

Witness Name: Hakeagapuletama Halo
Statement No.: WITN0363001
Dated: 25/03/2020

ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO ABUSE IN CARE

WITNESS STATEMENT OF HAKEAGAPULETAMA HALO

I, HAKE HALO say:

INTRODUCTION

1. My full name is Hakeagapuletama Halo. I was born on **GRO-C** 1962. I am 58 years old.
2. I have previously provided a signed statement for a civil class action about Lake Alice. I attach that 2001 statement made to Grant Cameron to this witness statement to form part of my evidence for the Royal Commission (Hakeaga Puletama Halo Statement for Grant Cameron, 31 January 2001, [GCA0000153]).
3. A part of my evidence today, I would like to show the Commissioners my journal. This is a journal I have kept since the 1990s. By holding this journal in your hands, I hope you will get a sense of the effect Lake Alice has had on me. I still use this journal and will continue to do so. It is a living document. It is evidence of the impact the Lake Alice child and adolescent unit has had on my life.
4. Before I give my evidence today, I want to start with this verse: Philippians 4:13 *"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me"*.

5. After getting out of Lake Alice a family member asked me to come to Church with them to seek some help for my epilepsy I was experiencing badly after receiving ECT at Lake Alice. I started going to the Church of God. My faith and my Church helped me with my recovery and still helps me today.

EARLY LIFE

6. I was born in Niue. I was raised by my grandparents a few weeks after I was born, which is normal in my Niuean culture. In Niuean culture, a person's first born is offered to their parents as recognition and appreciation for their upbringing. That is the traditional Island way of adoption. My grandparents became my mother, my father and my guardians. Throughout this statement I call my grandparents my mum and my dad, and I call my parents, my birth parents. My dad's name was Halo Maifala, and my mum's name was Mamata Pue Maifala.
7. I had epilepsy as a young a baby. I was in and out of the hospital, I was on pills for it, but they were not helping. I grew out of my epilepsy as a young child and did not experience seizures again until after I got out of Lake Alice.
8. My parents and I came to New Zealand when I was six years old. We came on the Tofua ship to Samoa and then a plane to New Zealand. I did not speak a word of English on arrival. My dad knew more English than my mum.
9. We first lived in Ponsonby with some family who were already here. My birth parents and my other siblings stayed in Niue until a few years later.
10. We went to the Pacific Island Presbyterian Church in Edinburgh Street. Niuean was spoken at Church. The Minister was quite strict in his sermons. He always told us to make sure we obeyed the Bible, worked hard for the church, gave money to the church and were good to our parents.

EVENTS LEADING UP TO ADMISSION INTO CARE

11. I went to Richmond Road School in Ponsonby in 1968. As I did not know English, I did not understand anything that the teacher was teaching. I did not do my homework because I did not understand my teacher and I did not speak in class. I think because I did not speak in class, they thought I was

handicapped. I felt totally lost. It was pretty hard to find friends, so I just kept to myself.

12. We then shifted to a house in Grey Lynn, so I moved to Grey Lynn Primary. I started getting bad reports at Grey Lynn Primary for misbehaviour. I had a few words of English and my cousin was in the same school, who helped me a bit.
13. I was not talking as I did not know the language, so I was transferred to Beresford Primary in 1970 and put in a special class. They said I was handicapped and that is where one of the big problems started from.
14. There was a problem when I was practising a song and I was making a nuisance of myself and making funny noises. We had a relief teacher that day as the teacher that knows me was away. The relief teacher dragged me out of the classroom, put me in a dark area and locked me out of the classroom. I was scared about being locked in this dark room. I was upset and angry. I tried to push on the door to push it open and let myself back in. My hand accidentally went through the glass door. I cut my hand severely. I was taken to Auckland Hospital by ambulance. The report said I violently punched the window but the scars on the palm of my hand prove I did not punch the glass. I pushed it to try and get out of there.
15. After my treatment at Auckland Hospital, I came home and stayed there. I did not go back to Beresford. After this incident I was perceived as being violent.
16. Then a notice came that I was to go to a St Johns Psychiatric Hospital in Papatoetoe, Auckland. I was admitted on 16 June 1971. I do not know why they put me there. My parents visited on a bus. They were not happy about me being in there because they did not believe there was anything mentally wrong with me. With the help of Reverend Lagaua Talagi they got me out. I was discharged from St Johns on 25 February 1972.
17. My parents and Reverend Lagaua Talagi agreed to send me to Niue. They decided it was better that I was up in the Islands rather than at the St Johns Psychiatric Hospital. My mum and I stayed in Niue for three or fourth months. We came back to New Zealand for Christmas. I then began at Newton Central Primary.
18. My dad passed away on 13 March 1973. I was 10 years old at the time. I was very close to my dad. I started getting angry and upset. I told my teacher I cannot do school for a while because my dad has passed away.

