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MS C - AFFIRMED
QUESTIONED BY MS MACDONALD

CHAIR: Hello. We are going to call you Ms C, is that right? That's good.

A. Yes.

CHAIR: Fine. First, I'll just let Ms Macdonald talk to you first, can you see her?

MS MACDONALD: You can see me, can't you?

A. Yes, I can.

CHAIR: We'll start with the affirmation. Is there a bit of delay on the line?

MS MACDONALD: I think there is, Madam Chair.

CHAIR: Can you hear me?

A. Yes, I can.

CHAIR: I think there's some delay on the line, so we'll just have to adapt to that. If you have any trouble understanding, just let me know, won't you?

A. Yes, thank you.

CHAIR: I am going to give you the affirmation now. (Witness affirmed). I will now hand you over to Ms Macdonald.

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PRIVATE STATEMENT NOT FOR LIVESTREAM

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MS MACDONALD:

Q. Good afternoon, Ms C. I am going to be very clear about what's going to happen. You have a statement that you wish to make and this is a statement that's not going to be recorded or a part of the livestream at all, so I will just wait for a signal that it's okay for you to go and then you can read that bit of your statement.

CHAIR: Yes, you have the thumbs up.

MS MACDONALD:

GRO-B

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GRO-B

END OF PRIVATE STATEMENT

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MS MACDONALD:

Q. So, we will start to livestream now, Ms C.

A. Yes, thank you.

Q. So, if you go to your statement and just introduce yourself as much as you can to the Commissioners?

A. I was born in 1959 and I am Pākehā. I am a married woman. I have been married to the same person for 39 years. I am a family person. I have children and grandchildren and I also have worked in a career much of my life and studied to develop that career.

1 Q. Thank you. Now, you've come today to talk about your
2 experience of abuse within the Anglican Church?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. So, can you just start by telling the Commissioners how
5 you first met the Priest that you're going to talk
6 about?

7 A. Okay. I first met the Reverend when I was 11 years
8 old, around 1970. My family were nominally Anglican,
9 and my mother attended Church. The Reverend suggested
10 to her that I might like to attend confirmation classes
11 at the local Church where he was Vicar.

12 I am not sure how old the Reverend was at the time,
13 but I guess he must have been around his mid to late
14 30s. I began attending the youth group which was a
15 really good experience for me. I felt accepted by the
16 group and was also made to feel really special by the
17 Reverend.

18 I was the youngest child of four in a family of six.
19 The Reverend's warmth and positive affirmation of me
20 was very important at that stage of my life.

21 The Reverend spent many months cultivating my
22 attachment to him and this was accepted by my parents
23 because he was the Vicar and my parents trusted him. I
24 had long talks with him, both within the youth group
25 where I was attending and also in his home, at times
26 alone with him.

27 Right from the beginning, the Reverend had made me
28 welcome in his family. His wife also welcomed me. And
29 at times I would have been visiting quite regularly,
30 sometimes maybe once a week. I occasionally babysat
31 their children and I got on well with their family.

32 I became very involved in the Church. I was a
33 member of the Vestry, I was invited to be a member of
34 the Vestry as a teen member, kind of like a youth
35 representative. I was also a server and undertook

1 Bible readings in Church services and I felt really
2 special and important in those kinds of roles.

3 It was at his home late one night that the Reverend
4 first touched me intimately. I would have only been
5 about 12 when this happened. His wife and children
6 were asleep, and I was in the lounge alone with the
7 Reverend. There was only a desk lamp on and music was
8 playing. I actually vividly remember the moment and
9 how dark and cosy it was, and we'd been just talking
10 for a while. He leaned over and touched my breast. He
11 then withdrew his hand and said, "I'm glad you trust
12 me". I was very confused about what had happened as I
13 had not been touched by a man or woman in that way
14 before, but his words were sufficient reassurance for
15 me at the time.

16 The Reverend's apparent love for me was a major part
17 of my becoming a Christian. I did not have the
18 maturity and knowledge at that age to differentiate
19 between his kind, loving, attentive behaviour and his
20 sexual behaviour towards me. His attention towards me
21 was powerful and heady and I resolved my confusion
22 about his sexual overtures to me by basking in the
23 warmth of what I imagined was his genuine love for me
24 and also my unquestioning trust in him. I often felt a
25 mixture of longing, excitement and a nervous kind of
26 churning in my stomach when I was on my way to meet
27 him.

28 As the nature of his sexual behaviours progressed, I
29 began at times to become sexually aroused by his
30 touching. However, if I ever tried to respond, he
31 would immediately stop touching me. I feel and believe
32 that he did not want a mature adult sexual love and
33 believe he specifically wanted sexual contact with a
34 passive child.

1 It was also I think now an extra layer of control
2 that he was exerting over me. I responded by learning
3 to be totally passive and to mute my own responses.

4 Q. Ms C—

5 A. The sexual side of our relationship—sorry?

6 Q. I was just going to ask you a question. Did he ever
7 discuss with you what he was doing?

8 A. No, no, he didn't. The sexual side of our relationship
9 was never discussed or alluded to by either of us. He
10 did tell me once that he was doing these things to help
11 me be normal, which kind of infers that in some way I
12 wasn't.

13 Q. Go ahead.

14 A. I know of, and have spoken to, two other women who I
15 know were abused in the same way by this Reverend. One
16 of them at about the same time as me and the other a
17 bit after me, with some overlap. I spoke to them both
18 at one stage as an adult.

19 And I also have a very clear memory of seeing the
20 Reverend touching a friend of mine sexually when the
21 three of us were together. He had invited us both to
22 accompany him on a trip up country. I was driving, so
23 I must have been about 15. The Reverend was sitting
24 next to me in the front seat and my friend was sitting
25 on his knee in the front seat. I saw him fondling her
26 with his hand up her skirt. I remember feeling
27 uncomfortable about this, but it didn't occur to me to
28 do anything about it. She and I never discussed it as
29 children or in our teens. I think, I believe it was
30 because both she and I had been well prepared or
31 groomed by the Reverend that he was able to touch her
32 sexually while I was present without either of us
33 commenting or communicating about it.

34 Sometimes during overnight youth group events, group
35 members and leaders would sleep communally on

1 mattresses in the same room. I remember this as one of
2 the opportunities he took to touch me sexually. Even
3 at the time I was aware that the Reverend was sleeping
4 alongside several other girls at different times and at
5 different events.

