

Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

Witness Statement of

MOV
[REDACTED]

Support person present: No

1. My name is MOV [REDACTED] I was born MOV [REDACTED] My date of birth is [REDACTED] 1972. My contact details are known to the Inquiry.

Life before going into care

2. I was born in Glasgow. I believe that my birth family were living in Irvine at the time. I don't have any memories of my birth family from that time, but I did meet them again in 2007. I was one of nine siblings. I would have been the middle child. I was from an Irish-Scottish travelling family. My mother's name is [REDACTED] and my father's name was [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was in and out of prison and in and out of my mother's life for large periods of time. It seems like every time he came back into her life, she would get pregnant and have another child.
3. I don't have any recollection of my biological family. Some of the first things I remember are crying in a crib. I also remember I dropped a kettle of boiling water on myself. I remember a flash of what could have been parents or foster parents, I really don't know. I was crying and somebody was saying something like, "See, you shouldn't have left that." That's probably my earliest memory, but I don't know how old I was. I have some recollection of going to the hospital, but I can't say what happened when I was there.
4. I'm assuming I was with foster carers when the incident with the boiling kettle happened, because I've spoken to my birth mother and she has no memory of that

happening. My adoptive parents have no knowledge of it either. As I got older, I thought that it was my fault that I got taken away from my parents. I thought I might have been taken away because of the burn on my foot. That wasn't something that anybody told me, I was just looking for an explanation as to why nobody wanted me and why I was given away.

5. There are a lot of different stories about why I was taken into care. My adoptive parents told me a lot of stigma about my birth family, that they were scummy people and that they tore the doors off walls to heat their home. From what I understand, my biological father was in town. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] went to a pub and something happened that night. There may have been a fight at the bar and the police were called. [REDACTED] wasn't a drinker. I might have been outside. I ended up at the police station that night under the care of the police. I think it was before I was one year old.
6. As far as I understand it, all my brothers and sisters were also taken away from my biological parents at that time. We were all separated. I was placed into foster care. I think that my mother was more interested in getting her children back than my father was. She tried to do so as soon as we were taken away in 1973. She had the support of her parents. They were able to find everybody except for me. I was the only child who wasn't integrated back into the family.
7. When my adoptive mother was diagnosed with dementia, we had to go through some paperwork. I found some letters from a lawyer which indicated that [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] actively hid me from my family, who were trying to get me back. There was a protracted legal battle over me. My aunt was supposed to drive my mother to a court hearing. My aunt didn't show up in time, my mum missed the hearing and she then lost the adoption case.
8. I have a memory of being sodomised very early on in life. I used to have nightmares of four black shapes holding me down or trying to drown me. I would wake up, screaming. I used to call them Barbapapas, after a cartoon character that was around when I was a kid. It was a recurring nightmare. I'm assuming it was something that happened when I was old enough to store it in my memory. I was in foster care with

██████████ and ██████████ from 1974, but I think it might have been something that happened before I went into their care. I don't think they would have played any part in it.

Foster care, ██████████, ██████████ Largs

9. ██████████ maiden name was ██████████. ██████████ had already been married and had a child. I don't know why he split up with his first wife. I know that his daughter wasn't very fond of him. From what ██████████ told me, she only used to come by to receive money. I'm assuming that was child support. ██████████ and ██████████ didn't have any children between them.
10. ██████████ told me that she used to work with children with someone called ██████████. I believe it was in a children's home called ██████████. I'm not sure if I was taken there, but ██████████ became smitten with me when she was a social worker. She told me that she had actually gone to my parents' home and met my family. I went into ██████████ and ██████████'s care in ██████████ 1974, when I was two years old. The only thing I remember vividly from before that time is being burnt by the kettle. I'm not sure when, but around that time ██████████ and ██████████ bought the cottage at ██████████ in Largs.
11. Before I came on the scene, ██████████ was in the military in Belgium, working on an Air Force base. He was then a police man in Glasgow. He left that job and started working on a golf course and then he took odd jobs, including odd jobs on the ██████████ in Largs. ██████████ was a full-time mother when I was a child.
12. The house at ██████████ was a three bedroom bungalow. ██████████ built an extension onto it with a sunroom and a dining room. There was a living room and a couple of bathrooms. It was a fair-sized house. My bedroom was at the back of the house. I had a bed, dresser drawers and a closet that you could open up. It was bare-bones, but it was suitable.