19. I started playing up, getting into trouble with friends and shoplifting. My mum was not happy with my behaviour. My older sister GRO-B was living with my mum and I too. I got caught shoplifting about three times and was sent to Youth Court.
20. I started at Kowhai Intermediate in March 1974. I was placed in a special unit for children learning English as a second language. This class was good, and I was making some friends. I misbehaved at school, so they took me out of that class and put me into a handicapped class. I couldn't understand why they put me with the kids who had learning disabilities. Just because of my bad behaviour they said I was handicapped.
21. While I was in the handicapped class I also got into trouble. I was bored and restless. In my other class I had learnt how to play dodge ball with the other boys. So, one day I asked the kids in the handicapped class who wants to play dodge ball. I got everyone to go stand against the wall and threw balls at them that they were meant to dodge but they did not know how to play the game. I just wanted to play the game, but I got in real trouble. I was totally out of place in that class. I did an IQ test, and they said I was above average. I was then returned to the normal class.
22. I then went to Avondale Intermediate. By then I was getting in trouble at school all the time and my mum could not handle it. My birth parents had moved to New Zealand by now and my mum and a social worker took me over to my birth parents' house to live. I did not want to go. My birth parents were pretty strict. I was being a nuisance in the classroom and was expelled from Avondale Intermediate. That was the end of school for me. I was 12.
23. Something happened between me and either my birth mum or my birth dad, and I got a hiding and took off to a friend's place. I told my friend that I wanted to go back to my mum. My mum was more gentle and not as strict.
24. As I had continued playing up and shop lifting, I had to go to Youth Court. The Judge said I had to go to Owairaka Boys' Home. The Department of Social Welfare took me there.

(See Grant Cameron Statement paragraphs 12 – 22 [GCA0000153])

OWAIRAKA BOYS' HOME

25. I was admitted to Owairaka Boys' Home on 3 October 1975. I didn't like it.
26. I was put in a secure room for four days. I had to stay there for a long time because I was so upset. They were worried I would run away. I was lonely. In the secure room there was a bed, a toilet, and sometimes another kid was put in the same cell. When that happened, we had to share the toilet and we had to eat in there too. I did not like that room.
27. Then they interviewed me and asked me if they let me out to the top house, would I run away? I said no I will not run away, so they let me out.
28. The kids at Owairaka were all right. There was quite a mix of different nationalities. I made some friends.
29. The staff were strict and there was a daily routine. We would wake up early and get ready, then we had to go outside for a run. We would then go to school. But the boys that had to do the cleaning and cooking did not go to school. I was one of those kids. I had to do the jobs. I had no choice. Then my time was up. Mum visited me while there. She had to bring my sister's baby, but she did briefly visit me. There was violence at Owairaka, but otherwise it was ok.
30. Dr Becroft was a medical officer who wanted to put me into Carrington Hospital, but my admission was declined because I was too violent. I am not sure that this was true, or whether it was because there was no space. The hospital authorities and Dr Becroft were under a mistaken impression that I was already a State Ward, but I was not a State Ward at that time. It was then agreed that I would be taken to Lake Alice. My mum and my birth parents were told that they were taking me to Lake Alice to go to a school there. They were not told that it was a mental hospital. They never knew the true story. My mum did not speak good English at all and there were no Niuean interpreters. She signed papers because they told her they were taking me to a school.
31. My Social Welfare case worker, Mr Harold Skuse, took me to Lake Alice. We were supposed to meet with my mum and birth parents at Owairaka and then we would all go to the airport together. However, my mum and birth parents were late. The Social Worker did not wait, and he took me straight to the airport. My mum and birth parents then had to get a taxi out to Auckland airport because they did not have their own transport. By the time they had got to the airport I

had already boarded the plane. I could see them all standing on the observation deck at the airport waving. I could see them through the window in the aeroplane. I remember it clearly. My family never got to farewell me.