6 The sexual behaviour was so "normalised" that it did
7 not occur to me that the Reverend's behaviour was
8 sexual abuse until I was in my 30s. And it has taken
9 me many years to understand the way he used his
10 position of authority and the relational intimacy to
11 build this level of attachment and trust that he could
12 sexually molest myself and at least one other young
13 girl in my presence. Spirituality was a powerful means
14 of building that connection. And also, spirituality as
15 a means to develop intimacy with me at such a young
16 age. He developed and used his control over me and
17 others to the degree that he got away with his
18 behaviour for decades, as far as I'm aware of. It was
19 at least 20 years before I confronted him in writing.

20 Q. Did your parents ever question the time that you were
21 spending with him?

22 A. Except for a concern during my School Certificate year
23 that I was spending time with him and the youth group
24 rather than studying, my parents did not question the
25 amount of time I was spending with the Reverend.
26 Because he was a Vicar, I believe that they assumed I
27 would be completely safe with him.

28 Q. And can you talk a little bit more about the
29 circumstances where he would abuse you?

30 A. The abuse occurred both at the Reverend's home and at
31 their family bach house. At times, I was with him
32 alone and at other times with both him and his wife.
33 He also abused me when surrounded by others while
34 communal sleeping at youth events.

1 I would sometimes go back to the manse, which is
2 where the Reverend was living with his family and I
3 would go back there after Church on Sundays and we
4 would have an afternoon rest or lie down together. The
5 Reverend would be between his wife and myself. While
6 his wife was asleep, or faking sleep, to be honest I've
7 never been sure which, the Reverend would touch me
8 sexually. The children were either asleep or playing
9 but they weren't present in the room.

10 The Reverend also said once to me that full
11 intercourse between us was not possible because it was
12 not acceptable between himself and his wife. He made
13 it sound as if what was going on was acceptable, but I
14 do not know if his wife knew what was going on or if
15 that was just him pretending that she did. I would
16 have been about 17 at the time that he said that.

17 Q. Ms C, if you want to talk more about the nature of the
18 abuse you can read the next couple of paragraphs. Be
19 aware that all of your evidence is on the record and
20 the Commissioners have all of the evidence already.
21 So, if you don't want to, that's fine as well. If you
22 don't want to, just go to paragraph 26. And if not,
23 just read 24, 25 and 26.

24 A. I think I'll go through to 26 because they have that
25 written in it?

26 Q. Yes.

27 A. Yeah. Thank you.

28 **CHAIR:** You can be sure that we have read all of your
29 brief of evidence and so whether you say it out loud or
30 not, we certainly know of it and understand it. So,
31 you just do what is most comfortable for you.

32 A. Thank you very much. Yeah, I won't. I'll skip through
33 to 26.

34 **CHAIR:** Yes.

1 A. He began to confide in me about adult things, for
2 example, he told me about the sexual relationship
3 between friends of his, and about another Minister's
4 wife who was a lesbian. He made disparaging comments
5 about adult women's bodies, especially their breasts,
6 and I learnt to assess my own body and sexuality
7 through the Reverend's messages about what was okay and
8 what wasn't okay.

9 When I look back, I don't think the Reverend was
10 physically attractive at all himself now in retrospect.
11 He was very misogynistic in the way he spoke about
12 women.

13 My entire relationship with the Reverend was
14 connected in many significant ways to my emerging
15 experiences and concepts of God and Christianity. That
16 part of my life was very important and there was so
17 many pluses in it that I was willing at the time to put
18 up with the niggling doubts and some sexual turmoil and
19 discomfort because of the benefits, that is the
20 attention, his interest in me, the social connection
21 with community and what I interpreted as his Christian
22 'love'.

23 For example, I had been a quiet child and my long
24 conversations with the Reverend helped me to be
25 articulate and to think deeply about spirituality and
26 other issues. He seemed to respect my perspective. In
27 other contexts of my life, I was treated like a child
28 and yet, here was somebody in my world at the time who
29 listened to me, affirmed and respected what I had to
30 say and made a big difference to me personally.

31 The last time I was with the Reverend in a sexual
32 way was when I was about 17. His wife was in hospital
33 at the time and I went 'round to their home to see if
34 there was anything I could do to help as there were
35 children still living with them. I don't think the

1 children were old enough to know what was going on and
2 I don't think they witnessed anything.

3 The Reverend and I were in bed. This time he guided
4 my hand onto his erect penis and said forcefully, "See,
5 you have an effect on me too". This was a new kind of
6 response from him. He sounded really angry with me,
7 yet I had no way of finding out what I had done or why
8 he was so angry because this was different to how it
9 had been in the past. I was actually very frightened
10 by his behaviour this time and I left. Previously, he
11 had controlled all sexual behaviour and not allowed any
12 participation during his sexual advances. His anger
13 towards me was really frightening and I never went back
14 to visit the family on my own after this experience.

15 **MS MACDONALD:**

16 Q. Ms C, could you please tell the Commissioners what the
17 impact of all this was on you and is on you?

18 A. Kind of before I want to talk about the impact, I
19 firstly want to say that I know and believe that I am a
20 really resilient strong woman. I have a good marriage,
21 we have been married for 39 years and we have a strong
22 loving relationship, besides some of the difficulties
23 and the challenges that have been there, and some of
24 those are associated to what I experienced earlier in
25 life.

26 I also have wonderful successful children and they
27 have encouraged me and my choice to be here today. I
28 love my grandchildren deeply and I believe they will be
29 proud of me too.

30 I do not hold to any one faith, however, and I think
31 this has a lot to do with what I experienced. However,
32 I have developed a strong sense of spiritual
33 connectedness with nature and the physical world around
34 me, making space for myself and my life is a key part

1 of my wellbeing and my ability to live a good and full
2 life.

3 And now I will say that despite many years of
4 therapy, growth and learning, the effects on my life
5 have been long-term, persistent and evasive. I still
6 feel physically sick with a deep sense of embarrassment
7 and shame that I did not realise the Reverend's
8 behaviour was sexual abuse until I was in my 30s.

9 While I understand the grooming and control that
10 paedophiles use to manipulate their victims, I still
11 feel deeply ashamed and embarrassed about that part of
12 my life.

