

Friday, 15 July 2022

1

2 (10.00 am)

3 LADY SMITH: Good morning and welcome to the last day of  
4 this section of our evidence in the foster care and  
5 boarding-out case study. We have a witness, I think,  
6 who is ready to give evidence; is that right, Ms Innes?

7 MS INNES: We do, my Lady. The first witness this morning  
8 is 'April'. 'April''s parents were foster carers for  
9 Dundee Corporation then Tayside Regional Council. In  
10 particular, an applicant using the pseudonym 'Anthea',  
11 who was in the care of Dundee Corporation and then  
12 Tayside, was boarded out with 'April''s parents in Fife  
13 on [REDACTED] 1975. 'Anthea' lived there until she was  
14 removed on [REDACTED] 1981. 'Anthea' gave evidence on  
15 Day 304, 6 July 2022. It's understood that Dundee City  
16 Council is the relevant successor.

17 'April' (affirmed)

18 LADY SMITH: 'April', a couple of practicalities first. You  
19 see there's a red folder on the table in front of you.  
20 That has your written statement in it, but we'll also  
21 bring it up on screen as we go to different parts of it  
22 during your evidence. Feel free to use either or  
23 neither, whatever's helpful to you.

24 Separately from that, though, can I just assure you  
25 that I do appreciate that it's not easy being brought

1           into a public area to give evidence of any sort. It  
2           would be even more difficult when you're being asked  
3           about matters to do with your own life, particularly  
4           your own life many years ago as a child. I know it can  
5           be upsetting, I know it can be stressful, and there are  
6           times that it's just not easy to remember what happened  
7           decades ago, and I hope you don't feel that we're being  
8           unreasonable in asking you to do what you can with your  
9           memory. I do get that everything that we're asking you  
10          to do here is far from straightforward and could feel  
11          quite challenging.

12                 So if you need a break at any time, whether just  
13          sitting and pausing or leaving the room for a while, you  
14          must let me know.

15    A.    Okay.

16    LADY SMITH:    Because we want to do what we can to make it  
17                    easier for you to give the best evidence to help us with  
18                    our overall work here in the Inquiry. Is that all  
19                    right?

20    A.    That's great, thank you.

21    LADY SMITH:    If you're ready, I'll hand over to Ms Innes and  
22                    she'll take it from there.

23    A.    Okay, thank you.

24                                 Questions from Ms Innes

25    MS INNES:    Good morning, 'April'. We understand that you

1           were born in 1961; is that right?

2    A.   That's right.

3    Q.   If we can look first of all at your statement, please,

4           we give is the WIT-1-000001015, and if we can go to the

5           final page, page 29, and paragraph 134, it says there:

6                    "I have no objection to my witness statement being

7           published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry.

8           I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are

9           true."

10                   And I think you signed this statement on 16 June

11           2022. Is that right?

12   A.   That's correct.

13   Q.   If we can go back to the beginning of your statement,

14           please, you tell us a bit about your family at

15           paragraph 4. You tell us there about your parents and

16           you say that you have two brothers and a sister; is that

17           right?

18   A.   Yes.

19   Q.   We know that you were born in 1961, your next brother

20           was born in 1962; is that right?

21   A.   That's correct, yeah.

22   Q.   And then your next brother was born in 1963?

23   A.   Uh-huh.

24   Q.   And then your younger sister was born in 1971?

25   A.   That's right.

1 Q. So there's a ten-year age gap between you and your  
2 younger sister.

3 A. Mm.

4 Q. If we move on over the page to page 2, at paragraph 6  
5 you talk about moving to a farm in Fife. I think you  
6 lived there in a farmhouse?

7 A. When we first moved to Fife, it was a cottage, it was  
8 a farm cottage.

9 Q. It was a farm cottage, okay.

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. At paragraph 6, you refer there to a two-storey  
12 farmhouse which was quite big?

13 A. That's right, that was the one at [REDACTED]

14 Q. So you moved from a farm cottage to [REDACTED] --

15 A. To a farmhouse, yeah.

16 Q. -- and to a farmhouse there, okay. And you say it was  
17 quite a big house?

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. And you tell us about the accommodation. And then  
20 upstairs I think there were the bedrooms where the  
21 children slept. Can you just tell us about the layout  
22 of that, please?

23 A. When you came up the stairs, then off to your right, you  
24 first -- off to the right at the far end there was a big  
25 bedroom that went sort of from one side of the house to

1 the other, so your front wall to your back wall. The  
2 bedroom was really big.

3 And then coming back from that you had a small  
4 bedroom on the right-hand side and then on the left-hand  
5 side of the stairs you had another bedroom that was the  
6 same size as the big one at the other end and it went  
7 from the front wall to the back wall of the house.

8 Yeah, they were big.

9 Q. So you had these two big bedrooms?

10 A. Two big bedrooms and one smaller one.

11 Q. Did you stay in the smaller one, I think you tell us?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. And your brothers were in one of the big rooms?

14 A. That's right, on the left from the stairs.

15 Q. Okay. And I think your parents slept down the stairs;  
16 is that right?

17 A. They did.

18 Q. We know that there came a time obviously that you left  
19 the house. Did your little sister move into your room  
20 when you left or can you --

21 A. No, I think she was still in the room with the foster  
22 children, with the foster girls.

23 Q. So she shared a room with the foster girls?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. Okay, thank you.

1           At paragraph 10 on page 3 you tell us about your  
2           parents becoming foster carers. Can you remember your  
3           parents saying that they intended to take some foster  
4           children?

5   A. I can remember that the foster children were coming.  
6           I mean, I can't remember how my parents told us. But we  
7           were told that there was two foster kids coming.

8   Q. Can you remember your parents telling you that they were  
9           going to apply to be foster parents or that they  
10          intended to foster?

11   A. I really don't remember that bit.

12   Q. Okay. So you were told that two children were coming --

13   A. Yeah.

14   Q. -- to live with you and did you know if that was going  
15          to be for a short period of time or a long period of  
16          time?

17   A. No, I didn't. I didn't know if it was going to be short  
18          or long.

19   Q. How did you feel at the beginning about these children  
20          coming to live with you?

21   A. I wasn't bothered. It was fine. I mean, it was a big  
22          house and it was just two more children.

23   Q. Can you remember anybody from the social work department  
24          speaking to you before the children arrived to see how  
25          you felt about it?

1 A. No. No, I don't remember either of the social workers  
2 having much to do with us as children, the ones that  
3 lived in the house.

4 Q. So when you say either of the social workers, there were  
5 obviously -- I assume there were two?

6 A. There was. There was a lady that would come more  
7 regularly and then there was -- I think it was her boss.

8 Q. Right.

9 A. Would come maybe -- I don't know, once every three  
10 months? He didn't come as often.

11 Q. Okay. Can you just bear with me for a moment, please.  
12 So if we move on over the page, please, to the  
13 arrangement when these two children first of all came to  
14 you, so at page 4, you say you didn't know how long they  
15 would be coming for and two children came to begin with  
16 and you think they were about five and seven or eight at  
17 the time, so it was a boy and a girl that came; is that  
18 right?

19 A. Yeah, a boy and girl.

20 Q. In terms of your memory of their ages you're pretty much  
21 correct about that. We know that the youngest children  
22 were born in 1967 and 1968.

23 A. Right.

24 Q. So we then go on in your statement and you tell us that  
25 two older children came. Were they the older sisters of

1 the two younger ones who'd already been living with you?

2 A. They were.

3 Q. You say, I think, in your statement at paragraph 18 that

4 you remember there was a little while between the first

5 two coming and --

6 A. There was, but I can't remember how long. I mean, it

7 was -- it was more than weeks. I would say it was quite

8 a few months. It could even have been a year. There

9 was quite a bit.

10 Q. I think your sense of time that it was more than weeks

11 is correct. We know from the records that the first two

12 children came in [REDACTED] 1974 and then the two older

13 sisters came in [REDACTED] so it was a couple of months

14 between them coming.

15 A. Right.

16 Q. How did you feel about two more children coming, can you

17 remember?

18 A. It didn't make any difference.

19 Q. You tell us what your sense of their ages were. They

20 were born in 1964 and 1966, so the oldest one I think

21 was about a year and a bit younger than your youngest

22 brother.

23 A. Right, okay.

24 Q. So in the house we then had you, born in 1961, your

25 brother born in 1962, your next brother born in 1963,



1           then the oldest foster child born in 1964, then the next  
2           girl born in 1966, another girl born in 1967, a boy born  
3           in 1968, and then your sister born in 1971. So that was  
4           the sort of age range of the children.

5   A.   Quite well spaced.

6   Q.   So there were eight of you in the house at that point --

7   A.   Yes.

8   Q.   -- with a ten-year age gap, as you've said, between you  
9           and your youngest sister.

10  A.   Mm.

11  Q.   You say in your statement that when the first two  
12           children came, paragraph 16, you say that they'd come  
13           from Dundee and they had no idea about country life.

14  A.   None. They had no idea. Absolutely none.

15  Q.   Can you tell us how that was evident?

16  A.   They thought that sheep would come to them like dogs.  
17           You know, you would make noises and they couldn't  
18           understand why the sheep would just scatter. Cows they  
19           were a bit wary of to start with but once they'd seen  
20           the ones that were in the byre they were fine, but they  
21           realised that the cows were enclosed in this bit and  
22           they could walk down the alleyway and not -- the cows  
23           couldn't get out.

24           Blackbirds they thought were like big butterflies.

25           They just had no -- no idea of what it was. No, none.

1 Q. Was it the same when the older two girls came? Did they  
2 have the same sort of lack of knowledge of the country?  
3 A. I didn't notice it so much in the two older ones. It  
4 was the two younger ones I seemed to notice they didn't  
5 know.  
6 Q. At paragraph 20 at the top of page 5, you tell us that  
7 you began spending time away from home when you were 16  
8 and you say there that you started working at a local  
9 hotel, I think?  
10 A. That's right, yes.  
11 Q. And sometimes you would stay over?  
12 A. Yeah.  
13 Q. But then your main base was still the --  
14 A. Was still at home.  
15 Q. Still at home, okay. And I think -- well, we know that  
16 you were 16 in [REDACTED] 1977.  
17 A. Mm-hmm.  
18 Q. So presumably you started working at the hotel at some  
19 point after that?  
20 A. Yeah, yeah, I did. I did work, you know, on a Saturday  
21 and Sunday -- no, just Saturdays before I was 16. It  
22 would just be things like washing the dishes or -- just  
23 a general sort of go-about, you know, a dogsbody.  
24 Q. So did you leave school when you were 16?  
25 A. Yes.

1 Q. So then did you start working there more?

2 A. More, yeah.

3 Q. So maybe around the summertime in 1977 was when you

4 started working there more?

5 A. More.

6 Q. Then you tell us that you went into the army when you

7 were 17 and a half.

8 A. That's right.

9 Q. And that's when you moved away?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Roughly that would have been in about [REDACTED] 1978?

12 A. [REDACTED]

13 Q. [REDACTED] you went, okay. So [REDACTED] 1978?

14 A. Mm-hmm.

15 Q. And after that you say that you visited a couple of

16 times a year?

17 A. That's right. At least. At least.

18 Q. So whenever you had leave?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. You would come home?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. Okay. How long would you stay when you had leave? Was

23 it for a weekend or was it for a week?

24 A. A week. It was normally a week or two weeks.

25 Q. You talk about remembering that the children were at

1           your wedding when you got married in 1980?

2    A.   That's right, yeah.

3    Q.   We know that they left your parents' home in March 1981,  
4           so not too long after your wedding in 1980.

5    A.   I know, yeah.

6    Q.   If we move down your statement, in the next  
7           section you're talking about placement preparation and  
8           you say that you had no idea how much notice your  
9           parents were given of the children coming --

10   A.   No, I don't.

11   Q.   -- I think you've just said you were just told --

12   A.   They that were coming.

13   Q.   -- these children were coming.

14   A.   We were given the rough idea that they were coming from  
15           Dundee and we were given, you know, that their father  
16           was either in prison or going to prison and the mother  
17           had ran away. You know, we were given a general gist of  
18           their background.

19   Q.   Yes, you say that at paragraph 23.

20   A.   Mm.

21   Q.   I wonder if you have any reflections on that  
22           information. Do you think that you ought to have been  
23           told that their father had gone to jail for stealing and  
24           their mother had ran away?

25   A.   I don't think it made any difference. What might have

1           made a difference was, you know, what was the -- that's  
2           an adult's point of view, was what was the father  
3           stealing? I mean, was he stealing food to feed these  
4           children or, you know, what was he stealing? But as  
5           a child that wouldn't have made a bit of difference at  
6           all.

7   Q.   So from your perspective when you were told that their  
8           parents had behaved in that way, did that have any  
9           impact on you or --

10  A.   I thought that was rotten for them. It was a shame.

11  Q.   At paragraph 24 you say:

12                 "There was nothing done to prepare me for the  
13                 adjustment of having foster children in the home."