32. I was a 13-year-old boy, wondering where am I going now? They said that I was going to go to a school. That was all that I knew about it.

LAKE ALICE CHILD AND ADOLESCENT UNIT

33. I arrived at Lake Alice on 6 November 1975. I was surprised, scared and a bit quiet.

34. My first impression was *“bloody hell what is this place? What sort of place? This is not a school? This looks like a prison?”* When you arrived, you would get taken straight into Villa 7. I was not put into a secure room.

35. Villa 7 was a strange, big two storey building made of white cement. Downstairs there was a dining room with a kitchen on one side, and near that were the stairs leading to the dormitory. In the middle there was a sick bay and office. On the other side was the lounge with the TV.

36. The first week was just like at the Owairaka boys' home. Although it was a strange place, at least it was not locked. I had no meetings with a doctor or a psychiatrist or a psychologist.

37. Medicine was given to me right from the beginning, from the nurses. This was never explained to me. They didn't tell me what the medicine was for. The tablets they gave the children made them sick. From my medical notes I now know the regular medicine they gave me was, Largactil, Merlleril, Modecate, Anatencol, Artanel. These medications were given to me through injections or via tablets or syrups.

38. The daily routine at the unit was to have a shower, have breakfast, clean up then go to the school. There were three teachers including Anna Natusch who looked after us. I recall Anna Natusch telling us kids to hurry up and to do something good for ourselves. She was telling us this place, the child and adolescent unit, was not the right place for us. She would say there is a whole world outside for you. After school we would go back to the villa for free time before dinner. After dinner we would sit and watch TV and then go to bed. There was a set timetable for bed.

(See Grant Cameron Statement paragraphs 23 – 28 [GCA0000153])

ELECTRIC SHOCKS, AVERSION THERAPY AND ECT

39. The first time I remember meeting Dr Selwyn Leeks was when he gave me electric shocks.
40. Dr Leeks was hardly ever at the unit. He would check the reports from the other staff to see who had been misbehaving and then work out who would be getting ECT. I do not ever recall having a meeting with Dr Leeks, where he spoke with me or talked to me about how I was feeling, what I was thinking, or anything like that.
41. My first memory of Dr Leeks was the shocks. The first time I had ECT they called my name out. I went freely and walked up the stairs of Villa 7 because I did not understand, I thought it was something to help us patients. But I had a funny feeling something was not right. Dr Leeks and three other staff members were there. They did not ask me any questions or explain anything to me. They just put me on the bed. The bed had sheets and a pillow, and there was a small machine on a trolley. It had electric earphones attached to it. The earphones were the electrodes, and they had white pads or cloth, on the end of them. I think the electrodes were wet and they were put on the sides of my head. They put a mouthguard in my mouth and electrodes on my head. I looked up at their faces, they were pretty mean looking and that made me feel something bad is going to happen. I thought I had better ask, and I did ask Dr Leeks if this was going to hurt and he said *"yes, it is."* I cried and said *"ok, I don't want it."* He said, *"I am sorry, but it has to be done whether you like it or not."* No one explained to me what was about to happen. I just cried and said, *"I don't want it please."*
42. I received ECT within one week of arriving at Lake Alice. The first time I received ECT I would describe it as treatment because I did not feel pain. This is because when they turned on the machine, I was knocked unconscious immediately. I was not given any muscle relaxant or anaesthetic, the staff held me down, but I was knocked out unconscious immediately. I had never given any consent for