13 My initial awareness began about 30 years ago as I
14 tried to make sense of extremely disturbing dreams of
15 violence towards the Reverend. I hadn't had contact
16 with him for many years, but the dreams were horrible
17 and one involved me physically chopping off his head
18 with an axe. I remember the intensity of the distress
19 that was associated with my belief that if those dreams
20 could come from me and were inside of me, then I could
21 no longer be a Christian. At that time this thought
22 was even more disturbing than the dreams themselves.

23 Since my early 30s, I have been very gradually
24 facing up to the truth of what happened, the meanings
25 and effects of it. And this has not been a small part
26 of my life and I cannot count the costs of what that
27 has involved.

28 I still experience disbelief that a man of the cloth
29 used the Christian faith to groom me. I also find it
30 difficult to comprehend that leaders within the
31 Anglican Christian faith community avoided, minimised,
32 deflected and denied during my attempts towards
33 preventing further opportunities for him to sexually
34 abuse other girls. This has had and, to be honest, it
35 continues to have a negative impact on me. It seems

1 evil and it has undermined my faith and my willingness
2 and my ability to identify myself as a Christian.

3 Since joining the youth group within the Reverend's
4 parish, many of my social connections were with
5 Christian people. I married a Christian man and my
6 growing awareness about the truth of the abuse has been
7 a huge struggle within this social cultural context.

8 For this reason (and many others) I have felt alone
9 often, not able to speak openly about the abuse that
10 occurred or seek help from those closest to me.

11 I have struggled to grow. I needed to learn the
12 skill of how to protect myself within relationships. I
13 care about people and want connection but am vulnerable
14 within close relationships. I had to understand the
15 cost of losing myself and not protecting my own
16 boundaries as a child. I had to face my failure to
17 protect myself within the context of the Reverend's
18 grooming, sexual abuse, manipulation and controlling
19 behaviours. I was confused by "love", when love can
20 mean accepting and giving to others in the context
21 where I am not respected or acknowledged or cared for
22 appropriately myself.

23 At times I still experience confusion, anger, pain
24 and mistrust, sometimes of myself and others, alongside
25 the desire for close relationships. I have some good
26 friends and a really loving family, however often I do
27 feel very alone in the world.

28 Q. So, would you like to talk now, Ms C, about the
29 attempts that you've made at redress for yourself and
30 others?

31 A. The attempts that I have made at redress have taken a
32 lot, well actually a huge amount of practical,
33 spiritual and emotional energy. The letters and
34 mediation occurred when I was a mother of pre-school
35 and school age children.

1 And I have been reassured that I could not have done
2 more to prevent other girls from experiencing abuse by
3 the Reverend. However, I continue at times to feel
4 distress about the likelihood that he continued in his
5 behaviour and I'm deeply sorry that I did not do more
6 to stop him abusing. It's a mixed-up thing. I feel
7 sorry I did not do more, but I also understand that
8 there wasn't anything more I could do.

9 At 61 years of age, I am grateful, really grateful
10 for the therapists who have stood with me and supported
11 me and helped me as I attempted to make my way through
12 this abusing maze in my past and in my present. At
13 times, it is like a jigsaw where very few of the pieces
14 would fit together and at other times it has felt like
15 a stinking pile of rotting debris, just horrible, just
16 painful.

17 I am hoping that one day it will be finished,
18 whatever that means here in this world on earth. And
19 my spirituality now is more a sense of hope that the
20 cells of my body will just become part of the physical,
21 natural world, where I most experience peace.

22 But I did make efforts towards accountability back
23 in 1992 as well. Shall I just keep reading?

24 Q. Yes, that's fine.

25 **CHAIR:** If you wish to but do feel, if you need to take
26 a break, do let us know, won't you?

27 A. I might just grab a glass of water.

28 **CHAIR:** Please do. Don't rush, take your time.

29 A. Yeah, thank you. On 8 July 1992, I wrote to the
30 Reverend who had sexually abused me to ask him why he
31 had done that. At the time – sorry. At the time, I
32 was a young mother with young children. I had
33 experienced depression and during therapy I realised
34 that the Reverend's behaviour towards myself and other
35 young women was sexual abuse of young adolescent girls.

1 I was experiencing and acknowledging levels of anger
2 towards him that were highly distressing to me.

3 Initially, as I described before, they came through
4 dreams where I was being violent towards him but then
5 later, as understanding of the abuse grew more
6 conscious, I experienced levels of anger that I found
7 even more distressing.

8 This level of anger did not sit well with me
9 spiritually or my view of myself. My goal in
10 contacting him initially was eventually to find a way
11 to forgive him. I was a Christian then and I wanted to
12 be free of any negative links to him. I was asking him
13 to explain and I wanted him really to understand what
14 he had done to me and the harm he had had caused. I
15 told him I was shocked at just how angry I was and in
16 the letter I named his behaviour as "abuse".

17 I wrote that I had thought of contact two years
18 earlier but had still felt protective towards his
19 marriage. But I had then come to the realisation that
20 his wife had known about the sexual contact. It was
21 kind of beyond my understanding that she could know but
22 I believe that she did know, and I couldn't make sense
23 of it. I just couldn't believe that she could be in
24 the same bed at the same time and not have known. She
25 didn't take an active part, however she was present.
26 And likewise, I would sometimes go to their beach house
27 with him and their children without her. Thinking
28 about that now, I would never accept that my husband
29 would go to a place where the only place was to sleep
30 beside an adolescent girl or at least in the same room
31 as an adolescent girl with the children. I know you
32 can minimise things and it was the 70s but I know, I
33 just knew that was not okay.

34 In the letter, I asked him specific questions that
35 were very important to me, such as: Why did he need

1 sexual contact with very young women or girls? Why did
2 his wife allow it?

3 A week later I received a letter from the Reverend.
4 His written response indicated no insight into his
5 behaviour. He accepted I felt "hurt" and had a right
6 to be "angry" but stressed how long ago this had been.
7 He then went on to detail his own "journey", his own
8 distress and then went into great detail about his
9 wife's illness.

10 Q. I'm going to pull up an exhibit now, which is the
11 letter that you received from him. So, we'll just have
12 to see if it, I think it's supposed to appear on your
13 screen as well, so you can tell me if it does, and
14 that's exhibit number 3, please. Are you seeing
15 anything?