14                 You just got on with it.

15  A.   Yeah.

16  Q.   Do you think that it would have been helpful to have  
17           some kind of preparation or support?

18  A.   I think the only thing that might have been helpful,  
19           that would also have to do with my age or the age of the  
20           children there, was to actually tell those children  
21           maybe some of the problems that these new kids have got  
22           and to make us aware of -- you know, because we had the  
23           little one, the youngest one, he had a real problem with  
24           stealing also, but when it was explained to us by, like,  
25           mum and dad why they thought he was doing it, then we

1           understood.  But it might have helped if you'd had  
2           social workers actually saying to you these children  
3           have come from ... and they may have a few problems.  
4           But we didn't know that they had problems, you know, us  
5           children didn't know they had problems.  We just assumed  
6           they were like us.

7    Q.  If we go over the page to paragraph 25, you say there --  
8           you've talked to us already about the bedrooms and  
9           I think that when the foster children came to live with  
10          you, you still had your own room.  Your brothers had to  
11          share with the boy.

12   A.  Yeah.

13   Q.  Can you remember that having any impact on them?  Were  
14          they happy about having to share with the boy?

15   A.  I don't think it bothered them, yeah.

16   Q.  You said that your sister then shared with the girls?

17   A.  Yes.

18   Q.  Did that have any impact on her or not?

19   A.  I don't think so.

20   Q.  If we move on to the next paragraph, paragraph 26, you  
21          talk about the arrangements about mealtimes.

22   A.  Yeah.

23   Q.  Your memory is that the kids would be in the kitchen  
24          having dinner and your parents would have theirs in the  
25          living room.

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. Was there a table in the kitchen that you --

3 A. There was a small table in the kitchen.

4 Q. I think you tell us later in your statement that you

5 think that there might have been two sittings of dinner

6 in the kitchen.

7 A. I couldn't remember where we had, you know, our dinner,

8 because I can remember being with the foster kids in the

9 kitchen, but when I think back on it, I don't remember

10 where I would have been standing? Because there wasn't

11 a lot of room in the kitchen. And there wasn't enough

12 room for all of us in the living room, so there had to

13 be two -- two bits.

14 Q. Yes, so you couldn't --

15 A. I can remember us -- the meals -- I can remember the

16 foster children being in the kitchen, but I can also

17 remember, like, seeing them eating, so I must have been

18 in there somewhere, but I honestly can't tell you

19 whereabouts because it wasn't big.

20 Q. So you're not sure as to whether you were sitting or

21 standing at the table with them?

22 A. It would be standing because there was no chairs.

23 Q. There were no chairs?

24 A. No chairs.

25 Q. So did you have your dinner at the kitchen table?

1 A. You see, I can't remember -- but I can remember seeing,  
2 you know, the foster children eating, I can remember  
3 watching them eating and so I must have been in there,  
4 but that doesn't mean to say I was in there every time.  
5 I don't remember.

6 Q. At paragraph 27 you refer to chores that had to be done  
7 in the house and you talk about different things that  
8 you had to do. You say there wasn't a written rota, but  
9 it would be your turn to do the dishes or take the  
10 sticks and coal in?

11 A. That's right.

12 Q. And you also talk about giving your mum a hand to dust  
13 and hoover?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. Can you remember doing that sort of thing in the  
16 farmhouse?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Can you remember doing that sort of thing when the  
19 foster children were living there?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Would you be doing it together --

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. -- with some of them?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. And I think you know that in her statement **FCV** said



1           that the foster children had to do chores but you and  
2           your siblings didn't have to do anything. Is that your  
3           memory of what happened or not?

4    A. No, no. The two boys, my two brothers, that would be  
5           sticks and coals and probably something in the garden  
6           because dad had quite a big vegetable garden, but my  
7           sister and myself, no, we had to do just the same.

8           And then you have to remember, I left in 1978, so  
9           that would only leave my sister and the foster children  
10          because my brothers, they also weren't that long behind  
11          me in going to various jobs. So that would have only  
12          left the five of them in the house. So it would appear  
13          that it was the foster children doing most of the work.

14          But, no, we used to all do it when I lived there.

15    Q. At paragraph 29 you talk about cutting sticks and you  
16          say that you don't remember **FCV** cutting her finger  
17          with a saw but it's possible that that happened after  
18          you left?

19    A. Well, it could be. It's just that as children most  
20          times my father, you know, he had been a forestry  
21          worker, he did most of the chopping of the wood. Our  
22          thing was just to go out and get the wood and bring it  
23          in. There would be like a stack of wood in the  
24          coalhouse and he was the one that normally did it with  
25          the chainsaw. So there's no way **FCV** going to be

1           allowed to use the chainsaw.

2   Q.   A chainsaw, okay.

3   A.   And for, like, kindling -- I mean, she might have cut

4           her finger with the axe. You know, we were allowed to

5           use the axe to cut kindling, but I don't think the saw.

6   Q.   I think she said in her evidence to the Inquiry when she

7           gave oral evidence:

8           "I used to saw the sticks and cut the kindling."

9   A.   Yeah, cut the kindling but I don't see -- maybe the

10          chainsaw wasn't working and they had to use a bow saw,

11          I don't know.

12   Q.   She also talked about bringing in the coal:

13          "My brother used to bring in the coal."

14          And you said your brothers used to do that when you

15          lived there?

16   A.   That's right, yeah.

17   Q.   And she talked about sweeping the stairs with a hand

18          brush?

19   A.   That's right, we used to sweep the stairs with a hand

20          brush.

21   Q.   If we go on over the page, please, to paragraph 32, you

22          say that you have a memory of one of the foster

23          children --

24   A.   That's right.

25   Q.   -- I think the youngest girl wetting the bed for

1 a period of time?

2 A. There was.

3 Q. What can you remember about that?

4 A. I just remember that every so often the youngest, yeah,  
5 one would wet the bed. I don't remember any of the  
6 other two doing it, though. The other two girls. But  
7 I remember [REDACTED] yeah.

8 LADY SMITH: How would you know she'd done that?

9 A. Normally when we'd get up in the morning, when we were  
10 given a shout to get up in the morning, sometimes it  
11 would be me that would be going up the stairs to get --  
12 to say it's time to get up, and you would smell, yeah,  
13 you know, that [REDACTED] had wet the bed and of course when  
14 she got out the bed you would see it.

15 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

16 MS INNES: And how was that dealt with?

17 A. I don't remember it being anything dramatic, just the  
18 fact that she'd wet the bed again and there was --  
19 I assume it would be my mum that dealt with it.

20 Q. You say in your statement here:  
21 "She was probably ticked off for it."  
22 A. Yeah, I would imagine she would be.

23 Q. Why do you think that?

24 A. Well, you'd have to go back a bit where my brother,  
25 yeah, he had a case of wetting the bed, the youngest

1 brother, yeah, for a little while and I remember him  
2 being ticked off for it so I just assume that [REDACTED]  
3 would be too.

4 Q. What did ticking off involve?

5 A. Just a telling off, you know, verbally.

6 Q. You say that you think it would have been your mum that  
7 would have done the ticking off?

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. Because your dad would have been out working?

10 A. He'd have been at work.

11 Q. Did he go away early to work in the morning?

12 A. Yeah. He was gone before we got up and during the sort  
13 of summer months he wouldn't come back till -- sometimes  
14 it would be 9. It depends on what needed doing on the  
15 farm.

16 Q. At paragraph 33 you talk about some memories that  
17 [REDACTED] had in her statement about wetting the bed and  
18 being called names. You say that you don't remember  
19 that?

20 A. I don't remember [REDACTED] wetting the bed.

21 Q. You say you don't remember her being called names?

22 A. No.

23 Q. You say:

24 "There might have been some teasing about it but  
25 I really don't remember that."

1 A. It would have been [REDACTED] they would have been teasing  
2 because I really don't remember FCV [REDACTED] wetting the bed.  
3 If she did, it could have been only very rarely, but  
4 [REDACTED] was quite -- it was a few times with [REDACTED].

5 Q. Why do you think that she might have been teased about  
6 it?

7 A. I don't know. Just children's things.

8 LADY SMITH: Can you think of what might have been said to  
9 her?

10 A. By my mum? Or by --

11 LADY SMITH: Anybody in the household.

12 A. I don't know. I think they would just tease her for the  
13 fact that she'd wet the bed again, you know, but I can't  
14 remember what sort of -- what they would have said to  
15 her to tease her.

16 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

17 MS INNES: You refer to your brother who used to wet the bed  
18 for a period of time, but you don't remember anyone  
19 teasing him about it?

20 A. Oh, I'm sure we teased him about it. We would have  
21 teased him about it.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. But it was only -- it wasn't malicious. You know, it  
24 was just children's sibling sort of things. It  
25 wasn't -- you know, we weren't constantly at him for it,

1       yeah.

2   Q.  If we move on from there, please, you tell us on page 8  
3       about mealtimes and you've already told us about your  
4       memories of where you might have been sitting.

5       If we go down to -- well, first of all paragraph 34.  
6       You talk about something that FCV says in her  
7       statement, which was that she used to hide bread down  
8       the back of the settee.

9   A.  I don't see how that would work because we had this  
10      little dog that was forever looking for food and the dog  
11      would have found it.

12  Q.  Okay.  At paragraph 36 you refer there to something that  
13      again FCV said in her statement and you say:

14             "The foster children didn't have different meals  
15             from the rest of the family."

16  A.  No.

17  Q.  So what's your memory of that, of how meals were made?

18  A.  It would be the normal things like tatties and mince,  
19      soup, sausages, chips, beans, fish fingers.  Quite a lot  
20      of veg, quite a lot of veg.

21  Q.  Is that from the vegetable garden that you said that  
22      your dad had?

23  A.  Yeah, dad had.

24  Q.  And who did the cooking?

25  A.  When I was there it was, like, predominantly mum, she

1           would do the cooking. But we'd all give a hand, like  
2           peel the potatoes or chop the onions, the carrots, you  
3           know. It wasn't just down to -- it wasn't just down to  
4           mum. She would be given a hand by the rest of us.

5   Q. Did the foster children also help out with things like  
6           peeling vegetables and such like?

7   A. Yeah, yeah.

8   Q. At the end of this paragraph, so paragraph 36, you say  
9           in the last couple of sentences:

10           "We were hungry but there was always bread and jam.  
11           There were jars and jars of jam."

12   A. There was always bread and jam, yeah.

13   Q. Was that the sort of go-to snack if you were hungry?

14   A. Yeah, bread and jam.

15   Q. When you say "we were hungry"?

16   A. But as children I always remember being hungry, yeah, as  
17           children. I mean, I don't know if my brothers and  
18           sisters was, but I can remember at a certain period that  
19           I would be hungry and always looking for something to  
20           eat, yeah.

21   Q. And if you were looking for something to eat, what would  
22           you be given?

23   A. Bread and jam.

24   Q. You say at paragraph 37:

25           "If you didn't like what there was for dinner, then

1 I think it would be back to bread and jam."

2 A. It would be back to bread and jam, yeah. But, I mean,  
3 most times it wouldn't be the whole meal that you didn't  
4 like. In the case of my little sister, she didn't like,  
5 say, carrots, so she'd be given a meal but she'd pick  
6 the carrots out. Or if, say, they didn't like fish,  
7 then they'd still eat the veg and the potatoes and just  
8 leave the fish. It wasn't a case of because you said  
9 you didn't like it that the whole bit was taken away.  
10 You could leave the bit you didn't like to one side.

11 Q. At paragraph 38 on page 9 you say:  
12 "There weren't many biscuits. All the goodies were  
13 locked away in the pantry."  
14 A. That's right.

15 Q. So were they actually locked in the pantry?  
16 A. The pantry door was locked.

17 Q. And who had the key for that?  
18 A. Mum and dad.

19 Q. And if you wanted anything out of the pantry, what would  
20 you do?  
21 A. Ask.

22 Q. And would you be given the key to unlock the pantry  
23 door?  
24 A. No.

25 Q. Or would they unlock it?



1 A. They would unlock it. It would be mum that would unlock  
2 it because dad was hardly there.

3 Q. You say that crisps, biscuits and sweeties were locked  
4 away?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Can you remember that being the case before the foster  
7 children arrived?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. I think you also go on at paragraph 39 to refer to  
10 something that FCV says in her statement about  
11 things being locked away in a bedroom?

12 A. My mum was always given chocolates for birthdays and  
13 Christmases. My mum doesn't eat chocolates, so they  
14 would be locked in her bedroom. But she would bring  
15 them out every so often and we'd all get some, but yeah.

16 Q. So from what you say, your parents' bedroom door would  
17 be locked as well?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Who had the key for that?