- this treatment. I had never signed a form, and nobody explained to me what it was and why I was being given it.
43. Not long after this experience of ECT as treatment, I then got electrodes on my head for punishment. From then on, I only ever got it as punishment. This time it hurt. I was conscious.
44. As soon as the machine was turned on the pain hit me. It felt like I was being whacked with a sledgehammer at full speed. My memory of this is that Dr Leeks turns it on, and it hurts, and you are sitting up, my body was forced into a sitting-up position because of the pain, then he turns it off and you fall back onto the bed. Then he turns the dial up again, and my body would sit up again, and then fall back down again. I remember feeling my body bounce on the table which was very painful, and I was crying. It was like two huge knives being driven into my head and I was very afraid.
45. These electric shocks would carry on, up and down, and then at some stage you are then out to it. If you are not knocked out, then he would carry on with more shocks. He would carry on for at least 4-5 times, or until you were knocked out. Then you wake up.
46. I cannot remember what I was being punished for. I begged Dr Leeks to stop, but he would say *"I'm sorry, but it has to be done."*
47. I used to ask, *"am I getting it for punishment, or am I getting it for treatment,"* because I knew that if I was getting it for treatment, I would be safe. If it was treatment, I would be knocked out straight away. But if I got the ECT electrodes for punishment it would hurt. I would remain conscious and feel all the pain.
48. I never got ECT for treatment again. I would always be conscious and feel the sledgehammer like pain of the shocks repeatedly forcing my body up, and then falling down again on the bed. I would be crying my eyes out and begging them, telling them I do not want it, but still Dr Leeks would give it to me. He did not seem to care. He was a man full of hatred.
49. The aftereffects of these shocks were headaches, loss of memory, bad anger and fear.
50. Cleaners were sometimes in the same room when this was happening, just doing their jobs and they were upset about it.
51. There were no other kids up in the room when I was in there. No other kid wants to go up there. We are all sitting in the lounge and we know who is getting it as

we can hear their screaming. We would cry to ourselves because we know what is going on and what kind of pain that person is in. We are also afraid of who will be next.

52. My medical records show that I received what they call ECT unmodified on all occasions; twice in 1975 and five times in 1976. I believe I got ECT more often than my records show. I am sure that I got ECT more than this. I think I would have got ECT about 10 times.
53. There was a grade system at the villa. You got a grade every day. You could get a D for misbehaving in the villa. Anna Natusch was going to give us D's at the school, but she did not want to. She knew what would happen if we got D's. There was a board on the wall inside the villa. Dr Leeks would look at this board to see how many D 's you got during the week. Four D's in a week meant ECT. If you got lots of A's you would get lollies. I got lollies, sometimes. For good behaviour. The board was visible to us in the villa, so we knew if we were getting close to having four D's for the week.
54. After ECT, or if we misbehaved, we would be locked in the two rooms upstairs near the dorm. Normally after ECT you would sleep for a few hours and you would wake up in these cells. There was no toilet. They would bring food at mealtimes, but you would have to wait there until they decided to let you out. I think this was anything up to three or four hours, or more depending on what you did.
55. ECT was never explained to my parents. My parents did not consent to this treatment. No one explained ECT to my mum or my birth parents.

(See Grant Cameron Statement paragraphs 29 - 37 [GCA0000153])

Paraldehyde

56. I got paraldehyde injections downstairs in the sick bay. You would get it if you had an incident of bad behaviour. They call you and you go in. At first, I didn't know what was about to happen. You would have to pull your pants down and they would give the injection above your buttocks. The paraldehyde injection felt like having a burning steel bar up your backside. Afterwards you would be crying and walking as slow as a tortoise, so the other boys knew what had just

happened to you. There would be a smell on your breath straight away. It would take you half an hour before you could sit down because of the pain.

57. It was like getting a hiding. Instead of staff using their hands, they would use paraldehyde to protect themselves from allegations of assault. That is how clever they were. I was given it every week; I was given it one day just for laughing too much as it was too loud.
58. The amount of liquid you were injected with depended on what you were getting it for. Laughing, smoking, misbehaving, or fighting meant 2cc or 5cc on the backside. Running away meant you were given 10cc and then ECT on the legs.
59. According to my Lake Alice medical file, I received paraldehyde injections four times, but I received it more than what was noted. It was given by the nurses GRO-B
100 and GRO-B
150. No consent was ever given. We would be crying and begging for them not to give it to us.
60. I asked people in the medical department if they can find out what it is, and they told me they use it for epilepsy.