16 A. Yes, yep.

17 Q. So, I just wondered if you could scroll through the
18 letter, just to show the length of it? And if you
19 could scroll back up to the top? I can't see that, but
20 I have a copy of it, so if you could pull out the very
21 first paragraph? And if it's okay with you, Ms C, I
22 will read the first paragraph?

23 **CHAIR:** I think we've got the second paragraph
24 highlighted. Did you want the very first one?

25 **MS MACDONALD:** Yes, thank you.

26 Q. "Thank you for writing to me so honestly. I appreciate
27 that as I felt your pain and anger. Let me try and
28 express my distress too, as I realise the hurt you
29 still feel over events of so many years ago now. You
30 have every right to feel that anger.

31 Before I try to answer the questions you have
32 raised, it may be helpful if I tell you a little of my
33 own journey since then, and the horrendous thing that
34 happened to us last year".

1 And then if you can scroll through until the last
2 page and pull out from, "Your questions" down, so
3 that's the third line down.

4 So, this is the last few paragraphs:

5 "Your questions:

6 What was going on from my perspective. Why? I wish
7 I knew why. 40 years plus of blameless relationships
8 then that?

9 I can give no excuses - only express deep horror and
10 sorrow.

11 There was stress which I felt keenly.

12 - the things going on.

13 - self-imposed stress throughout operating wrongly
14 as a Priest.

15 - (my wife's) vulnerability, her own personal area
16 where I didn't dare intrude at the time.

17 - I didn't feel I could share my stresses with her.
18 Not her fault, you understand.

19 What did I get out of the contacts? It sounds
20 cowardly and banal but basically it was comfort. I
21 can't put it better than that and in any case this is
22 what we had to work on in our marriage to get that
23 right."

24 And if you could scroll back to the top of page 1
25 and if you could pull out the paragraph that is
26 highlighted there? The first one that's highlighted.

27 "Please believe me when I tell you there is nothing
28 like that in my life now, nor has there been for more
29 than a decade".

30 So, Ms C, I just read out the beginning and end of
31 the letter, the four-page letter, and I just wondered
32 if you had any comments about any of that?

33 A. The four-page letter, spanning one paragraph at the end
34 answering my questions, it just seemed incredibly kind
35 of self-absorbed. And having written that "40 years of

1 blameless relationships" seemed just unbelievable
2 because I had witnessed him sexually molesting my
3 friend as well. Yeah, it was just a very - it was a
4 difficult letter to read, that's for sure, yep.

5 Q. And if you go to paragraph 53 of your statement?

6 A. Yep. One worrying thing was that in 1992 he wrote
7 "there is nothing like that in my life now nor has
8 there been for more than a decade". Given that he
9 groomed and abused me between 1970 and 1976, this
10 suggests he may have carried on abusing young girls for
11 years after I stopped personal contact with him. And,
12 like I said before, I had witnessed him abusing another
13 young woman at the time and I knew it wasn't only me.
14 Yeah.

15 Q. And if you go halfway down paragraph 54, you referred
16 earlier to communal sleeping on youth camps?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. If you just start at the sentence beginning, "Given"?

19 A. Yeah. Given the manner and context of his offending,
20 how brazen it was, even when lying next to his wife or
21 with another young person present, I did worry about
22 the likelihood of his offending. I knew that he had
23 abused two of my friends by that time, but I don't know
24 how many other people he's offended against and I still
25 don't.

26 In the letter he described becoming ill and very
27 distressed as he tried to come to terms with his
28 behaviour. He described his sexual abuse of me as
29 arising from a spiritual lack and from being stressed,
30 rather than a sexual attraction to children.

31 He said his wife had not known about the abuse but
32 had gradually realised all was not right and confronted
33 him with what he was about. They had stayed together
34 and he himself had decided when he was safe to return
35 to parish work. This suggests he had stopped doing

1 parish work and I would still like to know if he had
2 been removed from that work because the Church found
3 out about his behaviour. And that for me is still an
4 unanswered question.

5 He described the end of the abuse as me making a
6 "clean break" which he agreed was "a good idea" as if
7 we had been in an adult to adult relationship. And he
8 told me that he prayed for me regularly. And, to be
9 honest, I found, and at the time and I continue to
10 find, that kind of condescending and repugnant, as I
11 just don't want his prayers when he was unable to
12 confront or address his own behaviours in that letter.
13 He clearly appeared to be extremely self-absorbed and
14 in a state of denial and minimisation of my challenges
15 to his behaviour.

16 He said he believed God had forgiven him and that
17 what he had done had helped his Ministry. I just quote
18 this, "I think I'm more for giving. I've been allowed
19 to help people in pain - especially this kind of pain".
20 This suggests he may have been counselling people or
21 Ministering to people who had either been abused or
22 were abusing. Naturally, this comment, it was really
23 disturbing to me at the time and it really didn't
24 reduce my concern about his potential to continue to
25 harm others.

26 Despite the fact of his wife's physical illness in
27 1992, it really didn't actually have anything to do
28 with what he had done to me, he went into great lengths
29 about how ill he was and how he had to rethink how he
30 served the Church because of that. With that
31 communication and then also later communication with
32 the Church, really my impression was that they wanted
33 to shut me down, keep me quiet and make me go away
34 because his wife was sick but I was just thinking at
35 the time, that's not my fault that she's sick and why

1 is this a part of what they're telling me? You know,
2 is he facing the facts of his sexual abuse? And is
3 this taking responsibility for those behaviours? And
4 is there any attempts at restitution at all?

5 When eventually, at the end of the letter, he
6 started to address my questions, he was still implying
7 some fault with his wife somehow and a lack of sharing
8 in their marriage as well "stress" being behind the
9 abuse. He said he got comfort from our contact but did
10 not address the fact that I had been a child and his
11 behaviour had been illegal.

12 Q. You wrote again asking him who was supervising him, and
13 you say in your statement that he appeared to realise
14 you weren't going to let it go because you received a
15 letter from him again. That's exhibit number 4,
16 please.

17 And in that letter, top left paragraph, he gives the
18 name of a mentor of his.

19 If you can go to the bottom of the right-hand side
20 of the page, please?

21 It says, "The Bishop has directed me to see Ms Ruth
22 Arcus, consulting and clinical psychologist, for
23 assessment, counselling" and there's actually something
24 missing from the top of the page. Do you have that
25 with you, Ms C, because it says "also to advise him as
26 to"?