Routine at the [REDACTED]*Mornings and bedtime*

13. [REDACTED] used to get me up in the morning. She would feed me and make sure my uniform was ready. She would pack my lunch for me in my school bag.

Mealtimes / Food

14. Meals were good and I was well-fed, apart from Brussels sprouts. [REDACTED] would try to get me to eat Brussels sprouts and I didn't like them. They'd be on my plate the next time. At that point in my life, everything was okay.

School and nursery

15. I attended a nursery school in Largs, but I'm not sure of its name. It was just as you came into the town. From there, I attended St. Mary's Primary School. It was a Catholic school. I can recall walking to school by myself. There were no bad experiences at St. Mary's that I can recall. I got on okay at school, apart from getting the strap a couple of times. I can't really remember what that was for, but I remember going to the office to get the strap. I remember interacting with other kids and trying to learn. I remember reading *Janet and John* books. I think I had difficulty learning to read at first, but I picked it up. I'm a good reader now.

Leisure time

16. I had toys, like Action Man. [REDACTED] used to bring me back model cars from London. I don't remember having a lot of books. I think I had a Rupert book, but that's the only one I recall. I remember having a lot of football albums and collecting stickers.
17. I think growing up in Largs was pretty normal for the most part. When I got a bit older, I had a tendency to wander round the town a lot. By the age of about five, I would crawl out of the windows to go out and play. I was always trying to sneak out. I had a

free spirit. There was a horse field across the road from us, although there was no horse in it at that time. I believe the Marist brothers owned that property. I used to see them walking across the field to go down to the beach. I spent a lot of time on the beach. I spent a lot of time by myself, wandering around, exploring and investigating. Those memories for me are very positive. Those are the kind of things that I miss.

18. I was just a little critter. I wasn't afraid to go and knock on people's doors and introduce myself. I did it to people down the road all the time. I would also go and play on the Marist property.

Religion

19. [REDACTED] was Protestant and [REDACTED] was Catholic. [REDACTED] was a real stickler about going to church. My birth family were Irish travellers, so they were also Catholic. I've been baptised twice because my biological parents baptised me and then I was baptised again when I was at St. Mary's Primary School. [REDACTED] forced me to go to church for a large part of my life. I was never a very religious person, so I don't think I ever went along freely.

Holidays

20. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] took me on holiday to Spain on two occasions. We also went to Canada before the adoption process was completed. I have good memories of the holidays, although I had heat stroke when we were in Spain and I had to be carried around a lot. When we went to Canada, I was sick on the flight.

Healthcare

21. I have memories of having ear infections. The family doctor would come to our house.

Relationship with foster parents

22. I called [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] "mummy" and "daddy" for as long as I can remember. When we lived in Largs, my relationship with [REDACTED] was good. I forgot about my past and she became like my mother. If there was trouble or I had to ask a parent, I would go straight to [REDACTED] and avoid [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was very affectionate. I think her intentions were good. I think religion was driving her and the adoption. It seemed like it was her mission in life. I would say that [REDACTED] was a typical mother. The only thing was that [REDACTED] was always right from her perspective. He got the last word.
23. I don't know the legalities of foster care. I'm a bit cynical because of my dad. I don't know if they pay foster carers in Scotland, but I'm assuming that's why [REDACTED] took me on. He never really seemed like a very good father. Because of all the time I've had to look back and think about it, I feel like I was taken on by him to cover his mortgage. I feel that way because of the relationship I had with him and how cold it was.
24. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] didn't tell me much about my birth family, other than that they were scummy people who tore the doors down to heat the house. I was told that I should be thankful that they had taken me in. I think I had completely forgotten about my birth family by the time we moved to Canada.