(See Grant Cameron Statement paragraphs 38 – 40 [GCA0000153])

Secure room

61. If I misbehaved, I was locked up in the secure room. If you had done something really serious you would be put in there. I know that GRO-B who got into trouble got sent to the Block. This was the Secure Block in the main part of Lake Alice hospital, not the adolescent area. GRO-B was just 15, and he got locked up in the Block with criminally insane adults.

Communication with family

62. I wrote letters to my mum. Our letters had to be written in English so the staff could read them, and I know if they read something bad about the hospital, they would just throw the letter away and not post it. It took me quite a while to think about how to tell my mum about what was happening and to be brave enough. I wrote normal letters to my mum but tried to write in code by drawing a picture of a happy face and then writing a few words in Niuean in a speech bubble,

"Mum, electric shock, pain", or "Mum, injection very sore". I felt that this was the only way I could let my mum know what was being done to me. I had to do this about six times before she got the message. I even wrote to my birth parents. My mum wrote back to me in Niuean and told me to tell them to stop. I did not because I knew they would not listen because I am just a kid and because the letter from my mum was in Niuean. If they find out my mum or parents know they will throw me up into the wall. Because my mum was not an English speaker, she did not know how to get help or intervene. She did not think she could do anything because of the language and cultural barrier. The language barrier was a big issue but she also felt powerless. She felt that because I was in the State's hands there was nothing she could do.

63. My only mistake was that I did not tell her to keep all these letters. Over the years I drew in my diary some of the figures I had drawn in the letters to my mum (drawings from Hake Halo's diary [PSY0000119]).
64. I went home for Christmas and on the way home from the airport I told Mr Skuse from the Department of Social Welfare about the ECT and the shocks.
65. When I was home, I felt alive again. I told Mum about Lake Alice, she was not happy about it.
66. On the 9th of January 1976, while I was at home for the holiday period I was asleep in my bedroom, and in the bedroom next to mine my sister was murdered. I was the first person in her room and I found my sister dead. She had been murdered by her boyfriend. She was holding her baby at the time that he murdered her. I am thankful he did not murder her baby. It might have been my scream that made him run away. I went into her room and I thought I was dreaming and that my sister and her baby were still alive. The knife was lying on her chest. She was 19, I was 14. My niece was a little baby. I felt all alone. I had no support and no one to speak to. That made me more upset and I got into more trouble.
67. A few weeks after this, on 28 January 1976 I appeared in the Youth Court and I was placed under guardianship. The social worker spoke to my Mum about what to do with me. There were no interpreters there to assist my Mum in this conversation. The social worker thought my Mum wanted social welfare to have full control and have me under their guardianship. However, my Mum was misunderstood by the social worker. She had asked him to please look after

me, while I was in care. The social worker thought she was saying please take Hake and make him a State Ward. If a Niuean interpreter had been present during this conversation, that may have changed a lot of things for me. I returned to Lake Alice on 2 February 1976.

68. I was angry when I was brought back to Lake Alice. No one talked to me about why I was going back there. Some of the same kids were still there. I was given more ECT. I was not coping at that time as I was more upset. If anybody upset me, I would get into an argument and it would get worse and worse and before you know it there is a smashed cup on the wall.
69. Even though the staff knew what had happened to my sister and what I had experienced, I had no support, no counselling, no therapy. The nurses were just doing their jobs, their routines. I know at that time I did need support. But there was nowhere I could find it. When I was back at Lake Alice after my sister had been murdered, I was angry and upset, and I got even more ECT and electric shocks than I had ever had before.
70. Not once did I have a conversation with Dr Leeks. He would just check the nurses list and then go. He didn't talk or consult with the other kids either.
71. I never ran away from Lake Alice because I knew that if I ran away, I would get ECT. All the other kids would run away. For me, I would rather sit on my butt and stay where I was. When the other boys would run away, they would bring them back and take them to secure block for quite a while, then put in Villa 7. They were given ECT and were lucky if they got it to their heads. Sometimes they got it on their legs – they would tell us themselves, *"I got it on my flipping legs."* I always got mine on my head.

Complaints

72. We complained to our teacher, Anna Natusch. She was the only person I believed in and trusted at Lake Alice. She gave us advice, encouragement, and counselling. She was pretty upset and not happy with me being in Lake Alice. She thought I was "bad" not "mad". She thought I did not need to be there in the psychiatric unit. I had not done anything big or really wrong, just the shoplifting. I told Anna Natusch about my sister. Her methods of helping me were much superior to the tactics of psychiatric drugs and ECT.