27 A. Yes, I do have it.

28 Q. It's just it's been cut off in our copy.

29 A. At the top of the second page?

30 Q. Yes, please.

31 A. It just says, "further professional supervision".

32 Q. Right, okay, thank you. So, then you received contact
33 from the psychologist. If you want to read from
34 paragraph 61?

1 A. Yep. On 10 September 1992 I was contacted by a
2 clinical psychologist Ruth Arcus who had been
3 instructed by Bishop Roger Herft to assess the
4 Reverend. She said she was writing to me and others
5 identified by the Reverend to ask if I would write to
6 her and describe the abuse by the Reverend on me and on
7 any other victims to assist her in preparing her report
8 and recommendations.

9 In November, she wrote to me again telling me she
10 had recommended in-depth counselling for the Reverend.
11 I received a summary of sessions at that time that the
12 Reverend had had with the psychologist between the 18th
13 of August and the 20th of September 1992. I do not
14 remember whether I received this at the time or later.

15 Q. Thank you. Now, you wrote again to Bishop Roger Herft,
16 you wrote to him a few months later. I'll just pull
17 that letter up, that's Exhibit 7, please. If you could
18 just, the highlighted paragraph, pull that out, please?
19 Do you want to read this, or would you like me to read
20 it? It's your words.

21 A. "I am writing to ask if this counselling has begun. If
22 it hasn't could you indicate to me when it is likely to
23 start".

24 Q. Thank you. And if you could just read from
25 paragraph 64, please?

26 A. I was surprised that no-one had followed up with me,
27 seeing as I had initiated the process. It also seemed
28 odd that they would keep paying the Reverend his
29 salary/stipend and refer him to a clinical psychologist
30 for what was criminal behaviour but not ask whether I
31 wanted any help with dealing with the aftermath of the
32 criminality. All of the efforts of the Church seemed
33 to be towards the Reverend's wellbeing.

34 Q. Just carry on.

1 A. Bishop Herft wrote to me in March 1993 saying he had
2 not known of my identity until I had written to him.
3 He said the Church had a grievance procedure for cases
4 of sexual harassment, although he did not send me a
5 copy of the policy or procedure.

6 I found it odd that the Reverend had told the Church
7 he had abused a number of adolescent girls, but the
8 Church apparently had not attempted to follow-up with
9 any of the victims, even to check with their wellbeing.
10 The psychologist who did the assessment got our names
11 and contact details from the Reverend because she wrote
12 to us, so the Church could have asked him for those
13 contacts too.

14 I knew he was first in Waikato and then in Auckland.
15 I had to contact the Bishops from both Dioceses, who
16 assured me back then that he was on restricted duties,
17 whatever that meant, and seemed to be asking me to
18 trust them. Since to me this simply repeated the
19 initial pattern of the Reverend's abuse, I did not find
20 that very comfortable, in fact it felt awful, like a
21 parallel process. I also thought if they have him on
22 restricted duties they must know what has been going
23 on, what he has been doing, so what are they doing to
24 investigate his behaviour?

25 I replied quickly to Bishop Herft.

26 Q. Carry on, do you want to read what you replied? It's
27 in your statement?

28 A. So, this is a part of what I wrote. "My understanding
29 of sexual abuse is that it thrives in an environment of
30 secrecy and silence. The secrecy protects the abuser
31 and keeps the victim silent. The Reverend has
32 committed a serious criminal offence against myself and
33 two other women that I know of. It is important that
34 he take responsibility for his actions. I would like
35 to see this matter dealt with within the Church

1 adequately in an open and respectful manner. To do
2 this I would like to make several suggestions:

3 1. That the recommendations made by Ruth Arcus be
4 adhered to.

5 2. That there be limitations placed on the
6 Reverend's Ministry that are appropriate to the
7 offence, at least until this whole issue is resolved.

8 3. That communication to me be direct and that you
9 keep me informed—as to what is being done and what
10 progress is being made.

11 4. It is important to me that you respect the fact
12 that I have been one of the victims of the Reverend's
13 abusive behaviour and that I am acting in a responsible
14 way in wanting to see this issue resolved and dealt
15 with appropriately.

16 5. That the ultimate aim be reconciliation and
17 healing for both the Reverend and all those whom he has
18 abused."

19 I also said that I would go through the criminal
20 justice system if the abuse was not dealt with
21 appropriately through the Church's own systems. I also
22 noted the phrase "sexual harassment" as used by Bishop
23 Herft was not the correct phrase to cover sexual abuse
24 of children.

25 And then again—you go.

26 Q. You'd already asked for verification about the
27 counselling and did you do that again?

28 A. Yep, in March 1993 I wrote again to the Bishop of
29 Auckland asking whether the Reverend had had commenced
30 counselling.

31 Q. And did you receive a response?

32 A. I did receive a response. I received confirmation that
33 the Church would put conditions on his Ministry.
34 However, no confirmation that he was complying or how
35 he was being externally monitored.

1 Q. You attempted a form of mediation, was that something
2 that was your suggestion or the Church's suggestion?

3 A. When I said previously in a letter they hadn't given me
4 the process or the procedure, Bishop Herft in April,
5 2nd of April 1993, sent me the grievance procedure
6 because I had asked for it. He accepted that these
7 were serious offences and suggested mediation.

8 And following that, a woman called Nerys Parry was
9 appointed by the Anglican Church as the designated
10 person to deal with my complaint. We eventually had a
11 face-to-face mediation which resulted in a written
12 document called a record of agreement. I thought—

13 Q. Can I just confirm with you, so that was a mediation
14 between you and the Reverend himself?

15 A. Yep.

16 Q. And if we can get Exhibit 12, please. Can you see that
17 okay?

18 A. I can see it but it's quite small, but I've got a copy
19 here of it.

20 Q. Okay. Can you pull out the first two paragraphs,
21 paragraphs (i) and (ii)?

22 "The Reverend accepts full responsibility for his
23 abusive behaviour towards Ms C and does not in any way
24 hold her responsible for the abuse.

