ahau ki a  
19 koe mō tō mana, ō whakaaro nui me tō kōrero ki a mātou,  
20 tēnā koe Matua. I, on behalf of the Commissioners, I want  
21 to thank you, Darrin, for your testimony here today. We  
22 recognise that this is the first time that you've disclosed  
23 your experience in full and how difficult that is for you,  
24 particularly speaking to someone in a position of authority  
25 and the issues of trust that you have with people in  
26 positions of authority. So, we all, each and every one of  
27 us, mihi you for that and recognise your courage in coming  
28 forward and speaking to us so openly and in this public  
29 domain. I want to assure you that we have listened and  
30 learned and I know that's really important to you, that you  
31 came here so that you could ensure that children currently  
32 in care in the future are taken care of, so we want to mihi  
33 you for that whakaaro as well and know that is close to our  
34 hearts and we will do the best we can to meet your  
35 aspirations. Kia ora.

1 A. Thank you.

2 **MS JANES:** Thank you. That concludes your evidence and,  
3 also, the evidence for the day.

4 **CHAIR:** Thank you. If you'd like to stay there, you can  
5 either leave now, we're going to have our final waiata and  
6 some wise words from our kaumātua, so if you'd like to stay  
7 there.

8

9 (Closing waiata and mihi)

10

11

12

**Hearing adjourned at 3.28 p.m.**