Visits

25. I vaguely remember [REDACTED] coming home with a toy. It was a Spiderman punch bag with water at the bottom and you could blow it up. He gave it to me and asked me if I liked it. He told me that somebody was going to come over and talk to me. He said the person was going to ask me some questions, including whether I liked where I was and whether I wanted to stay with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. I think that took place before a meeting with a social worker. I think it might have been connected to the adoption process.
26. I was almost coached to answer the questions a certain way. Somebody came and asked me the questions and I answered the questions. That's the only social work visit

I can remember from when I was in foster care. I have a kind of flashing memory of that meeting. I think the guilt of the toy has kept it in my memory. It made me feel guilty later on. When I was about fourteen, I realised that I was adopted and what adoption meant. I felt like I'd maybe completed the adoption process for [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and made an error for my family. It hit me that everything was my fault.

Abuse in foster care

27. There was a boy called [REDACTED] who lived around the corner from us in Largs. His father was [REDACTED]. I think their surname might have been [REDACTED]. Before I started school, he molested me at the end of [REDACTED]. It was around the time I started creeping out of the windows. He tormented me and sexually molested me repeatedly. He was a sadist. I don't know how old he was, but he was several years older than me.

St. Columba's College, Largs

28. The Marist property was just across the street from [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] There were two main buildings. There was the building where the kids stayed, which I think was called Landour. There was the building with the classrooms, which I think some of the teachers stayed in. There was another building with a billiard room in it, the small pantry at the back and some sheds and things.
29. I used to be on the Marist property quite a lot before I started attending school at St. Columba's. [REDACTED] was [REDACTED]. I can't remember whether I went over there without [REDACTED] or whether he took me over there when [REDACTED]. At some point, I ended up over there and I do remember going with him. I would play with the school children there. I was there routinely between the age of about five and seven.

30. When I was about seven, I attended St. Columba's as a day pupil. I don't know why the decision was made. I think it might have been because my biological parents were looking for me and my foster parents were trying to take me out of the public school system. St. Columba's was a private school. My biological family lived in Irvine, which was close by, and they had been to Largs, looking for me.
31. I'm not sure of the exact dates when I attended St. Columba's. I know I was there for a couple of years or so. I can't really remember my first day. I remember [REDACTED] taking me over to the school in my blue blazer, but that's about it. I don't think I had any apprehension about going to the school because I already knew some of the children there.
32. I think there were at least fifty boys at St. Columba's. I think I would have been one of the youngest children there, but I don't remember the age of the oldest children. I don't have a great recollection of the other children there. The only children I can remember are the [REDACTED] brothers because they taught me how to shoplift. I was under the impression that pretty much all the boys boarded at St. Columba's, except for me and the [REDACTED] brothers. I know that a lot of the kids missed their parents. I remember thinking it was really odd, to be separated from your family to go to school.
33. I remember Brother Arthur, who was the headmaster of the school. Brother Arthur was a very caring person. He used to come over and visit my family, as did some of the other brothers. There was a Brother who I think was called ^{MFY}[REDACTED] I recall him as being very nice. I think he left to go to South Africa. He taught in the school before I started there. I remember Brother Germanus. I know my mother was very fond of him, but I don't really have any memories of him. Brother Peter taught science and gym. I have a photograph of myself and five of the brothers, which was taken shortly before I left the school. I can identify four of the brothers in that photograph, Brother Germanus, who is on the right hand side, Brother Peter, who is second from right, Brother ^{MFY}[REDACTED] who is standing in the middle beside [REDACTED] and Brother Arthur, who is on the left hand side. I don't know who the individual standing at the back is. I have provided a copy of that photograph to the Inquiry. I don't recall there being any lay staff at the school.

Routine at St. Columba's*Mornings and bedtime*

34. I think I spent one or two nights at St. Columba's. I don't recall much about the routine. I remember going up some wooden stairs and that the dormitories were large. There could have been ten or twelve single beds in the dormitories, but I'm not sure. I think I stayed in the dormitories when I spent the night there, but I don't have any great memory of it. I don't recall the boys who boarded telling me any horror stories about bed time.

Mealtimes

35. I think I did eat meals at the school occasionally. I think we would eat in the pantry area. I think I remained at the school for lunch, but I really can't recall much about mealtimes. I remember that Brother Peter liked curry. He ate it a lot and the boys would have it too. I recall seeing the brothers eating in the pantry as a group.