73. We did not complain to other staff as we did not know who we could complain to or if anyone came to the hospital to check these out or not.

(See Grant Cameron Statement paragraphs 42 – 48 [GCA0000153])

AFTERMATH

74. I was discharged from Lake Alice on 13 August 1976 when I was 14 years old. When I went home to my mum and birth parents, I just felt relief that I am out and away from those shock treatment things. My mum was very happy. I told her what was going on there. She was pretty upset about what I was saying. At the end of 1976, my Mum asked her lawyers to arrange for legal adoption of her granddaughter and of me. She did not mention to the lawyer that I was a State ward. The lawyer did not know that I was a State Ward until he interviewed my Mum with an interpreter present. The interpreter at that meeting explained to my Mum what a State Ward meant. My Mum had not understood, and no one have ever interpreted for her, that the State had the rights of guardianship over me.
75. I did not go back to school. I felt lost and confused and did not know what to do or where I was going to go. The experience of Lake Alice and the electric shocks also triggered my epilepsy to return.
76. One of my brothers rang me and got me into his Church that helps to support people with healing prayers. I have been going to that Church since 1978 and am now an elder at the Church.
77. My faith has really helped me move on from what happened to me and continues to help me. I pray often. I would like to refer to part of a prayer I wrote in my diary in January 2007: Heavenly father in Jesus name who is and will always be my healer and my saviour as there is no one else to be, I just come before you and thank you for the blessings you have granted unto me.
78. I recall in 1978, there was a Church trip to Niue, the Minister asked me about it, but I had no money, he said forget the money we will pay your fare. The Church helped my recovery. My great-grandfather was still alive, and I got to see him during that trip to Niue. He thought he would not see me again and was very thankful to the Church that they had brought me to set his eyes on me. I

- was very thankful to the Church for allowing this trip to Niue to happen and being able to meet with my great-grandfather again helped me in my recovery.
79. About a year after I was released from Lake Alice, Social Welfare took me to Carrington Hospital in Point Chevalier, Auckland. I was admitted to Ward 8. Social Welfare told my mum and birth parents that I was going to Carrington for treatment, because of my misbehaviour at Lake Alice.
80. When I came out of Lake Alice, I had a big problem with my temper. If people shout at me, that starts me off, cups and plates go flying. My epilepsy also got worse.
81. Carrington was like Lake Alice although there was no ECT, no school, no activities, I just wandered around. I cannot recall other kids being around.
82. A nurse injected me with paraldehyde, the same as at Lake Alice. I do not know why. I took off back home. The staff came looking for me and found me at home. They tried to take me back to Carrington, but I said I was not going and told them about being injected with paraldehyde. They accused me of lying. However, after an inquiry was conducted, they found out that I was telling the truth.

(See Grant Cameron Statement paragraphs 61 – 82 [GCA0000153])

PSYCHIATRIC AND EMOTIONAL CONSEQUENCES

83. Because of my experience at Lake Alice and the ECT, my epilepsy came back, I suffer from anger, fear, forgetfulness, hearing voices, stress, confusion and much more.
84. I have felt the effects ever since leaving and I am still feeling the effects. I think I would have had a normal life if I had not been to Lake Alice. I just did the ordinary sort of kids' bad things, which were minor misbehaviour, and I had no epilepsy immediately before I went to Lake Alice.
85. I have had nightmares ever since leaving Lake Alice. I have nightmares about ECT and the tortures of Lake Alice. I cannot sleep properly or peacefully through the night. I do not feel safe to sleep by myself in my own bed. I would always prefer to have someone sleep with me in the room or bed. It might be

because of the lying on my back part and facing up in the air, which makes me think about getting ready to get ECT. Once the fear comes, I cannot sleep.