20 A. Mum.

21 Q. And if you wanted to go into the bedroom to get  
22 anything, what would you do?

23 A. Why would we need to go into my mum's bedroom?

24 Q. Okay. So if you wanted a chocolate from the room, what  
25 would you do?

1 A. Ask her.

2 Q. And would she give you the key to go in?

3 A. No.

4 Q. Or would she go in herself?

5 A. She would go in herself.

6 Q. Can you remember their bedroom being locked before the  
7 foster children came or not?

8 A. No, I don't think the bedroom was.

9 Q. Can you remember if there was any reason why your  
10 parents started locking their bedroom door?

11 A. Things were going missing.

12 Q. What sort of things were going missing?

13 A. Chocolates were going missing. Just various things were  
14 going missing. So it was decided just lock it and that  
15 stops it.

16 Q. Do you know who was taking things from the bedroom?

17 A. Well, they had their suspicions, yeah, but I suppose to  
18 be fair to all of us, then just shut all of us out then  
19 you can't ...

20 Q. Okay. What were their suspicions?

21 A. Well, because the bedroom wasn't locked, yeah, before  
22 they came, then it had to be one of them, one of the  
23 foster children. And I don't think the bedroom was  
24 locked when the first two foster children came. It was  
25 when the second two children came.

1 Q. At paragraph 40, you talk about FCV saying that the  
2 foster children never got treats or money and you say  
3 you didn't get pocket money?  
4 A. No, we didn't get pocket money.  
5 Q. And you used to get money from going to pick berries or  
6 presumably harvest potatoes at that time of year as  
7 well?  
8 A. That's right. If we worked, we got money.  
9 Q. You remember, I think, two of the girls being out in the  
10 berry fields but it didn't --  
11 A. That's right. No, they didn't make much because they  
12 had eaten the berries, they were eating the berries.  
13 But you have to remember, that's their first time out  
14 there. We'd been going out maybe a few years. We'd got  
15 past that bit. We were probably the same, we just ate  
16 all the berries and didn't make much money.  
17 LADY SMITH: Did you get to keep all the money you earned  
18 from the fruit picking?  
19 A. Most of it, yes, we did. What mum would normally do was  
20 we'd get the money and she would gather it up because  
21 you were paid normally daily for what you'd done, she  
22 would gather it up and then we'd be taken down to Leven  
23 and we would get some of the money and we could just buy  
24 what we wanted.  
25 LADY SMITH: So your mum kept some of it?

1 A. Yeah.

2 MS INNES: And then would she give it to you when you asked  
3 or would she decide?

4 A. It was normally to get things that we needed for school.  
5 You know, like school shoes. It was normally towards --  
6 well, I know in my case it was normally towards  
7 something that we would use for school.

8 Q. Was that because you decided that you wanted to use it  
9 for something for school or because --

10 A. No, she would decide.

11 Q. -- your mum said you should spend it on that?

12 A. Yeah. But we still had -- we were still given a bit  
13 that we could just spend as we wanted, but there was  
14 some of it actually went towards, like, the school  
15 uniform.

16 Q. If I can move on now to page 10 and paragraph 46, and  
17 you talk there about the bathroom. There was one  
18 bathroom downstairs for everyone.

19 A. That's right.

20 Q. You say you can't remember if there was a lock on the  
21 bathroom door?

22 A. No, I don't remember if there was a lock on the bathroom  
23 door, but normally if the door was shut then somebody  
24 was in, you know, so you didn't go in. The bathroom was  
25 empty if the door was open.

1 Q. And did anybody come in when you were in the bathroom?

2 A. No, because the door was shut.

3 Q. I think you know that FCV says that your brothers  
4 might go in when she was in the bath. Can you remember  
5 that happening?

6 A. I don't think so.

7 Q. If we can move on, please, to page 11 and paragraph 49,  
8 you talk about something that FCV said in her  
9 statement about the time when she started her periods  
10 and she talked about bringing sanitary towels down and  
11 them being thrown on the fire.

12 A. That's right.

13 Q. And you say that was the procedure?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. I think she indicated that she did this when there were  
16 other people in the room or she had to do that when  
17 there were other people in the room?

18 A. Well, I was always told just to bring it down -- you  
19 know, towards the end of the night, yeah, and then put  
20 them in. I think it was up to me when I decided to do  
21 it. Yeah? I don't think there was any sort of laid  
22 time or -- you know, it was up to yourself when you put  
23 them on the fire.

24 Q. Okay. In the next section you talk about clothes  
25 and you say that you all had clothes that were handed

1 down from family or friends?

2 A. Yeah. We had some new clothes but we also had other  
3 clothes from various relatives and friends.

4 Q. Did you have much choice in what you wore or not, as  
5 a child?

6 A. We were given quite a lot of second-hand clothes, so  
7 we -- you know, you could wear what you liked. You  
8 didn't have to wear -- you know, there was quite a lot  
9 of it so you could actually pick and choose what you  
10 wanted.

11 Q. I think you will know that **FCV** says in her statement  
12 that clothes weren't washed regularly?

13 A. No, mum was always doing the washing at the weekend.  
14 Yeah.

15 Q. So was there a big washing at the weekend?

16 A. At the weekend, yeah.

17 Q. I think you talk about that at paragraph 51 where you  
18 say that you gave her a hand sometimes with the washing?

19 A. That's right, we did.

20 Q. Presumably there would have been a lot of it?

21 A. There was huge piles, yeah.

22 Q. And you say at a certain age you learned to iron your  
23 own clothes and then it was down to you?

24 A. That's right, yeah. Yeah, we were shown how to iron our  
25 own clothes and then it was up to you to do your uniform

1           and things.

2   Q.   Can you remember what sort of age you would have been  
3           when you were doing that? Was that when you were at  
4           secondary school or primary school?

5   A.   It was secondary school. I don't remember doing it in  
6           primary school.

7   Q.   At the bottom of this page at paragraph 52, you refer to  
8           dinner time and then after dinner time what would you  
9           do? Would you go to bed? Would you go outside?

10  A.   No. If it was nice we'd be outside, yeah. If we were  
11           stuck inside, then I mean there was the TV, there was --  
12           I mean, there was games, homework, you know. Yeah, we  
13           didn't go to bed, not till -- I don't know. I know we  
14           went -- the older ones went to bed later and the younger  
15           ones went to bed must be about 7 or half 7 they'd go to  
16           bed, but we would be later. Might have been 8. We  
17           weren't much later.

18  Q.   So when you say the younger ones, are you including the  
19           foster children in that?

20  A.   And my sister.

21  Q.   And your sister.

22  A.   And my sister, yeah. Not all the foster children, no,  
23           it wouldn't have been. I think the older one would have  
24           still been up. It would have been the four younger  
25           ones.

1 Q. So the four younger ones, you mean your sister and three  
2 of them?

3 A. And them, yeah, would be the four younger ones.

4 Q. At paragraph 53 you say that you have a memory that the  
5 house was cold.

6 A. Yeah, the house was cold.

7 Q. How did your parents manage to heat it or how did you  
8 keep warm in the bedrooms?

9 A. There was -- we didn't. Hot water bottles. There was  
10 no heating in the bedrooms. The only room that had any  
11 heat was the living room.

12 Q. Okay. If we can move on, please, to paragraph 63, this  
13 is on page 14. You talk there about trips and holidays  
14 and you remember going on holiday together.

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. You say that you can remember all going to your great  
17 aunt's in Aberdeenshire?

18 A. That's right.

19 Q. And that was the four of you and the foster children?

20 A. Uh-huh. My two brothers would sometimes be there and  
21 sometimes not, but myself and my sister and the four  
22 foster children, we'd all be there.

23 Q. Was that a regular thing?

24 A. It was quite often, yeah. During the summer.

25 Q. The summer holidays?



1 A. Mm-hmm.

2 Q. Where would your parents be when you were away at your  
3 aunt's?

4 A. They normally went off somewhere, yeah.

5 Q. Can you remember being left in charge of the children  
6 yourself when your parents went away on holiday?

7 A. Yeah, but only for a long weekend. I don't remember any  
8 longer than that.

9 Q. Okay. I'm going to show you something from FCV  
10 records about this and it's DUN-000000699 and if we  
11 start at the bottom of page 25.

12 Sorry, just bear with me a moment, my screen has  
13 gone to sleep.

14 At this entry, which seems to be in May 1977, the  
15 date is cut off in the copy we have, it says there:

16 "Telephone call from Mrs Smith, West Gilston School.  
17 She said that she thought we should know that [your  
18 parents, the bit that's blanked out there refers to your  
19 parents] had went away on holiday to England, leaving  
20 all seven children ..."

21 I managed to hit something on my screen which has  
22 covered it up.

23 Yeah, so it's blanked out but it's in brackets, so  
24 the seven children is the four of them and the three of  
25 you.

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. In your charge, so it refers to you there?

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. " ... who was also fulfilling her mother's job in one of  
5 the local public houses. I thanked her very much indeed  
6 for the information and praised her for passing it on to  
7 us. I discussed the situation with Mr Birrell, SSW  
8 [would be senior social worker], who advised me to phone  
9 the farm."

10 If we go to the top of the next page:

11 " ... to find out the exact situation and to confirm  
12 if [you] is in fact 16 years of age."

13 It then says:

14 "I phoned [you] in the presence of Mr Birrell, SSW."

15 It says you answered the phone:

16 " ... and although she was very unwilling to tell me  
17 anything she did in the end say that her parents were  
18 away to England. They went on Saturday and they were to  
19 return the following Saturday. She was looking after  
20 the children helped by a farmhand who has lived in  
21 a caravan in the farm's garden ever since I knew this  
22 foster home, who was there at night. I told [you] that  
23 she should phone me if anything at all happened."

24 And then she says looking back on this phone call,  
25 she must have told you that Mrs Smith from the school

1 had been the informant.

2 So what these records tell us is that there was  
3 a time in May 1977 where it appears that you were left  
4 for a week looking after the children.

5 A. I don't remember it being a week, but, you know,  
6 according to this it looks like it was a week. I do  
7 remember being left to look after the children and there  
8 was [REDACTED] in the caravan, I suppose, if I got stuck,  
9 yeah. But yeah, I mean, I remember being left to look  
10 after them.

11 Q. So at this point you were 16.

12 A. Mm-hmm.

13 Q. And this was around the time that you left school. Can  
14 you remember doing that before you left school?

15 A. I can't remember. I really can't.

16 Q. So you were 16. We know your younger sister's ten years  
17 younger than you, so you were looking after children  
18 that were aged between six and 15, I think your brother  
19 was a year younger than you.

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. Can you remember how you felt about being in charge of  
22 all of the children?

23 A. I don't remember having much feelings about it. It  
24 just -- everything carried on as normal. I really don't  
25 remember it being like hard or -- or anything like that.

1 I really can't remember it because -- yeah.

2 Q. It also said in the first part that we looked at that  
3 you were covering your mother's shifts in the local pub.

4 A. I've never done that. Mum never worked in the pub so --  
5 you know, mum's never worked in the pub. She's never  
6 worked in the hotel.

7 LADY SMITH: When did you start working in the hotel?

8 A. In the hotel? I must have been about 15 when I started  
9 just doing it on a Saturday night, it was just filling  
10 up the dishwasher and doing dishes. But my mother's  
11 never worked in the hotel.

12 LADY SMITH: Let's assume for a moment there was  
13 a misunderstanding about who it was that was working in  
14 the hotel. It does appear, doesn't it, that the person  
15 who took this phone call was being told that you were at  
16 that time somebody who worked in the hotel?

17 A. I worked?

18 LADY SMITH: A hotel, a pub, whatever.

19 A. At 16 I was, yeah, but it wasn't full time.

20 LADY SMITH: You were 16 by May 1977, weren't you?

21 A. Mm-hmm.

22 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

23 MS INNES: Can you remember where did your mother work?

24 A. If she worked, it would have been on the farm, yeah,  
25 or -- I can't remember when she started doing home help.

1 She worked for the council doing home help.

2 Q. Okay, so can you not remember her working at all?

3 A. Only when I was a lot younger, I remember that she used

4 to work on the farm. But that was before the foster

5 children came.

6 LADY SMITH: Do you remember having any discussion with your

7 mother or both your parents about the idea that they

8 would go away for a week leaving you in charge?

9 A. I don't think we discussed it, Lady Smith. I think it

10 was just, "We're going to go away and we're going to

11 leave you and [REDACTED] yeah.

12 LADY SMITH: So do you have no recollection of being asked

13 how you would feel about doing that?

14 A. No, not about how I would feel. No.

15 LADY SMITH: Whether you felt able to do it?

16 A. No, I don't think I was asked if I felt able. I might

17 have been asked if it was okay, you know.

18 LADY SMITH: Have you any memory of being given contact

19 details for them while they were away?

20 A. [REDACTED] might have had the contact details for my mum and

21 dad.

22 LADY SMITH: Do you know if he did?

23 A. I have no idea. I can't remember if he did or not.

24 LADY SMITH: What's your reaction to this having happened

25 looking back on it now at the age you are?