25 (ii) The Reverend agrees that he and his wife need
26 to address the issues of sexual abuse by him towards
27 young girl in his parish, by seeking third-party
28 counselling assistance. Specifically, the focus for
29 counselling is for his wife to accept his sole
30 responsibility as the abuser and to help her to work
31 through any reservations or anger she may have about or
32 towards the victims of the abuse. This stance is seen
33 by both parties as an impediment to his acceptance and
34 working through of responsibility for the abuse".

1 If you can scroll down to number (v) and pull out
2 5(ii)? "Ms C agrees to relinquish her desire to see
3 the Reverend out of the Ministry providing he
4 co-operates in this self-monitoring and self-care
5 process".

6 The rest of that is already in the evidence, so I'm
7 not going to read out more of it.

8 Can I just ask you to tell the Commissioners how you
9 felt later about the mediation?

10 A. Well, I felt that Nerys Parry was respectful towards
11 me. However, in retrospect I don't believe that she
12 was – yeah, I had confusion about whether she was an
13 independent mediator, as she was appointed by the
14 Church. I wasn't given a choice in the decision and
15 when I reflect on that now I think I would have liked
16 the mediator to be totally independent.

17 Also, over time I realised that this mediation
18 process actually had very little power to ensure that
19 the Reverend was prevented from reoffending. At the
20 time of mediation, I really wanted to ensure that he
21 would never be in circumstances where he would have
22 access to young girls. And while they agreed to this
23 at some level, I don't believe they respected my
24 intentions or actions to the extent that they did not
25 continue to inform me. And I would say that the
26 Reverend in no way should be self-monitoring and that
27 the Anglican authorities were again, in a sense, asking
28 me to trust them and that the outcomes would be adhered
29 to without really any follow-up or accountability in
30 relation to me.

31 I know that initially the Reverend was removed from
32 even parish work but there was not any further
33 communication with me about the limits to his Ministry.
34 I knew he was attending counselling, but he shouldn't
35 have been allowed within that parish work again

1 actually. And I naively thought that was one of the
2 outcomes of the mediation. I think I was just so much
3 of the view that if you've got somebody who abuses
4 adolescent girls, why would you put them in a parish?

5 Q. Do you want to carry on from paragraph 75?

6 A. When considering my attempts at redress, I am aware
7 that I had to use a lot of energy and push very hard to
8 make the progress that I did. And despite my efforts,
9 I have no assurance that the Anglican Church took steps
10 into the future to ensure that he had no work
11 opportunities to reoffend. It really should not have
12 been my job to keep other children safe but that is
13 what I was trying to do. We came out with that written
14 agreement, but I have no assurance that they followed
15 it. Yeah. To me, it seemed and continues to seem, to
16 be honest, like the response of a misogynistic "old
17 boys' club" designed to protect the Reverend and it
18 really undermined my trust because what I experienced
19 was people who minimised, who avoided and wanted to
20 protect one of their own where there was clear evidence
21 of illegal molestation of young girls. I believe I am
22 a compassionate person and I did not want his wife
23 harmed in the midst of her ill-health. However, using
24 her as a protective shield was frustrating and
25 undermining of trust in the system or their approach to
26 such serious misconduct by a Parish Priest.

27 I put a great deal of thought and effort into
28 pursuing the matter but in the end, I did not feel
29 reassured. I felt as if I was fobbed off within a
30 system setup by the Anglican Church and that the Church
31 was harbouring the Reverend, even though they knew what
32 he had done. Yeah.

33 I really believe that it was likely he would re-
34 offend and that he had abused or would continue to
35 abuse other children and I wasn't prepared to accept

1 his word or his self-monitoring about it. And I wanted
2 some kind of guarantee that it would be stopped.

3 I did not at the time seek revenge on the Reverend,
4 but I did want to find a remedy against offences of
5 that nature happening again.

6 I would like to say though that before the mediation
7 occurred, Tom Brown, the Assistant Bishop of
8 Wellington, referred in a letter to the Reverend as the
9 "alleged offender". That was the first time anyone
10 from the Church had used language that reflected what
11 the Reverend was and it sounded like they actually
12 meant it. My sense was that everyone else was trying
13 to fob it off.

14 Tom Brown also said that he knew I was free to go to
15 the Police.

16 Q. And is that something that you did?

17 A. Yep, yeah. I realised that it may be necessary for me
18 to go to the Police in order to resolve this for myself
19 and possibly the wider issue. Initially the thought
20 did not occur to me, but the lack of the Anglican
21 Church's appropriate response alarmed me sufficiently
22 and I considered it. So, eventually I went to the
23 Police. Unfortunately, it was like hitting another
24 door. After a very superficial discussion at the
25 Police Station, I was basically told that it was my
26 word against his and they said that they would put my
27 name and his name in a database in case there were
28 other complaints against him, but I had to let it go.
29 It didn't satisfy my feeling that I had done all I
30 could.

31 I had put a lot of effort in at a time in my life
32 where my energy was not high, due to attending therapy
33 to process and resolve my own experiences of being
34 sexually abused by an Anglican Priest, while doing my

1 best to care for my children and maintain my own life
2 and marriage.

3 I feel quite horrified when I reflect on the lack of
4 responsibility or communication by the Anglican Church
5 leadership and the system that knew without doubt that
6 one of their workers was a sexual offender, however did
7 little to reassure me that he was being prevented from
8 reoffending.

9 Nor did they offer me any significant support or
10 assistance.

11 Q. So, you've described in detail your attempts at getting
12 the Church to do something. Because you were unhappy
13 with that, more recently you approached a restorative
14 justice service to try to maybe arrange a meeting, and
15 that was to be with the Church, not with the Reverend?

16 A. Yep.

17 Q. Do you want to tell the Commission about that from 85?

18 A. Yep. I initially met with-

19 Q. You can name them, even though it looks as if you
20 can't. It's up to you.

21 A. Okay. I initially met with Project Restore in March
22 2019. It didn't go well. Project Restore is a
23 specialist restorative justice service provider which
24 works with vulnerable victims of sexual or domestic
25 violence. They didn't communicate in a clear, timely
26 or responsive way. From the beginning, communication
27 and consideration were not really taken into a great
28 deal of account.

29 For example, it was not communicated to me that
30 multiple members of their team would be at the initial
31 meeting. I arrived expecting to meet with one member
32 of the team, only to learn that the assumption was that
33 I would meet with three members of their team,
34 including one male member and a new member of the team.
35 That was really uncomfortable for me at the time as my

1 assumption was that they would have given me this
2 information beforehand as part of the preparation and
3 asked me for permission in that regard.