School

36. I think we went from class to class together as a unit. I think the people in my science class were also in my gym class. I think the classes were arranged by age. Brother Peter taught science and gym. Brother Arthur taught music. I remember him teaching us how to play guitar. I wasn't very good at it, but he always tried to encourage me. Later on in life, I have a love for guitar. I've spent a lot of time playing it. It's where I go to escape things now. I enjoyed music, but I wasn't really a big fan of school. I just liked to wander.

Leisure time

37. I used to go over to St. Columba's before I started at the school. I would go there at the weekend or in the evenings as well, after I started. We would congregate in the billiard room and play billiards. I would watch TV shows and movies with the other

boys. I remember watching Blake 7 and a show about a monkey god and a pig god travelling around Japan. There was a video game set up in the living room called Pong.

38. I remember playing with the other children and interacting with them. There was a small wooded area and a trail that went around the rugby pitch. I always wanted to be around kids. I liked the property. I liked investigating things and climbing up the back hills. I didn't live in fear 24/7.

Trips

39. The only outing that I can remember was to Millport. We were in a van and I remember it being packed full of kids. I think it was at the weekend because there was a fair running.

Healthcare

40. I have a memory of being on the school grounds with a child who lived almost directly across the road from me. I don't know if it was before or after I started at St. Columba's, but the other boy wasn't a pupil there. I wandered up to his house and we ended up wandering around together. There was a trail that went up to the golf courses above Largs. Every kid wanted to go up there. We asked one of the Brothers whether it was okay for us to be on the grounds. I think it was Brother Arthur. He said yes, but told us to keep away from a shed at the back.
41. After a while, we gravitated towards the shed. They had window panes, stacked horizontally on a shelf in the shed. The other boy and I climbed the shelf. The frames he was standing on gave way and he fell through the glass. He cut his leg from his ankle right up to his hip. It was flayed. I remember him looking up at me and I was looking down at him in horror. He hopped off down the trail. By the time the shock gave way and I was able to climb down myself, he was gone. I followed the blood trail back. He was in the pantry room, where the priests would sit and eat together. They had him in a big steel tub, compressing his leg. I think they were waiting for a doctor to get there to stitch him back up.

42. I don't know how long after that it was, but I ended up at the boy's house. I think I went to see how he was doing. He was in a cast up to his hip. His mother was screaming at me. That was another thing that I felt guilty about. I don't recall my parents or any of the priests talking to me about what happened. I just remember the child's mother basically saying, "Look what you did to my son."

Religious instruction

43. I can't recall much about religion at St.Columba's. I'm not a religious person. I do remember the Brothers took us to a cathedral in Glasgow. We also used to take our guitars to the local parish church in Largs. The whole class would play acoustic guitar at the front of the church.

Visits

44. I know that parents did visit the school to see their children. I know this because a visitor gave a child a really large Edinburgh rock candy and I stole it from him. I don't know anything about the arrangements for visits.

Discipline

45. If there were rules at St. Columba's, I can't remember them. It was a strict school. I don't recall any of the brothers using physical punishments, apart from Brother Peter.

Abuse at St. Columba's

Peer bullying

46. I remember one incident when I was out on the rugby field. I was seven or eight years old. There were two other boys from my class there. One boy went to get something. The other boy took a small box of Rice Krispies and he urinated inside the box. He said he was going to feed it to the other child when he returned. I argued with him and

told him not to do it. The other boy came back and I told him not to eat the Rice Krispies, but he did. I thought that incident was odd.