1 A. My reaction -- to the allegations of abuse?

2 LADY SMITH: No, no, no, to a 16-year-old being left in  
3 charge of all these children on, the way you describe  
4 it, on quite a casual basis of assumption that you'd do  
5 it and just get on with it?

6 A. But I was quite capable of doing it.

7 LADY SMITH: I see. Thank you.

8 MS INNES: Can we move back, please, to page 14 in this  
9 document and this is a foster home review on 12 May  
10 1978, so a bit later, and it talks about a visit to your  
11 parents:

12 "A warm welcome was given and the discussion was  
13 amicable. [Your parents] said [your mother] is willing  
14 to stop working at weekends but is not prepared to do so  
15 during the week. Her take-home pay is £30 a week. This  
16 compares with a fortnightly fostering allowance of  
17 £139.40 and this will go up by £16 a fortnight if the  
18 proposed plan for extra payment goes through the  
19 committee. [Your mother] says she needs to work for the  
20 wages."

21 What sort of work would your mother have been  
22 undertaking at that time, can you remember?

23 A. I really can't remember. I mean, I can remember her  
24 working on the farm and I can remember her working for  
25 the council, but I really can't -- I really don't know

1           what work she was doing.

2   Q. I think FCV ██████ in her evidence mentioned an egg

3           factory?

4   A. Oh, right, there was an egg factory. That's right,

5           there was work at an egg factory, which was down towards

6           ██████.

7   Q. Right.

8   A. I don't know how long she did that for, though.

9   Q. Okay, so maybe that's the work --

10  A. Maybe that's what it was, yeah.

11  Q. Okay. Can you remember covering any shifts at the egg

12           factory for your mother, for example?

13  A. No. No. That was an awful place. No.

14  Q. Right. If we can move back to your statement, please,

15           and if we can move to the top of page 15 and

16           paragraph 68, you say there that:

17            "In her statement to the Inquiry, FCV ██████ says that

18            she was called an idiot and daft."

19            You don't remember anybody calling her that?

20  A. I don't remember, no. And FCV ██████ wasn't daft, yeah.

21            I mean, she was quite -- she was quite quick.

22  MS INNES: I'm not quite at the allegations of abuse yet,

23            but I am going to ask you about discipline on page 16 at

24            paragraph 78, and I don't know, Lady Smith, whether you

25            wish to give the witness a warning before I go into

1           these questions?

2   LADY SMITH:  Yes, I did think about this earlier for  
3           a caution.  You're absolutely right, Ms Innes.

4           If I can just recap, 'April', you've been brought  
5           here principally of course to tell us what you can  
6           remember, if anything, about what was going on in your  
7           parents' household when they were being foster parents  
8           of these children and how things interacted between you  
9           and your brothers and sisters and them.

10          But I also need to explain to you that although this  
11          is a public inquiry and not a court hearing, it's  
12          possible that in the next little section questions may  
13          arise the answers to which could be relied on outwith  
14          the Inquiry, and the questions being questions which  
15          could give rise to incriminating answers.

16          Now, if there are any such questions, I have to tell  
17          you you're not obliged to answer them.  Do you  
18          understand that?

19   A.  I understand.

20   LADY SMITH:  And if you're in any doubt, just ask.

21   A.  Okay.

22   LADY SMITH:  Just check with me, check with Ms Innes.

23           Thank you very much.

24   MS INNES:  Thank you, my Lady.

25           So at the bottom of page 16 at paragraph 78 you talk



1           there about discipline.  What was your parents' approach  
2           to discipline?  How did they go about it?

3   A.  Well, normally we'd get a ticking off, yeah.  If that  
4           was, say, for like a minor thing, yeah, or we'd be sent  
5           upstairs to bed.  That was about it.  I don't  
6           remember -- I remember sometimes -- I mean, dad had  
7           a big belt, yeah, and it was just the threat, though.  
8           He'd never used it, you know.  If he started to unbuckle  
9           the belt, yeah, we ran up the stairs.  But he never --  
10          yeah, I don't remember him ever using that.

11  Q.  So you said that there could be a ticking off.

12  A.  Yeah.

13  Q.  So what would that involve?

14  A.  Most times it would be, you know, to ask us why we'd  
15          done what we'd done, you know, what had we done it for,  
16          and then sometimes you'd be shouted at for doing  
17          whatever it was, yeah, and then depending on how serious  
18          it was, then it was usually upstairs.

19  Q.  Would you be sent to your room for a period of time or  
20          how long would that last?

21  A.  Probably until the following morning, until breakfast  
22          time.

23  Q.  What if you were sent to your room before dinner time?  
24          Would you get anything to eat, can you remember?

25  A.  I really don't remember if we did or not.  I really

1           don't remember. I would have thought so, but I don't  
2           remember.

3   LADY SMITH: 'April', you've explained the sort of work your  
4           father did.

5   A. Yeah.

6   LADY SMITH: Was it all physical work?

7   A. All physical, yeah.

8   LADY SMITH: Was he a strong man?

9   A. Well, as a child, Lady Smith, I thought he was a strong  
10          man, yeah.

11   LADY SMITH: How tall was he?

12   A. He must have been about 5 '10.

13   LADY SMITH: A big man?

14   A. No. No, no. He's not -- no, there wasn't a lot of --  
15          you know, he was just -- no. He was all right built.  
16          He wasn't skinny and he wasn't fat and he wasn't muscles  
17          either. More the scrawny type of strength some people  
18          have.

19   LADY SMITH: Fit? Active?

20   A. I would say he was fit.

21   LADY SMITH: Tell me about the belt you mentioned. What was  
22          it like?

23   A. That was for his -- on the farm he used to have to wear  
24          these ovals, dungarees, so the belt was just to keep it  
25          up. I don't know where the actual start of that came,

1 but the belt was -- it was more a threat, yeah, but as  
2 soon as he -- if he'd been ticking us off -- and he  
3 never did it every time, it would just be every so  
4 often --

5 LADY SMITH: It wasn't so much what he did with it --

6 A. No.

7 LADY SMITH: I was just trying to get a picture in my head  
8 of what this belt was like.

9 A. It was just a thick -- most of the farm workers had  
10 them, like thick leather black belts. So you would get  
11 the ticking off. I remember normally it would be if it  
12 had been the three of us had been up to something,  
13 myself and my two brothers, then he might have said to  
14 us, you know, that we were going to get the belt and he  
15 started to unbuckle it and we would be off to the  
16 bedroom. But he never came in after us and he never  
17 used that belt. It was more the threat of, yeah.

18 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

19 MS INNES: Can you remember him saying that sort of thing to  
20 the foster children?

21 A. No.

22 Q. No?

23 A. No.

24 Q. Can you ever remember him using the belt on the foster  
25 children?

1 A. No. He wasn't -- he wasn't like that. He was really  
2 quite a gentle person. He used to bring home all sorts  
3 of animals that he got when he'd been working in the  
4 fields that had got injured or whatever and they used to  
5 go into the little byre or he'd take them down to the  
6 vet. He wasn't -- yeah, it was more the threat of,  
7 yeah, than the actual doing of.

8 Q. Okay. And you say he was normally in charge of  
9 discipline?

10 A. No, it was my mother. Well, that's wrong to say. My  
11 mum, she would be the one -- because most times my  
12 dad -- my dad would be the one that would thingy the  
13 punishment, whether it was up the stairs or -- yeah,  
14 I suppose you're right, it would be dad. Mum never laid  
15 a hand on us.

16 Q. So would your mum say --

17 A. What we'd done.

18 Q. When he came home --

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. -- she would tell him what had happened?

21 A. Yes. And then he would take to deal with it.

22 Q. Would she say things to you like, "Wait till your father  
23 comes home"?

24 A. No. No. We already knew that bit.

25 Q. I see, okay. If you go on over the page to the top of

1 page 17 at paragraph 79, you talk about fighting with  
2 your siblings.

3 A. My brothers. It would be my brothers. Never with my  
4 little sister. She was too small.

5 Q. So you remember having physical fights with your  
6 brothers?

7 A. They were just play fights, yeah.

8 Q. Can you remember them ever fighting with the foster  
9 children?

10 A. No, I don't -- I don't remember that, yeah. No,  
11 I don't -- I don't think they did -- it was quite --  
12 I think there was a sort of -- a sort of underlying sort  
13 of rule that these weren't your siblings. You couldn't  
14 do the same stuff that you did between -- you know,  
15 physically, you couldn't do that with -- they're not.  
16 They're a bit like guests. You don't do that with  
17 guests, yeah, but you do with your own.

18 Q. You say at paragraph 80 that you do remember shouting at  
19 the foster children?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. And what would the context of that be?

22 A. If they were doing anything wrong.

23 Q. Okay. And would that be on these occasions that you  
24 were in charge of them or would that be when your  
25 parents were around?

1 A. Probably -- no, no, just when I was in charge of them,  
2 yeah.

3 Q. What sort of things would you be shouting, can you  
4 remember?

5 A. Well, to get up, to be quiet, you know, when they'd gone  
6 to bed, yeah. Because the three youngest ones used to  
7 go to bed at the same time and if it was summertime and  
8 it was still light outside, yeah, you would hear the  
9 three of them running around, you know, way after  
10 bedtime. So the first time I might shout up the stairs  
11 for them to be quiet and get back in their beds and then  
12 eventually I'd have to go up the stairs and make sure  
13 they were back in their beds.

14 Q. Okay. Can you remember being angry with them?

15 A. No, I don't remember being angry with them.

16 Q. Now if we move on from that to page 18 and paragraph 86,  
17 you've been asked there about your memory of how the  
18 foster children were disciplined and I think you say  
19 that as far as you can remember, they just got ticked  
20 off.

21 A. As far as I can remember, they just got ticked off. And  
22 they would lose something. Like either they would be  
23 sent up the stairs or they might not be allowed to go  
24 out at the weekend or whatever. No youth club. That  
25 sort of thing.

1 Q. Okay. Can you remember them ever being threatened about  
2 going back to Dundee?

3 A. Who would threaten them?

4 Q. By your parents or anybody else?

5 A. I only remember one time **FCV** dad was going to take  
6 her back to Dundee, but it was only her he was going to  
7 take back.

8 Q. Can you remember anything about the context of that?

9 A. I can't remember why, but it must have been some trouble  
10 that had been caused, yeah. He was going to take her  
11 back to Dundee. But he didn't.

12 Q. So your memory of it is that he was going to take her  
13 back to Dundee and it was as a punishment?

14 A. No, I think he was going to take her back to the foster  
15 care people, yeah, and he didn't want her back.  
16 I think.

17 Q. You say they didn't want her back?

18 A. No, my father and my mother didn't want her, for  
19 whatever reason, whatever she'd done. I know there was  
20 a bit there where dad was going to take her back to  
21 Dundee.

22 Q. But her brothers and sisters would stay with you?

23 A. Yeah, they were fine.

24 Q. And you say but that then never happened?

25 A. It didn't, it didn't happed.

1 Q. He didn't actually take her back?

2 A. No, he didn't.

3 Q. Do you know why it was that ultimately he didn't take  
4 her back?

5 A. No. I don't even remember why it was he was taking her  
6 back. But it would have been some trouble had been  
7 caused and dad maybe had just had enough, he thought  
8 that's it.

9 Q. Okay. At the bottom of this page there's a section,  
10 "Relationship with foster children", and you say that  
11 you personally thought your relationship with the foster  
12 children was all right.

13 A. Yeah, I did.

14 Q. How would you describe how you got on with them?

15 A. I thought it was good. I really honestly thought that  
16 we got on great.

17 Q. You will know from FCV [REDACTED] statement that she talks  
18 about feeling that it was them and us.

19 A. No, I never felt that it was them and us, yeah, because  
20 most times when we were doing something, whether it was  
21 a holiday or -- I mean, my parents went off and bought  
22 this minivan/bus thing for all of us to go out and about  
23 in. So it wasn't a case of them and us.

24 Q. I think you know that she also says in her statement  
25 that sometimes she felt like your family, members of



1           your family, would set them against each other and cause  
2           arguments and such like.

3   A.  No, I don't understand that at all.  I don't know  
4           what -- how you would do that.

5   Q.  So that's not your memory of what it was like when you  
6           were living there?

7   A.  No.

8   Q.  Okay.  Do you think it's possible that the dynamic  
9           changed in the house when you left?

10  A.  I don't -- well, it might have done, yeah.  I don't  
11           see -- because my brothers weren't that far behind me.  
12           I think [REDACTED] 'John' was only -- because he  
13           was -- he was working quite young too and he wasn't  
14           often there.  In fact, he was always -- from a young age  
15           he was off on his bike somewhere.

16           My other brother, I don't think he was that far  
17           either.  I think -- so that would have only left the  
18           foster children and my sister, my little sister.