4 Then, as the process progressed, a new name was
5 mentioned in an email, in relation to sharing my
6 information with her. She was somebody with
7 connections into the Anglican Church. There was no
8 clear explanation of who she was, what role she would
9 be playing and what she needed my information for.
10 When I raised these questions by email, no answers were
11 able to be provided, although there was an
12 acknowledgment that there was a need for someone to
13 explain what was happening. This felt concerning that
14 Project Restore were asking for sensitive information
15 to be shared with this person without being able to
16 explain what was happening. More information through
17 each step of the restorative justice process may have
18 allowed me to remain in the driver's seat, rather than
19 just to participate in a confusing process.

20 In March 2020, I stated that I had been experiencing
21 a lack of trust in the process. In response, Project
22 Restore, another male person from the Anglican Church,
23 without sharing again who he was, what role he would
24 actually be playing or what information had or would be
25 shared with him. This was another source of
26 trepidation for me and once again put me in the
27 passenger seat of a moving process.

28 Through email I repeatedly asked for more
29 information, clarification and consideration. For me,
30 I had tried to take a brave step by exploring this
31 process, given the experience I had at mediation in the
32 Church previously. It felt like there had been a lack
33 of consideration and that the onus was on me to point
34 out the considerations that need to be taken when
35 working with survivors.

1 For these reasons, I chose to press pause on the
2 restorative justice process.

3 But I would like to say that there has been a
4 response from Project Restore and I just want to thank
5 them and record that they have acknowledged and
6 apologised for the errors that occurred during my
7 experience with them, and I really appreciated being
8 able to read that today, it was really good to read it
9 today.

10 Q. So, would you confirm that, basically, their response
11 was they were quite grateful to you for having been
12 brave enough to tell them the problems that you'd had,
13 so that they could sort that?

14 A. It was. It was great to have a response that welcomed
15 that, yeah.

16 Q. Okay. If you just want to read your final couple of
17 paragraphs and also anything else that you want to say,
18 feel free to say it.

19 We've gone straight through without a break, I hope
20 that's okay with you.

21 A. It's okay.

22 Q. Because we're probably nearly at the end. So, if you
23 just finish what you want to say and then if any of the
24 Commissioners have any questions for you, they will be
25 able to ask you.

26 A. In terms of redress, what I had wanted to do was to do
27 all I could to prevent other young girls experiencing
28 sexual abuse by the Reverend. Additionally, as a
29 Christian, back then I understood and was attempting to
30 practise the principles of repentance, forgiveness,
31 restitution and reconciliation. I was hoping to do my
32 part within that Christian framework where everyone was
33 committed to the same principles. I was shocked by the
34 Reverend's past behaviour but as time went on I became

1 more shocked as I realised he was still ignoring these
2 basic principles of Christian faith.

3 And it wasn't just the Reverend that wasn't adhering
4 to these principles, I don't believe the Church was
5 either. One person is one person, but when you have a
6 system that allows abuse to occur, that is a bigger
7 problem, that is a bigger sickness. It appears that
8 the Anglican Church was protecting and supporting him
9 in this process which deeply hurt and disappointed me.
10 I wanted an assurance that this was not the case, that
11 the Church did not support and would not support any
12 member of the priesthood who abuses children. To me as
13 an adult, that was the bigger issue. We don't think
14 that individuals who do this but for them to be
15 protected within an institution, that's just awful.

16 I now realise that going into the mediation, I was
17 actually really naive. I was focused on wanting to
18 protect others from his offending but not really
19 conscious of redress for what I had experienced
20 personally. In hindsight, I have been able to reflect
21 more on what might have been a more humane and
22 restorative process for me personally. I would have
23 appreciated the Anglican authority, being proactive,
24 respectful, responsive approach to my attempts at
25 communication with them. I would have appreciated to
26 have benefitted from a clear and early acknowledgment
27 of the serious nature of the Reverend's sexual
28 offending, particularly within the context of his
29 Christian Ministry.

30 I believe that an independent specialist third party
31 should have been engaged to facilitate a redress
32 process and to monitor the safety of the Reverend's
33 Ministry and pastoral care.

34 I believe there is a need for the Anglican Church to
35 acknowledge the impacts of sexual abuse within a

1 Christian Ministry process. This includes the very
2 real psychological, emotional, physical, spiritual,
3 relational, financial and practical costs of engagement
4 by victims who are seeking redress.

5 And finally, I would like to say that in my 30s,
6 when I was a practising Christian, I believed the
7 Christian principles of repentance, forgiveness,
8 restitution and reconciliation were wonderful. I may
9 have considered that I would have been met by the
10 Church under these guiding principles. My experience
11 was that the Anglican authorities wanted as little to
12 do with me as possible and did almost nothing to
13 support me or to follow these principles.

14 I would recommend, and this is a big one because I
15 am a lay person and I'm actually not a Christian now,
16 but I would recommend that all Christian authorities
17 and leaders look really carefully at those principles
18 and consider not only how they relate to the
19 perpetrator of abuse. And particularly, how they
20 relate to a perpetrator of abuse by someone under their
21 jurisdiction.

22 I would also ask that they consider and practice how
23 best to implement these principles when relating to the
24 victim of the abuse. Thank you.

25 Q. Thank you. I'll just leave you in the hands of the
26 Commissioners, if they have any questions for you.
27 Thank you.

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MS C

QUESTIONED BY COMMISSIONERS

CHAIR: Thank you, Ms C. I'm just going to ask the Commissioners if they have any questions arising from what you've told us today.

COMMISSIONER STEENSON: Yes, kia ora. I just have one. It's around Project - a couple actually, it's around Project Restore. Was that part of the Church? What connection was it to the Church?

A. It's an independent organisation that's setup and they were going to act as a go-between between myself and the Anglican Church.

COMMISSIONER STEENSON: Okay. So, how did you come across that, to sort of know to engage with it? Was it something the Church suggested or -

A. No. I'd been getting support, therapy and support, really good support and therapy, through Wellington Health which is a service that provides a range of supports and services for people who have experienced sexual abuse. And I think actually I heard of that organisation through Wellington Health.

COMMISSIONER STEENSON: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE: Good afternoon, Ms C, thank you for your evidence this afternoon. Just a couple of points of clarification, if I may.