86. My personal relationships have been difficult. I still argue and have a temper and anger. I am lucky my family understands. My kids know my life history. My experiences at Lake Alice are a big story back in the Islands.
87. It has affected my ability to get a job. Had I not gone to Lake Alice, I would have had a good job, because I would have been able to get an education. There were some jobs I did have that were impacted by my experiences at Lake Alice. I had a job packing plastic bottles, but when I had to handle the big bins there I was just really scared because of the static electricity. I have also struggled with memory loss and this has caused difficulties at work. People say that if it were not for the epilepsy caused from the ECT, I would have got a good job.
88. I am on an invalids benefit but Social Welfare are now trying to get me on the working benefit although I still have epileptic fits. This is unfair. I am suffering because of everything that happened to me at Lake Alice, but they do not believe me and want me to go to work. Even my doctor told them I cannot work, but still they want me to work.

(See Grant Cameron Statement paragraphs 83 – 88 [GCA0000153])

INQUIRIES AND REDRESS

89. When the Mitchell Inquiry happened in 1977, Mum said to me *“come and listen to me, the government has already known the story about you.”* She asked me what I’m going to do about it. She said they want to see me to talk to me - one Palagi and a Niuean want to talk to you. She said, *“you remember those letters, they found out that story of yours is the truth.”* I was in shock - how did these other people know about it?
90. The Palagi was Dr Oliver Sutherland from ACORD and the Niuean was Mr Kolo. I was just pleased to be able to speak to them. I was pleased that these adults believed me. I let them know that everything is true, and they needed to stop Dr Leeks and the staff doing this to the kids, because it was happening, and nobody knows about it. I hated that ECT was used for punishment. Why can’t

Dr Leeks put it on his own head and turn the plug on himself and know the feeling of 230 volts?

91. I cannot remember Judge Mitchell coming to my house to talk to me. I can only remember Oliver Sutherland in the 1970s and then later Grant Cameron.
92. I remember speaking about Lake Alice in 2005, as part of the Citizens Commission on Human Rights investigation requesting that ECT be stopped.
93. I found that the Grant Cameron process was useful. I got \$76,023.39 but then legal fees were taken off, so I only got \$40,000, I was angry about that but at least I got something, and I am thankful for that (Memorandum to Cabinet Policy Committee - Further payment in settlement of Lake Alice claims by Minister of Health, Hon Pete Hodgson, 13 June 2007 [MOH0000164]; Lake Alice determination list by Sir Rodney Gallen, 14 September 2001 NZP0009542).
94. Justice Gallen interviewed me, and he spoke of Dr Leeks. I said I do not want ECT to be used as punishment ever again. The pain is so bad that it sits you up from lying down. The staff would hold you back down onto the bed. I know that Dr Leeks has said in the past that I was like an *"uncontrollable animal"*. I would say Dr Leeks is the uncontrollable animal to have done this to me and hundreds of other children.
95. I am speaking up now as I am doing it for the others who cannot speak for themselves. I would like to see the staff punished for what they did and how they did it, with the ECT and the paraldehyde. I would like people to acknowledge what happened at Lake Alice, because I feel people do not believe me.
96. It would have meant a lot to me to have someone very high up in the Government genuinely apologise to me and seek my forgiveness. Even though Helen Clark apologised, it was to everybody. I should have got a personal apology that was addressed to me.
97. I would have liked someone to help guide me when I was released from Lake Alice for things like education, to upskill for work and general life skills. I would have liked to learn anything that would help me get work.
98. The Government needs to do more to help people from different cultures, especially where English is their second language. Schools should have teachers that understand different cultures and languages, especially when I

was at school because my problems started from me being unable to speak English.

99. The State should have explained to me and my parents what a State Ward was and what happens to a child who is a State Ward. If they could not understand English, they should be offered an interpreter. The State should tell us the truth about where our children are going and what is happening to them.

100. As for my culture, I am still fully into my Niuean culture. I taught all my kids to speak Niuean. We speak Niuean in our home. I attend all my Niuean family events. My experience in Lake Alice has not affected me being Niuean. I think it is really good that people are more accepting of our Pacific Island cultures now.

101. Looking to the future, if I was told a grandchild of mine had to go into an institution, I would say no way. Our children have to be with us, not in institutions.

(See Grant Cameron Statement paragraphs 49 – 60 [GCA0000153])

Statement of Truth

This statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and was made by me knowing that it may be used as evidence by the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care.

Signed

GRO-C

Dated: 25 March 2021

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