19  Q.  Okay.

20  A.  So the dynamics would have changed then, wouldn't it,  
21           because you don't have the same amount of people doing,  
22           you know, certain things.  I would have thought it would  
23           have got better, though, because you've got less  
24           children there.  But I really don't know.  Whenever  
25           I came home, it all seemed fine.

1 Q. If we go on over the page to page 19 and paragraph 92,  
2 you say essentially what you've just said in your  
3 evidence, that you think that when you and your brother  
4 left, you think that the foster children's lives were  
5 better than yours had been?

6 A. Yeah, but that's didn't -- that's understandable because  
7 there's less children to deal with, isn't there, so  
8 there'll be more money going about. I mean, my life as  
9 a child there was great, so it didn't -- that didn't  
10 matter, but I think their lives would have been -- they  
11 would have been able to do a lot more without the  
12 other -- the older ones.

13 Q. Then you say at paragraph 93 that you don't think their  
14 experience was any different from yours when you were  
15 living at home and you don't feel that they were treated  
16 any differently to the way that you were?

17 A. No.

18 Q. And you say:  
19 "They might have been a bit softer with the foster  
20 kids than us."  
21 Is that your parents?

22 A. Yeah, they might have been. I don't -- I'm not saying  
23 that they were, but -- there was -- there was no  
24 difference between us.

25 Q. Why do you think they might have been softer on the

1 foster children?

2 A. Because they were the foster children. They weren't --  
3 you know, you can't ... yeah. Why do I think they would  
4 be? I don't know. I just felt that they were -- maybe  
5 if you've had so many kids beforehand then you have  
6 a bit more experience later on. I don't know. But  
7 I just felt that they were -- yeah, they were much  
8 easier with them.

9 Q. You mentioned that there would have been more money to  
10 go around.

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. Were you conscious of financial pressures on your  
13 parents as you were growing up?

14 A. I just knew there wasn't a lot of money.

15 Q. Do you know if they decided to take in foster children  
16 to get an income stream?

17 A. I mean, I didn't know it but I assumed that's what it  
18 was for.

19 Q. So if we go down to the bottom of this page,  
20 paragraph 95, and you talk about the things that you  
21 did. At the bottom of this page you say:

22 "I found it dead hard when I heard about the  
23 allegations. I thought I really can't believe this,  
24 this is weird. We did have good times. I just find it  
25 really sad because they were good."

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. Was that your reaction to seeing what FCV had said  
3 in her statement?

4 A. I still can't understand why she said that and all the  
5 stuff that she said there because I honestly thought  
6 that it was good. I mean yes, it was hard, the house  
7 was cold, there was shortage of food, but it -- I didn't  
8 see any problem with it.

9 Q. At paragraph 97 on this page towards the beginning of  
10 the paragraph you refer to your mother and you say:  
11 "She is not an affectionate type of person and never  
12 has been ..."

13 A. No.

14 Q. " ... but she was there."

15 A. She was there. And if there was something you really  
16 wanted, it would appear.

17 Q. So you talk about an example of wanting something and  
18 then she would, I think you're saying, make an effort to  
19 get it for you.

20 A. Yeah. But she wasn't -- she wasn't like a huggy, cuddly  
21 sort of person. She's not like that. She's still not  
22 like that.

23 Q. Bear with me a moment. (Pause).

24 If we move on, please, to paragraph 108, you deal  
25 there with visits from the social work department.

1           You've already mentioned that there were the two social  
2           workers and they would just speak to you in passing.

3   A.   That's right. I don't remember having a conversation  
4           with them as such.

5   Q.   You say that your memory is that you don't think they  
6           came that often?

7   A.   No. I know the lady, yeah, she came more, but not  
8           often. And the bloke, the man, even less. But I can't  
9           give you a time frame.

10   Q.   Yeah. Can you remember whether the foster children were  
11           spoken to in the house or whether they were taken out?

12   A.   I know when the man came, they were usually taken in his  
13           car. With the lady, I can't remember if they came or  
14           went.

15   Q.   Then at paragraph 109 you talk about hearing that the  
16           children had left your parents' home.

17   A.   Yeah.

18   Q.   So we know, as you've said, that you had left to go to  
19           the army in 1978, you got married in 1980, and we know  
20           that they left in [REDACTED] 1981. How did you find out that  
21           they had left?

22   A.   My mum had phoned me.

23   Q.   Can you remember what you were told about the reason why  
24           they had gone?

25   A.   Yes, she told me that -- that there'd been allegations

1           against dad.

2   Q.   Did she tell you what sort of allegations there were?

3   A.   Just abuse, but I didn't know if it was sexual or

4           physical.

5   Q.   Can you remember how you felt about that news at the

6           time?

7   A.   I was shocked, yeah, because I really couldn't see my

8           dad doing -- yeah. And then later I was angry.

9   Q.   And why were you angry?

10  A.   Because I really couldn't understand where this was

11           coming from, you know, why -- what was going on here.

12  Q.   Okay.

13  A.   When I left, it all seemed really good. It all seemed

14           like they were all getting on with their own -- whenever

15           I had phone calls with my mother, they all seemed to be

16           getting on with their own -- you know, [REDACTED] had got

17           a little job, it all seemed to be going fine.

18  Q.   What was your mum's reaction to them being taken away,

19           can you remember?

20  A.   Oh, she was really upset. Really, really upset.

21  Q.   If we move on, please, to paragraph 118, where you talk

22           a little bit about the allegations that were made at the

23           time, so at paragraph 118 on page 25. It's blanked out

24           in your statement there, but you're referring there to

25           the allegation made against your father.

1 A. Uh-huh.

2 Q. You thought, I think, at the time that you gave your  
3 statement to the Inquiry that [REDACTED]

4 [REDACTED] ?

5 A. [REDACTED]

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13 Q. Why would you have come back up?

14 A. Because that's quite a -- that's quite an important  
15 thing. I'd be here to support my dad and my mum.

16 Q. So you don't think that [REDACTED] but you know  
17 something -- there was discussion with the police?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. And then you don't know what happened after that?

20 A. No.

21 Q. [REDACTED] ?

22 A. [REDACTED]

23 Q. Do you know if there were allegations against your  
24 brothers at that time?

25 A. I can't remember how much longer afterwards, yeah, but

1           yes, there was allegations against both my brothers.

2   Q.   So did you know whether there were allegations against

3           your brothers at the time that the children were

4           removed? Or not?

5   A.   No, I really can't remember that.

6   Q.   Okay.

7   A.   I think they'd already gone. I think they'd already

8           gone by then. It was quite a bit later after the

9           allegation against my dad. And it wasn't long after

10          they made the allegations, yeah, that they were removed,

11          so.

12   Q.   Then I think you're saying that there was a later time,

13          you think it was in the 1990s, that there were

14          allegations against your brothers?

15   A.   I think that must -- I don't think -- when the Inquiry

16          first started off, I thought there was three times, but

17          I think there was only two, two sets of allegations. So

18          the one in the 1990s, I'm not 100 per cent sure on the

19          date, just that I had already moved back to Scotland,

20          I'd already got my children when the police came to

21          interview me about these allegations, so I'm assuming it

22          was in the 1990s.

23   Q.   And you remember speaking to the police about matters at

24          that time, being interviewed by them?

25   A.   Yes.



1 Q. And after that you say it didn't go to court [REDACTED]  
2 [REDACTED]?

3 A. No.

4 Q. Okay. I think at paragraph 121, your recollection is  
5 that you were being asked about the daily routine in the  
6 house and things like that?

7 A. That's right.

8 Q. At the bottom of paragraph 122 you reflect back on your  
9 memories of the children being in the house and how you  
10 felt about the allegations and you refer to a photograph  
11 at your wedding.

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. And you say at the end of the paragraph:  
14 "Surely if there was something wrong then it would  
15 appear and you would be able to see something wasn't  
16 right."

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. I think you said your perception at the time was that  
19 everything was fine?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. At the beginning of the next paragraph on that page you  
22 say there:  
23 "A lot of the time we had the attitude that [REDACTED] FCV  
24 was doing it again."

25 A. Oh, she used to do this -- whenever people came, she

1           was -- now I'm older I can see -- whenever people came,  
2           FCV would be straight -- say in the case of the male  
3           social worker, she'd be straight on his lap. If my  
4           grandparents came, she was right at the front, you know,  
5           she was looking for attention.

6           The rest of us just though, oh, FCV doing it  
7           again. It was nothing -- it wasn't being bad, it was  
8           just something FCV did. When people came to visit,  
9           FCV needed to be seen. Whereas if you had, like,  
10          little ██████████ didn't come forward, ██████████ would  
11          hang off in the background.

12        Q. So your memory of that was that she was seeking people's  
13          attention?

14        A. Yeah. She'd always -- she'd always done it.

15        Q. Over the page on page 27 at paragraph 123, you reflect  
16          on, I think, the suitability of the foster home for  
17          FCV and you say that there were too many of you,  
18          your reflection is there were too many of you for the --

19        A. As an adult. But as a child back then or as a teenager  
20          back then, I didn't see that as a problem. I didn't see  
21          there being -- but looking back on it, yeah. And  
22          I could see where -- where FCV and ██████████ had been  
23          in the short-term foster care and in FCV statement  
24          she says how they were treated there. They had their  
25          own rooms, they had pretty dresses, et cetera,

1 et cetera, and then she comes to us, you know, and we  
2 don't have our own rooms and we don't have the sort of  
3 money that buys, like, loads of pretty dresses. That's  
4 quite a drastic thing for a child to adjust from that to  
5 this. It's like you've done something wrong, isn't it?  
6 I'm in this really lovely place and then I've gone to  
7 this.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. So that's where I think she considered -- also, there  
10 has to be, like, the same levelness of what the foster  
11 carers are providing. You can't have such a drastic  
12 difference between the two. Because, I mean, me as  
13 a child, if I was popped into somewhere that the first  
14 foster carer place, I'd have been like: this is  
15 fantastic, this is really good, I have my own room, look  
16 at this. And then go and put you in with us on the  
17 farm, yeah, in a cold house? That's quite -- you know.

18 Q. Okay. At paragraph 124 you deal with the allegation  
19 that **FCV** made about you. She says that you hit her  
20 with a slipper and you lifted their nightie up and  
21 struck them on the bum in front of -- I think that's  
22 your brothers. Did you ever hit **FCV** or her siblings  
23 with a slipper?

24 A. No.

25 Q. Did you ever lift their nightie up to do that?

1 A. No.

2 Q. Or strike them on the bum?

3 A. No.

4 Q. Did you ever do that in front of your brothers?

5 A. No.

6 Q. If we can move on to the bottom of this page, you say  
7 that you've wracked your brain as to why FCV  
8 saying these things and why do you think it is that  
9 she's saying these things?

10 A. I think she wanted away from the farm.

11 Q. Do you think that's why she made the allegations in  
12 1981?

13 A. I don't know. She didn't -- I mean, just going -- being  
14 unbiased, she's clearly unhappy. I mean, the other  
15 three foster children seemed -- have they made  
16 allegations?

17 Q. Okay. Well, I suppose another reason that FCV might  
18 have made an allegation in 1981 was because it was true.  
19 Do you think it was true?

20 A. No.

21 Q. Why not?

22 A. Because my father's not -- is not like that. Wasn't  
23 like that, sorry, he's gone now. And, you know,  
24 FCV -- I don't want to say this because it sounds  
25 like I'm slagging her off, but she was known for telling

1           lies and being up to all sorts of stuff.

2   Q.   Okay.  And what about your brothers?

3   A.   No.

4   Q.   It's not possible that what she's saying about them is  
5           true?

6   A.   No.

7   Q.   Why not?

8   A.   I mean, I can see that they would tease her, yeah, but  
9           I don't see them physically, sexually -- you know.

10  Q.   Okay.  Just finally at page 28 of your statement you  
11           talk about lessons to be learned and I think you've  
12           mentioned some of these already.  At paragraph 130 you  
13           say:

14                "I don't remember talking to the social workers  
15           about how we were all feeling.  I remember them  
16           appearing but I don't remember being asked any questions  
17           by them."

18                Do you think that it would have been helpful for the  
19           social worker to speak to you or that it would be  
20           helpful for the social worker to speak to other children  
21           who are living in the house who are not fostered?

22  A.   I think it might have been helpful with all eight of us,  
23           all eight children, yeah, if the social workers maybe  
24           got all eight of us together to try and sort of --  
25           I don't know.  But as a child, yeah, I don't remember it

1           needing to be explained. I really don't know.

2   Q. Then at paragraph 131 you say that in the case of your  
3       own family, you think that you were fine with two foster  
4       children, but bringing in four was too much?

5   A. I think for my parents, well my mother, anyway, I think  
6       four plus us four, yeah, I think that's too much for one  
7       adult to -- on a long-term basis. Okay if you were  
8       doing it for, say, a short term, but not for years.

9   Q. And you say that you can't -- obviously, if there's so  
10      many children, you can't give eight children enough  
11      attention.