The mediation conference that was held, were you able to take a support person with you?

A. I didn't. I think the Bishop of Wellington was there and also my husband, who's here at the moment, he remembered being in for part of that time but not all of it. And I think, likewise, the Bishop wasn't there

1 for the whole of the meeting either. At one point, it
2 was myself and the Reverend and the -

3 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Did you feel that process was
4 safe for you when the support people weren't in the
5 room?

6 A. I will be very honest with you, I have very little
7 memory of it, and I think it was a really difficult
8 process. It was the first time that I had seen the
9 Reverend and, yeah, I think it was quite difficult
10 actually.

11 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** We've come to learn also that
12 there's another process that Bishops can recommend,
13 which is, I think it's called Title D. Was that ever
14 mentioned? Are you familiar with that phrase?

15 A. No.

16 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Okay, thank you. And was
17 monetary compensation, did that ever come up in any of
18 your discussions at mediation or around redress?

19 A. No.

20 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Was it something -

21 A. I applied for ACC therapy but prior to that, I was
22 paying for my own and my husband and I had also paid
23 for our own therapy.

24 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** There was never any offer by
25 the Church at that point during that process about
26 maybe compensating you for those costs?

27 A. No.

28 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** One more, just around the
29 Police's response. So, you went to the Police after
30 you had your mediation; is that correct?

31 A. Yeah. I definitely think it was after.

32 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Okay. So, you would have had
33 the outcome from the mediation meeting available to you
34 when you went and saw the Police?

1 A. Yeah. Like, in retrospect, I also had the personal
2 letters. It just never occurred to me to show them.

3 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Okay.

4 A. Which now, I think that's really silly of me, but
5 neither was I - it was a very brief interaction.

6 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Okay. But neither did they ask
7 and take it further, right?

8 A. No.

9 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Because you had the admission
10 from the Reverend and so, all of the documentation was
11 there had they actually asked you the right questions
12 in that context?

13 A. Yeah, yeah.

14 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Is that something that you'd
15 consider taking up again now?

16 A. Um, some of this is not okay, it can be taken off, so I
17 can answer directly. I know that the Reverend is still
18 alive, but I also know he's at the end of his life and
19 that there are children and I don't think I would take
20 a personal criminal, yeah. For me, that wouldn't seem
21 an okay thing to do at the end of somebody's life,
22 where they have children, yeah.

23 **COMMISSIONER ALOFIVAE:** Thank you. That was all I
24 wanted clarified. Thank you very much.

25 A. Thank you.

26 **CHAIR:** And just one area from me, Ms C. You said
27 that, and this struck me, you said that you put a lot
28 of effort at a time in your life when your energy was
29 not high due to attending therapy to process your own
30 experience and at the same time you were trying to, you
31 were dealing with your own personal matters but you
32 were also trying to drive a process. That's what it
33 seemed to me.

34 A. Yep.

1 **CHAIR:** If it had not been for your efforts, nothing
2 would have been done; is that correct?

3 A. Absolutely. Well, unless somebody else that was doing
4 it at the same time but I had no knowledge of that, but
5 it certainly would not have been, no.

6 **CHAIR:** So, this is a process, you're somebody
7 suffering from the effects of the sexual abuse, trying
8 to restore yourself, also driving a process. If you
9 had a choice, how would you like to have seen the
10 Church react to your initial revelation to them of what
11 had gone on?

12 A. Oh boy, I think it's like I would have like them to
13 have been proactive, respectful, supportive,
14 acknowledging how serious this was, yeah. That would
15 have been a whole different experience. And the
16 Reverend was moved during this process to a couple of
17 different places, so at one point I was dealing with
18 one Bishop and then learnt why he hadn't responded,
19 which was because he was in another parish or another
20 Diocese. In all honesty, I wonder if the Church knew.
21 I wonder if he had been moved because somebody had
22 signalled that, you know, I don't know that, yeah.

23 **CHAIR:** Okay. We've heard the phrase "geographical
24 cure" and it may be, we don't know, but the fact is
25 were you told that he had been moved? That if you
26 wanted to pursue the matter, you had to take it up with
27 another Diocese?

28 A. Yes, yep.

29 **CHAIR:** You were?

30 A. The letter went, well, one man, one of the people, the
31 authorities that responded, just said he's no longer,
32 he's gone to another Diocese, you'll have to deal with
33 them there.

34 **CHAIR:** But the point being, you had to pick it up and
35 had to go and chase the issue to another Diocese?

1 Nobody from the other Diocese contacted you and said,
2 "We will deal with it from now on". I think that's the
3 point I'm trying to make.

4 A. Yep.

5 **CHAIR:** That you had to drive the whole process, at a
6 time when you were at a fairly low ebb yourself?

7 A. Yep.

8 **CHAIR:** Well, thank you. Thank you for explaining
9 that. I'm just going to leave you now with Dr Erueti
10 who will ask any questions and then thank you.

11 **COMMISSIONER ERUETI:** I just want to thank you, Ms C.
12 Thank you so much and we've heard this a bit over the
13 last few days, about survivors having to themselves be
14 proactive and find the remedy through many different,
15 knocking on many different doors with mixed responses.
16 So, I want to thank you for your evidence today. We
17 are learning, still learning lots, there's much to be
18 learnt by the Inquiry, so we are paying close attention
19 to all the evidence and listening, and that's the way,
20 hearing evidence directly from survivors is the best
21 way that we can learn about how to make recommendations
22 for real substantive change. So, it's so essential to
23 hear directly from survivors from their mouths about
24 their personal experience, so we have learned many
25 things today about grooming and the redress schemes,
26 the lack of response by the Police and so on. So, I
27 want to thank you very much for your time today on
28 behalf of the Inquiry, kia ora.

29 **CHAIR:** Take care of yourself now, you'll probably feel
30 quite exhausted, so I hope you have some good support
31 behind you there?

32 A. I do, thank you. I want to say thank you very much for
33 the opportunity to be heard, thank you.

34 **CHAIR:** You are most welcome. If you'd like, we are
35 about to close with our usual waiata and some wise

1 words, if you'd like to stay and be part of that,
2 you're most welcome.

3 A. I would, thank you.

4

5 (Closing waiata and mihi)

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Hearing adjourned at 4.52 p.m.