12   A. No.

13   Q. And you can't meet children's needs if --

14   A. No.

15   Q. -- you've got eight. And I suppose with foster  
16      children, they might come with some needs that are  
17      different --

18   A. Extra.

19   Q. -- because of their background.

20   A. Yes.

21   Q. And then at paragraph 132, you talk about the move from  
22      the city to the country.

23   A. Yeah.

24   Q. You say at the end of this paragraph:  
25            "I think they should consider the environment that

1 the children come from and not replicate it but keep  
2 them in surroundings that they are used to."

3 A. I think so. Or as close to theirs. I mean, that's  
4 quite a change from going in town -- you know, in the  
5 city, a way out -- I mean, we were way out in the  
6 country. There wasn't -- the next house was maybe  
7 quarter of a mile away. No streetlights. No traffic  
8 noise. You know, nothing like that.

9 Q. Then at paragraph 133 you say:

10 "I think there are two things to consider. You need  
11 to consider where you put the child and you need to make  
12 sure that they get the attention that they need to bring  
13 them on."

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. So do you think these are two key things that should be  
16 considered when a child is being placed with foster  
17 carers?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. That reflection arises from your experience in  
20 reflecting back on the time --

21 A. As an adult looking back on, yes.

22 MS INNES: Thank you very much, 'April', I don't have any  
23 more questions for you and there are no applications,  
24 my Lady.

25 LADY SMITH: Are there any outstanding applications for

1 questions of 'April'?

2 'April', that does complete all the questions we  
3 have for you. Thank you very much for engaging with us  
4 as you have done, both by providing your statement,  
5 which is part of your evidence and I've read, and by  
6 coming here today to talk about your time as a child  
7 living in the back of beyond in Fife.

8 A. It is. I mean, I don't know if it's relevant,  
9 Lady Smith. I actually brought with me today  
10 photographs of the foster kids at my wedding, and there  
11 is also letters that all four foster children have  
12 written to my mother after they were taken away and they  
13 were all --

14 LADY SMITH: I see.

15 A. -- after coming back to the farm.

16 LADY SMITH: I see. We can maybe follow up on that if we  
17 feel the need to. Thank you very much.

18 A. Yeah.

19 LADY SMITH: I said at the outset I did understand it's  
20 tough being asked to cast your mind back all these  
21 decades. It is, I accept that, and we pressed you at  
22 times. I'm grateful to you for bearing with us and  
23 I hope you remember what it is we're here for in the  
24 broader aspects of our work.

25 A. Yeah.



1 LADY SMITH: It's really helpful to have heard from you  
2 today. Thank you very much.

3 A. I've also -- after being initially really quite angry to  
4 have to take part in this Inquiry, because, you know,  
5 this is the past stuff, it should all be laid to rest --

6 LADY SMITH: Yes, I can understand that.

7 A. But I've actually turned it round and I remember the  
8 good times with those kids. You know, there were some  
9 really good times. So yeah, thank you.

10 LADY SMITH: I'm able to let you go. Thank you very much.

11 (The witness withdrew)

12 LADY SMITH: Now, we'll take the morning break just now, but  
13 before I rise please would everybody bear in mind we've  
14 used the names of two foster children, FCV [REDACTED] and  
15 [REDACTED] for convenience, but of course their identities  
16 are protected by my general restriction order and they  
17 can't be identified outside this room.

18 Break now, Ms Innes, and another witness after the  
19 break?

20 MS INNES: Yes. We do have another witness after the break,  
21 my Lady.

22 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

23 (11.37 am)

24 (A short break)

25 (11.56 am)

1 LADY SMITH: Ms Innes.

2 MS INNES: Thank you, my Lady. The next witness has the  
3 pseudonym 'John'. 'John' is the brother of 'April', who  
4 gave evidence earlier this morning, but I will just give  
5 the same preamble.

6 LADY SMITH: Yes.

7 MS INNES: 'John''s parents were foster carers for Dundee  
8 Corporation and then Tayside Regional Council.  
9 An applicant using the pseudonym 'Anthea', who was in  
10 the care of Dundee Corporation and then Tayside, was  
11 boarded out with 'John''s parents in Fife on [REDACTED]  
12 1975. She lived there until she was removed on [REDACTED]  
13 1981. 'Anthea' gave evidence on Day 304, 6 July 2022.  
14 It's understood that Dundee City Council is the relevant  
15 successor.

16 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

17 'John' (affirmed)

18 LADY SMITH: 'John', no doubt you're not used to having to  
19 talk to people through a microphone but I'm afraid  
20 I need to ask you to do that this morning, so if you can  
21 stay in a good position for the microphone, that will be  
22 really helpful to us. Apart from anything else, our  
23 stenographers, who make the transcript of the hearing,  
24 listen to the evidence through the microphone system.

25 Separately from that, 'John', thank you for coming

1 here today to engage with us and for having engaged with  
2 us by giving us a written statement to help us with  
3 evidence that's relevant to the work we're doing here.

4 Can I say at the outset, I do understand that it's  
5 not straightforward, coming to give evidence in public,  
6 particularly in relation to the sensitive matters that  
7 we're going to have to discuss with you. I understand  
8 that can be worrying, it can make you anxious, and it  
9 can be difficult.

10 If you want a break, that's fine, at any time. If  
11 there's anything else that you would want to ask me to  
12 do to help you to give the best evidence you can, please  
13 do speak up. If it works for you, it will work for me,  
14 so bear that in mind.

15 Also, 'John', you'll know that you're here to give  
16 evidence at a public inquiry. This isn't a court, but  
17 you are, as I say, giving evidence in public.

18 A transcript, as I've explained, is being made and  
19 it's important you understand that anything you say this  
20 morning -- it will be afternoon by the time you finish  
21 your evidence -- could be relied on outside the Inquiry.

22 In these circumstances, I need to warn you that if  
23 you're asked any questions the answers to which could  
24 incriminate you, you're not obliged to answer them. Do  
25 you understand that?

1 A. Yeah.

2 LADY SMITH: If you can just say that you understand that,  
3 that will get picked up on the transcript. Yes? You  
4 nodded your head, thank you.

5 A. Yes.

6 LADY SMITH: If you're in any doubt at any point about any  
7 of the questions you're being asked, please say so.  
8 It's okay to speak up.

9 A. Okay.

10 LADY SMITH: If you are ready, I'll hand over to Ms Innes  
11 and she'll take it from there, all right?

12 A. Okay.

13 LADY SMITH: Ms Innes.

14 MS INNES: Thank you, my Lady.

15 Questions from Ms Innes

16 MS INNES: 'John', I understand you were born in 1962; is  
17 that right?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. I'm just going to look at your statement and we give it  
20 the reference WIT-1-000001010.

21 If we go to the last page of the statement, page 14,  
22 the last paragraph of it, paragraph 65, says:  
23 "I have no objection to my witness statement being  
24 published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry.  
25 I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are

1 true."

2 And I think you signed the statement on 10 June of  
3 this year; is that right?

4 A. Yes.

5 LADY SMITH: 'John', that written statement is in the red  
6 folder there. I'd just like you to look at the  
7 signature on it, if you go right to the back of the  
8 document that's in it. Is that your signature?

9 A. Yes.

10 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much. Ms Innes.

11 MS INNES: Thank you, my Lady.

12 Now, you tell us a bit about your family life in  
13 your statement. You tell us that there came a point  
14 when you moved to [REDACTED] Farm in Cupar?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. And I think to begin with you were living there with  
17 your mum and dad?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Your older sister?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. She's a year older than you; is that right?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And then your younger brother?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. He's a year younger than you; is that right?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And then your sister, who's the youngest, and she's  
3 quite a bit younger, I think, than you; is that right?

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. Okay. You tell us in your statement at paragraph 7 that  
6 you can remember at [REDACTED] Farm there was a lodger  
7 living in a caravan.

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Did he have anything to do with your family or did he  
10 just happen to be there on the farm?

11 A. He just was on the farm.

12 Q. He was on the farm. Did he work on the farm as well?

13 A. No.

14 Q. Okay.

15 LADY SMITH: 'John', can you get a little bit nearer to the  
16 microphone. It's not quite picking you up enough. Try  
17 there and we'll see how we get on.

18 Ms Innes.

19 MS INNES: You tell us a little bit about your own history.  
20 So at paragraph 9, obviously there was a time when you  
21 were at school. How old were you when you left school?

22 A. 16.

23 Q. 16, okay. So that would have been in 1978, I think.  
24 After you left school, what did you go to do?

25 A. Worked on the fencing.

1 Q. You were working in fencing. Yes, so you say that you  
2 used to cycle down to the fencers when you worked there,  
3 so was that close to the farm?  
4 A. A couple of miles.  
5 Q. Okay. And you stayed at home while you were working at  
6 the fencers?  
7 A. Yes.  
8 Q. And then you tell us that you went to work in Methil?  
9 A. Yes.  
10 Q. How old were you when you went to work there?  
11 A. 17.  
12 Q. So maybe about a year after you left school?  
13 A. (Witness nods).  
14 Q. Would that be right?  
15 A. Something like that.  
16 Q. Okay. You say that when you went to Methil, you stayed  
17 in digs.  
18 A. Yes.  
19 Q. And you'd go home some weekends?  
20 A. Yeah, some weekends.  
21 Q. And you say in your statement maybe once a month or  
22 something like that?  
23 A. Yeah.  
24 Q. If you had any holidays, would you go home?  
25 A. Depends on the weather.

1 Q. Okay. So sometimes if you had a holiday, would you stay  
2 in Methil or would you go somewhere else?  
3 A. Probably stay in Methil, maybe.  
4 Q. You say that during the wintertime you stayed in the  
5 digs?  
6 A. Yes.  
7 Q. You didn't go home during the winter?  
8 A. No.  
9 Q. Because you couldn't get transport home at that time?  
10 A. Yeah.  
11 Q. Okay. Then you tell us that you moved back to  
12 [REDACTED] ?  
13 A. Yes.  
14 Q. Do you know how old you were when you moved back?  
15 A. I can't remember what age I was.  
16 Q. Can you remember how long you were in the digs at  
17 Methil?  
18 A. I think it was two and a half years, I think. Something  
19 like that. I'm not 100 per cent on that.  
20 LADY SMITH: 'John', I'm sorry to be a nuisance. I think we  
21 either need the microphone a little bit nearer you --  
22 don't worry, we'll see if we can shift it -- or you  
23 nearer the microphone.  
24 Thank you.  
25 Ms Innes.



1 MS INNES: Thank you, my Lady.

2 When you moved back to [REDACTED], were the foster  
3 children still living there?

4 A. I don't think so. I can't remember.

5 Q. Okay, you can't remember, okay. You tell us at  
6 paragraph 10, so at the top of page 3, that after the  
7 foster children left, you remember you, your parents,  
8 your younger sister and you moving out because your dad  
9 lost his job.

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. Did your dad losing his job have any connection with the  
12 foster children leaving?

13 A. No.

14 Q. Okay, it was something else that happened?

15 A. (Witness nods).

16 Q. That happened after they had already left?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Okay. And you think that your older sister and your  
19 younger brother had gone to the army?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. You tell us that your mum and dad started fostering.  
22 Can you remember them telling you that they were going  
23 to take in some foster children?

24 A. Yeah. It was mentioned.

25 Q. Did they tell you why they were going to do that?

1 A. I don't think so. I can't remember much about it.

2 Q. You say in your statement that your mum and dad said  
3 they were going to foster because they needed extra  
4 money coming in.

5 A. Yeah, probably.

6 Q. Can you remember if that was something that was talked  
7 about at the time?

8 A. I can't remember off by heart.

9 Q. Okay. How did you feel about other children coming and  
10 living in the house with you?

11 A. Well, I just -- I just agreed with it and that was it.

12 Q. Can you remember if anybody from the social work  
13 department talked to you about foster children coming to  
14 stay?

15 A. I can't remember much about it.

16 Q. Okay. The only children that your mum and dad ever  
17 fostered were four children, I think, and two of them --  
18 the two youngest came first; is that right?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. And what can you remember about them coming to live with  
21 you?

22 A. They just came to live with us for the short term.

23 Q. You thought it was going to be short term?

24 A. Well, yeah.

25 Q. What do you mean by short term? How long did you think

1           they would be staying, roughly?

2   A.   Well, I have no idea. I couldn't tell you.

3   Q.   But your understanding was it was going to be short

4           term?

5   A.   I understood that, yeah.

6   Q.   Well, I think we know that two other children then came,

7           their older sisters came to live with you. You remember

8           that happening?

9   A.   Yes.

10  Q.   And we know that they stayed with your family I think

11           for about six years ultimately.

12  A.   If you say so. I can't really ...

13  Q.   Okay. So initially you thought it was going to be short

14           term but it didn't turn out that way?

15  A.   No.

16  Q.   Okay. Can you remember how you felt about the two older

17           sisters coming to join their brother and sister in your

18           house?

19  A.   I thought it would be nice for them, because there's

20           their sister and brother.

21  Q.   I think you tell us that you shared a room with your

22           brother and then the boy of the foster family?

23  A.   Yes.

24  Q.   How did you feel about having to share your room with

25           this foster boy?

1 A. I thought nothing of it, really.

2 Q. Did you share a room with him for the whole time that  
3 you were both living in the house together?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. I think we know that the bedrooms were quite big in the  
6 farmhouse.

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. So did you each have your own bed, for example?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. If we go down to paragraph 15 of your statement and  
11 page 3, you talk about a boy coming with a big car to  
12 visit the house. So do you mean a social worker came in  
13 a big car?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. Do you know what his name was?

16 A. I couldn't tell you.

17 Q. No. Can you remember how often he came? How  
18 frequently?

19 A. I couldn't tell you how many times he came.

20 Q. Okay. But you remember him visiting the house and him  
21 having this big car?

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. Can you remember him ever speaking to you when he came  
24 to visit?

25 A. No. I can't remember.

1 Q. Okay. Can you remember ever speaking to any social  
2 worker?

3 A. No.

4 Q. Can you remember a lady coming to the house who was  
5 a social worker?

6 A. No.

7 Q. If we go to paragraph 17 of your statement, you're  
8 talking there about what happened at mealtimes and you  
9 say there that you can remember that you all got your  
10 own breakfast?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. At the farmhouse. How did that work? Did you just help  
13 yourselves to things?

14 A. Yeah, just helped ourselves.

15 Q. What sort of thing would you have for breakfast, can you  
16 remember?

17 A. We could have cereal or toast or whatever. Whatever we  
18 wanted to have.

19 Q. Whatever you wanted to have?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. Okay. And then after breakfast you would go off to  
22 school on the bus; is that right?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. At paragraph 19 you say:

25 "The house was okay in the summertime but cold in

1 the winter."

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Can you remember what the heating was like in the house?

4 Were there fires or heaters?

5 A. There's one fire.

6 Q. Just one fire, and where was that?

7 A. The living room.

8 Q. How did you keep warm in the bedrooms?

9 A. Extra blanket.

10 Q. Okay. If we go on over the page, you talk again about

11 mealtimes. Who did the cooking in the house?

12 A. Our mum.

13 Q. Your mum, okay. Can you remember your sister or the

14 foster children helping with getting things ready for

15 meals?

16 A. No, I can't remember.

17 Q. Did you have to do anything to help get things ready for

18 meals, like peeling potatoes or anything like that?

19 A. No.

20 Q. Where did you eat your meals in the house?

21 A. In the living room.

22 Q. In the living room? Was there a table in the living

23 room?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. Could you sit at that table?

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. And who else would be sitting at the table in the living  
3 room having their tea, can you remember?

4 A. Everyone -- well, more or less everyone.

5 Q. Okay, so your parents, would they be there?

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. And what about your own sisters and brother?

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. Can you remember all of you sitting around the table  
10 together in the living room?

11 A. I can't remember us all sitting around at one time.

12 Q. Okay. You can remember being at the table, but not  
13 everybody who was at it, I suppose.

14 A. Yeah, yeah.

15 Q. Can you remember the foster children being at the table  
16 in the living room?

17 A. No, I can't remember -- we had a wee table in the  
18 kitchen as well.

19 Q. Okay, there was a wee table in the kitchen. Could you  
20 sit around that table or did you have to stand at that  
21 table?

22 A. I think there were stools around the table. I can't --

23 Q. You think there were stools round it?

24 A. I'm fairly sure there are stools.

25 Q. Can you remember eating at that table?

1 A. No, not really.

2 Q. Can you remember the foster children eating at that  
3 table?

4 A. Yeah, they ate at the table, yeah.

5 Q. Can you remember what sort of food you got to eat when  
6 you were at home? What sort of things did your mum  
7 make?

8 A. Oh, shepherds pie or whatever, mince and potatoes and  
9 that sort of things.

10 Q. Did you all have the same thing to eat or did people get  
11 different things to eat?

12 A. We all had the same.

13 Q. You all had the same, okay. Can you remember some food  
14 being locked away in the house?

15 A. Yeah, there was a reason for that, because it was  
16 getting stolen.

17 Q. So what sort of things were locked away?

18 A. Oh, I can't remember. Biscuits and crisps and that sort  
19 of thing.

20 Q. Okay, so treats?

21 A. Yeah, that sort of thing.

22 Q. Where were they locked away?

23 A. In my mum and dad's room.

24 Q. You said that there was a reason for that happening.

25 A. Mm.



1 Q. That they were being stolen?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. And who was stealing them?

4 A. I don't know.

5 Q. Okay. From what you're saying, was there a time when

6 things like that weren't locked away and then there came

7 a time when your parents decided to lock them away in

8 the bedroom?

9 A. Mm-hmm.

10 Q. Okay. If you wanted a bag of crisps or a biscuit or

11 anything from the bedroom, how would you go about

12 getting it?

13 A. You'd ask my mum. Or my dad if he's there. Mostly mum.

14 Q. Would you be allowed to go into the room yourself and

15 pick something or not?

16 A. No. No.

17 Q. So who would go into the room to get something if you

18 were allowed a biscuit, for example?

19 A. Well, my mum would bring the biscuits out.

20 Q. Okay, so she would go and unlock the door, okay. Were

21 things locked in the pantry, can you remember?

22 A. No, I don't think so.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. I don't remember, anyway.

25 Q. So you remember things being locked in the bedroom but

1 not elsewhere?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. Okay. If we go on over the page at page 6, you're being  
4 asked about something [FCV] says at paragraph 25 where  
5 she talks about being sent to bed without tea. Can you  
6 remember being sent to bed without tea?

7 A. No.

8 Q. Can you remember any of the foster children being sent  
9 to bed without tea?

10 A. No.

11 Q. Is it possible that it happened and you've forgotten?

12 A. I couldn't remember it.

13 Q. Can you remember being sent to your room if you'd been  
14 misbehaving, for example?

15 A. No.

16 Q. Again, is that something that you've forgotten or do you  
17 know if it happened or not?

18 A. I don't think so.

19 Q. You don't think so, okay.

20 Now, at paragraph 26 of your statement, you're  
21 responding there to something [FCV] says in her  
22 statement about the bathroom. I think there was one  
23 bathroom in the farmhouse; is that right?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Did it have a lock on the door or not?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. It did, okay. I think you'll know that FCV says in  
3 her statement that you sometimes used to go to the  
4 toilet when she was in the bath. Did that happen?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Why not?

7 A. Because the door would be locked or you would lock the  
8 door behind you.

9 Q. Paragraph 27, you say that you remember the foster kids  
10 wetting the bed. What do you remember about that?

11 A. I don't remember that.

12 Q. I think maybe when you gave your statement to the  
13 Inquiry you said that you remembered that it was maybe  
14 one or two of them that wet the bed and you heard your  
15 mum shouting, "You've wet the bed again".

16 A. I can't remember if I said that or not. I don't know.

17 Q. Can you remember that happening? Can you remember your  
18 mum shouting, "You've wet the bed again"?

19 A. I can't remember.

20 Q. Okay, so you can't remember that just now?

21 A. I can't.

22 Q. Okay. You'll know that FCV said in her statement  
23 that some members of your family, perhaps including you,  
24 called them names like "dirty" and "pee the bed". Did  
25 you call the foster children that?

1 A. I can't remember that one.

2 Q. Is it possible that you did that?

3 A. I can't remember, to tell the truth.

4 Q. Okay. And then in relation to chores, what sort of jobs  
5 did you have to do about the house when you lived in the  
6 farmhouse?

7 A. Logs and coal and that sort of things.

8 Q. Logs and coal, okay. So a chore to do with the logs,  
9 what was that?

10 A. Just sort them out and chop them for the fire.

11 Q. Okay, sort them out and chop them for the fire. And was  
12 that with an axe or with a saw?

13 A. With both.

14 Q. With both, okay. Can you remember any of the foster  
15 children doing that?

16 A. No.

17 Q. Is it possible that they did that and you can't remember  
18 that?

19 A. I can't remember if they've done it.

20 Q. Okay. And you mentioned coal. What was the job to do  
21 with the coal?

22 A. The coal cellar was outside. We had to carry it in.

23 Q. Okay. Can you remember doing that yourself?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Can you remember any of the foster children doing that?

1 A. I can't remember them doing it.

2 Q. Is it possible that they did that at some point and you  
3 just can't remember or you didn't see that?

4 A. It could be.

5 Q. You say at the top of page 7 that you and your brother  
6 mainly did chores outside of the house?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. And I think the only thing that you can remember doing  
9 inside would be cleaning out the fire or something?

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. Okay. Was that a job that you and your brother did?

12 A. Yeah, we done that, yeah.

13 Q. Sorry?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. You say at paragraph 30 that you'd help feed the cattle  
16 and the sheep on the farm.

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. Do you know if the foster children ever had to help with  
19 that or not?

20 A. No.

21 Q. They didn't?

22 A. (Witness shakes head).

23 Q. So who did that sort of thing?

24 A. Just whoever was available on the farm, you know, just  
25 went and seen the cows and that was it, the sheep.

1 Q. Did you and your brother do that job?

2 A. Yeah, if we were in that field we'd just go and have  
3 a look at them and give some grass to them or something.

4 Q. At paragraph 31, you say you didn't get pocket money  
5 from your parents; is that right?

6 A. That's right.

7 Q. Did you get any money from doing jobs on the farm?

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. So what sort of jobs would you do that you got money  
10 for?

11 A. Well, painting or anything like that, doors and that.

12 Q. So things like that.

13 A. And gates and that sort of thing.

14 Q. Okay. What happened to the money when you got that?

15 A. We kept it.

16 Q. Did you have to give it to your mum or anything like  
17 that?

18 A. No.

19 Q. Did you ever go and pick berries, for example? Is that  
20 something you did?

21 A. No.

22 Q. Is that maybe something that your sisters and the foster  
23 children did?

24 A. No, because there were never any berries on the farm.

25 Q. There were no berries on the farm?

1 A. No.

2 Q. You can't remember going anywhere else nearby to pick  
3 berries?

4 A. I wasn't there, I don't know.

5 Q. What about potatoes, lifting potatoes?

6 A. Yeah, we had potatoes on the other farm, the other farm.

7 Q. On another farm?

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. And did you get paid for doing that?

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. And what did you do with the money from that?

12 A. You kept it.

13 Q. Okay. Right, at paragraph 38 you talk about Christmas  
14 and birthdays. What was Christmas like in the farmhouse  
15 when the foster children were there, can you remember?

16 A. Okay, I think.

17 Q. Did you have a meal all together, can you remember?

18 A. Yes, I think so.

19 Q. And I think you say you had a Christmas tree up, so  
20 there were some decorations in the house?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. Did you get Christmas presents?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. What sort of things did you get at Christmas?

25 A. Oh, selection boxes, clothes, shoes, whatever.

1 Q. Do you know what sort of things the foster children got  
2 at Christmas when they lived with you?

3 A. Probably the same, roughly, I don't know. Just  
4 selection boxes and that.

5 LADY SMITH: You said, 'John', that you had a Christmas  
6 meal. Where did you have it, do you remember?

7 A. In the living room, I think.

8 LADY SMITH: Who was there?

9 A. Mum and dad, myself, my brother and sisters.

10 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

11 MS INNES: At page 9, paragraph 39, you talk about  
12 discipline in the house. In terms of your parents, your  
13 mum and your dad, did they both discipline you as  
14 children or was it more one than the other?

15 A. Both together, I think.

16 Q. If you did something wrong, how would they deal with it?

17 A. Oh, my dad would probably shout and bawl at us. And  
18 that would be it, done.

19 Q. Sorry, I didn't quite catch all of that. So your dad  
20 would shout and bawl, you think?

21 A. And that would be it over and done with. The matter  
22 would be finished with.

23 Q. And that would be it finished?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. Did he ever hit you with a belt or hit you with his



1 hand?

2 A. No.

3 Q. Did he ever threaten to do so?

4 A. No.

5 Q. So you can't remember him threatening to hit you with  
6 a belt?

7 A. No.

8 Q. Is it possible that he did that and you've forgotten?

9 A. No, I wouldn't think I'd forget that.

10 Q. And what about the foster children? How would your  
11 father deal with that if any of them did something  
12 wrong?

13 A. He'd probably just do the same as what he did to us.

14 Q. Which would be?

15 A. Shout and bawl.

16 Q. Shout and bawl, okay. Can you remember being sent to  
17 your room as a punishment?

18 A. No.

19 Q. Can you remember him sending the foster children to  
20 their room as a punishment?

21 A. I can't remember.

22 Q. Can you remember any threat that the foster children  
23 would be taken back to Dundee?

24 A. No idea.

25 Q. Nod idea, okay. And what about your mum? Did she take

1 anything to do with discipline?

2 A. No.

3 Q. So what if your dad was out and somebody did something

4 wrong, what would your mum do?

5 A. She'd wait till my dad came home.

6 Q. Okay. And what would happen then?

7 A. Well, the same thing.

8 Q. So would she tell him when he came home?

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. And would she say, "Wait till your father gets home" or

11 not?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. She would say that, okay. If we can move on from there,

14 we've already talked about social workers coming to

15 visit and you say that they maybe visited when you

16 weren't there, but you don't remember anyone other than

17 this man with a big car?

18 A. Mm.

19 Q. How did you feel that you got on with the foster

20 children?

21 A. Fine, I think.

22 Q. Did you get on better with any one of them rather than

23 the other, can you remember?

24 A. No.

25 Q. No? Okay. Did you spend time with them?

1 A. Not really. I mean, we were out on the farm most of the  
2 time.

3 Q. You were at the farm most of the time?

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. So are you saying you would be outside on the farm?

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. Doing things, okay. I think you know that FCV says  
8 in her statement that your family used to turn the  
9 foster children against each other, create arguments  
10 between them and things. Did that happen?

11 A. I can't remember that happening.

12 Q. Okay. I think she describes it as being a bit like us  
13 and them. Is that the way that you viewed it?

14 A. No. I don't think so.

15 Q. If we can go on over the page to page 10, you are asked  
16 there about various things that FCV says happened  
17 and you've given your response to them. I'm just going  
18 to go over the various things that she said. And you'll  
19 remember the warning that Lady Smith gave you at the  
20 beginning, that if something is likely to incriminate  
21 you, you don't need to answer the question.

22 A. (Witness nods).

23 Q. Okay?

24 A. Okay.

25 Q. So at paragraph 46, you say that you can't remember

1 anything happening at the farm that you thought was  
2 abuse; is that right?

3 A. That's right.

4 Q. You'll know that FCV said that your older sister hit  
5 the foster children with a slipper.

6 "She lifted our nightie up and struck us on the bum  
7 in front of [you]."

8 Can you remember that happening?

9 A. No.

10 Q. Can you remember ever seeing your sister hit one of the  
11 foster children with a slipper?

12 A. No.

13 Q. Is it possible that it happened and you've forgotten?

14 A. No.

15 Q. If we go down to the bottom of this page, page 10 and  
16 paragraph 50, you know that allegations were made  
17 against you I think at the time that the foster children  
18 left the farm; is that right?

19 A. I can't remember.

20 Q. Can you remember what happened that meant that they  
21 left?

22 A. No. I don't think so.

23 Q. Okay. I think we know that at that time FCV made  
24 allegations against your father and also against you.  
25 Can you remember being spoken to the police at that

1 time?

2 A. Yeah, I can remember.

3 Q. Okay. So how many times have the police spoken to you

4 about allegations that FCV [REDACTED] has made?

5 A. Just the once, I think.

6 Q. Just the once, okay. Is it possible that you were

7 spoken to back in the early 1980s and then you were

8 spoken to later on, so I think maybe late 1990s?

9 A. I have no idea.

10 Q. You don't know, okay. So you can remember going to

11 speak to the police about some allegations; is that

12 right?

13 A. I can't remember, honestly.

14 Q. Okay. You say in your statement that you were taken to

15 Cupar Police Station.

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. Can you remember that happening?

18 A. I can remember that. But I don't know what year it was.

19 Q. Okay. Can you remember roughly how old you were at the

20 time or where you were living at the time?

21 A. I can't remember.

22 Q. Can you remember how you felt about being questioned by

23 the police?

24 A. I just wondered what was going on.

25 Q. After you'd spoken to the police, what happened? Did

1           you have to go to court, can you remember?

2    A.  No, I don't think so.

3    Q.  You don't think so.  You can't remember ever having to

4           go to court in respect of allegations that FCV ██████ made?

5    A.  No.  I can't honestly remember that bit.

6    Q.  Okay.  Right, I'm going to move on to ask you about some

7           of the things that FCV ██████ said happened to her.  At the

8           top of page 12, she says there that you punched her for

9           hiding bread.  Did you ever punch her?

10   A.  No.

11   Q.  Can you remember her hiding bread?

12   A.  I can't remember that.

13   Q.  She says that you would slap her across the head.  Did

14           you do that?

15   A.  No.

16   Q.  She says that she would be punched on the chest by you?

17   A.  No.

18   Q.  Did that happen?

19   A.  No.

20   Q.  She says that you used to call her names.  Did you call

21           her names?

22   A.  No.

23   Q.  She says that they called her "big nose" and "big

24           mouth".  Can you remember that?

25   A.  No.

1 Q. Is it possible?

2 A. No, I don't know, I don't think so.

3 Q. She says that you used to get a wet towel and hit her  
4 when standing doing the dishes?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Flicking a wet towel at somebody?

7 A. No idea.

8 Q. Is it possible that that happened?

9 A. I can't remember it happening.

10 Q. I think she also said in evidence that you would give  
11 her a dead arm. Is that possible?

12 A. No. I don't think so.

13 Q. Sorry?

14 A. I don't think so.

15 Q. You don't think so, okay. If we go on to paragraph 55,  
16 she talks about something that she said happened to her  
17 brother and she says that you would use a horsewhip on  
18 him. Did that happen?

19 A. We never had a horsewhip.

20 Q. You never had a horsewhip.

21 A. No. I never seen it anyway.

22 Q. Sorry?

23 A. I never seen it.

24 Q. She described it in her evidence as a stick with a big  
25 leather bit on the end. Remember ever having anything

1           like that?

2    A.  No.

3    Q.  Maybe something that you might use to move livestock?

4    A.  No.

5    Q.  No?  Did you ever hit her brother?

6    A.  No.

7    Q.  She says that you used to call him an idiot.  Did you do

8           that?

9    A.  No.

10   Q.  At paragraph 56 she talks about having a pellet gun and

11       I think you tell us that you had a slug gun; is that

12       right?

13   A.  Mm, yes.

14   Q.  She says that you used to threaten her with it.

15   A.  No.

16   Q.  Did you do that?

17   A.  No.

18   Q.  And she says one time you threatened to shoot her in the

19       foot if she didn't dance.

20   A.  No.

21   Q.  And you were shooting at her feet to keep her dancing,

22       as it were?

23   A.  No.

24   Q.  Did that happen?

25   A.  No.



1 Q. She says that you kicked her up the bum. Did that  
2 happen?

3 A. No.

4 Q. Then at paragraph 57, again this is something that she  
5 said in her statement and she talked about a time that  
6 you were looking after them and you pretended, I think  
7 with tomato sauce, to have stabbed yourself. Did that  
8 happen?

9 A. I can't remember that.

10 Q. And they were panic-stricken and went to alert  
11 a neighbour. You remember that?

12 A. No, I have no idea.

13 Q. Is it possible that you might have done that sort of  
14 thing as a joke?

15 A. I wouldn't have thought so.

16 Q. You wouldn't have thought so, okay. If we go on to the  
17 next paragraph at paragraph 58 she talks about going to  
18 the Step Rock Pool in St Andrews. Do you know what  
19 she's talking about there in terms of the Step Rock Pool  
20 in St Andrews?

21 A. I know where it is, yeah.

22 Q. You know where it is, okay. And she says here that she  
23 was in the pool when you suddenly grabbed hold of her  
24 and stuck her head under the water. Did that happen?

25 A. No.

1 Q. And she says that you held her head under and kept it  
2 held under.

3 A. No.

4 Q. I think she said in her evidence that when this happened  
5 she caused a scene by screaming, so you all had to go  
6 back home in the car.

7 A. I can't remember.

8 Q. It was the end of the activity because of this.

9 A. I have no idea.

10 Q. Is it possible that happened and you've forgotten?

11 A. No, honestly, I don't know.

12 Q. You don't know, okay.

13 At paragraph 59, she makes reference to she  
14 understood that you had raped a girl when you were about  
15 15 and I think you say you can't remember that. You  
16 think if you had been charged with rape you'd remember  
17 it; is that right?

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. Okay. From the social work records, we understand that  
20 there was an incident on a school bus when you were  
21 about 15 when you and another boy were said to be  
22 holding a girl down and interfering with her clothing.  
23 Can you remember that happening?

24 A. No.

25 Q. I think it was reported to the girl's parents, but the

1 police weren't involved and it seemed to be dealt with  
2 through the school. Can you remember the headteacher  
3 speaking to you about that?

4 A. I can't remember that.

5 Q. Or your parents speaking to you about that?

6 A. I can't, I can't remember that.

7 Q. And you can't remember it happening at all?

8 A. I can't remember it, no.

9 Q. Is it possible that it happened and you've forgotten?

10 A. No.

11 Q. No, okay.

12 At paragraph 60, **FCV** says that she was sexually  
13 abused by you in a spare room in the farmhouse. Did  
14 that happen?

15 A. No.

16 Q. She says that you touched her underneath her clothing.  
17 Did you do that?

18 A. No.

19 Q. And she was made to touch you.

20 A. No.

21 Q. And I think in evidence she said that she had to perform  
22 oral sex on you. Did she --

23 A. No.

24 Q. -- have to do that?

25 In your response, when you gave your statement to

1 the Inquiry you said:

2 "I can't remember it. I've not got a clue where  
3 that's come from and I don't know where she's coming  
4 from with that."

5 Just to be absolutely clear about your evidence, are  
6 you saying it didn't happen or you can't remember it  
7 happening.

8 A. I can't help.

9 Q. Sorry?

10 A. I don't know nothing about it.

11 Q. You don't know nothing about it, okay.

12 Then at paragraph 62, she says that you had sex with  
13 her when she was about 12 or 13. Did that happen?

14 A. No.

15 Q. Did you ever have sex with her?

16 A. No.

17 Q. I think she told us in her evidence that that happened,  
18 she told her friend what had happened and then that was  
19 reported to the police and then it came about that she  
20 and the other children left your family. Is that your  
21 memory of what happened?

22 A. No.

23 Q. Around the time they left?

24 A. No.

25 Q. And she says at paragraph 63, she said that after she

1 had made the allegations, I think she was back in the  
2 house again with all of you and she was told that just  
3 was just making up stories. Can you remember saying  
4 that to her?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Can you remember anybody else in your family saying that  
7 to her?

8 A. I can't remember that.

9 Q. Is it possible that happened and you've forgotten?

10 A. No idea.

11 Q. No idea, okay.

12 Then at paragraph 64 of your statement, you say,  
13 when you're asked about your general reflections, you  
14 say:

15 "For a start, people should get their facts right  
16 before they start accusing people."

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Can you just explain what you mean by that?

19 A. Just what I'm saying.

20 Q. Okay. So what facts are not right in what FCV [REDACTED] said?

21 A. Well, none of it's right to me.

22 Q. Sorry?

23 A. None of it's right to me.

24 Q. None of it's right to you, okay. You say:

25 "It's as simple as that. A lot of people out there,

1           like myself, are getting things like this thrown in  
2           their face after 50 years."

3           And is that what you feel having to respond to  
4           FCV's allegations is like, it's being thrown in your  
5           face?

6   A. Yes.

7   Q. And you say:

8           "I think it's all wrong and I'm totally against it."

9   A. Yeah.

10   Q. So are you saying there that you don't think that you  
11       should have to answer to allegations that are made? Or  
12       what is it that you mean?

13   A. I don't know about that one.

14   Q. You don't know about that one. So just to repeat again  
15       what you said, you said:

16           "I think it's all wrong and I'm totally against it."

17           I'm just wondering if you can explain what you mean  
18       by that.

19   A. I don't know. I just think it's all wrong.

20   MS INNES: Okay. Okay. Right, I don't have any more  
21       questions for you. Thank you, 'John'. And there are no  
22       applications, my Lady.

23   LADY SMITH: Are there any outstanding applications for  
24       questions of 'John'?

25           'John', that does complete all the questions we have

1 for you today. Thank you very much for engaging with us  
2 and bearing with us while you've been giving your oral  
3 evidence today. It's very helpful to have heard you.  
4 As I said at the beginning, I do appreciate it's not  
5 easy to do what we've asked you to do, and you'll be  
6 glad to hear that I'm now able to let you go with my  
7 thanks for coming along and giving your evidence today.  
8 Thank you.

9 (The witness withdrew)

10 LADY SMITH: Ms Innes.

11 MS INNES: My Lady, that concludes the evidence for today  
12 and for this block of hearings.

13 The next set of hearings will commence on 9 August.

14 LADY SMITH: Yes. Thank you very much. I will rise now and  
15 there'll be a pause, as Ms Innes has indicated, until  
16 9 August when we will return to evidence in relation to  
17 this case study.

18 Thank you.

19 (12.50 pm)

20 (The Inquiry adjourned until 10.00 am  
21 on Tuesday, 9 August 2022)

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