Brother Peter

47. Brother Peter would berate you all the time. I recall many in the class being afraid of his temper. He had a small classroom which overlooked the rugby field. If you weren't paying attention or your eyes wandered outside to a football or rugby class, there would be dusters flying across the classroom. He would throw chalk dusters or chalk at us for looking out of the window or not understanding the classwork. He would also chastise us loudly. It was done in front of the class. At times, he would even make us pick up the duster and bring it back to him.
48. Brother Peter threw something at the boys frequently. It was a daily occurrence. The memory I have is of walking into his classroom in sheer terror. The duster probably bruised me on occasion, but I didn't go looking for the bruises. Psychologically, it definitely damaged me. It was a frantic feeling, to walk into his classroom and know that each day could be the same. At eight or nine years old, it instilled a mentality that it was better somebody else than me. I dreaded going to his classroom. I remember shaking in fear to the point that my face would twitch when he threw his duster, like a short circuit.
49. I was already coming from a broken family and under a lot of stress. Brother Peter was well aware of this. The Brothers were very close to my family. They would go over to my parents' home to socialise. Brother Peter was one of the Brothers who would socialise with my parents. The Brothers knew that the adoption process was ongoing. Most adults understand that that would be a lot of pressure on a child.
50. I remember getting changed for rugby. We had to strip out of our uniforms and take our underwear off. We had to put shorts on and we weren't allowed to wear underwear. It was very strict that we weren't allowed to wear underwear. Brother Peter would stand and watch, making sure that everybody complied. I thought it was really strange because I'd come from a public school and I had never experienced that before. The

only staff member I can recall being there when that happened was Brother Peter. It bothered me and I didn't understand why it didn't bother the other boys too.

51. On one occasion, I scraped my knee during a rugby scrum. At the end of the game, the rest of the guys went to get changed. Brother Peter took me to the pantry. He got me a drink of Ribena. He asked me how I was and how my leg was. He wiped my leg down. He then grabbed my genitals for a couple of seconds. I didn't look at him. I just looked at my drink. He then told me to go and get changed. I went to get changed and there was nobody else there by that time.
52. I felt confused and shocked. I knew something wasn't right. I think I was too young to understand what was going on at the time. After that happened, I always changed as far away from Brother Peter as possible.

Reporting of abuse at St. Columba's

53. I didn't talk to my parents or any other children about what happened with Brother Peter. I can't remember any children talking to me about being abused. I tried to talk to Brother Arthur, the headmaster, about things. I don't know whether I gave him details, but I tried to explain to him that there was something about Brother Peter. I'm not sure how the conversation came about, but I remember it being up in his office. We were talking about classwork and applying myself at school. I think it just came up. I felt safe with him and I'd known him for a long time.
54. Brother Arthur was concerned about what I had said, but I don't think he was just concerned about me. The way he delivered it to me was by saying that there were a lot of things going on in my life. I was going through an adoption process and I was leaving for Canada. He said I should take those things into consideration. I don't know whether he was trying to change my way of thinking. I can't really explain it. Looking back, I feel that there was some manipulation. Maybe he was afraid or worried.

Leaving St. Columba's

55. We left Scotland to go and live in Canada in [REDACTED] 1981. From what I've been told, [REDACTED]'s mother was moving to Canada to live with his brother, [REDACTED]. We all moved at the same time and lived with [REDACTED] initially. I have a photograph of me with some of the Brothers, which was taken the day I left the school. I have provided a copy of that photograph to the Inquiry. I'm not sure whether the adoption had been completed by the time we left for Canada. I know it was around that time. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were about 45 years old when they adopted me. They were probably a little out of touch with my generation.
56. When we had moved to Canada, we received a couple of handwritten letters from the Brothers at St. Columba's. I have provided those letters to the Inquiry. One of the letters was addressed to [REDACTED] and reminisced about how they had met. I think it was from Brother Arthur. He said that he hoped that I would forget my past and move on with my new life. Brother Germanus may have sent the second letter.

Life after being in care

57. When we moved to Canada, [REDACTED]'s demeanour towards me changed. His aggressive and abusive personality became evident as soon as we got there. I couldn't really explain what was going on in my life for the next twenty years. It seemed as if [REDACTED] was a dark shadow in my life. Everything I ever did or said was wrong or never good enough. I had problems adjusting in school and [REDACTED] had problems adjusting in life. Some of his stress bubbled over onto me. I got rid of my accent pretty quickly. It was an intentional thing. I practiced saying words differently. [REDACTED] wasn't happy about that.
58. I started having difficulty in maths after I moved to Canada. We were moving from imperial to metric systems at the time. I didn't understand how maths worked anymore because I'd been taught with a different mind-set. I can remember trying to do maths questions. [REDACTED] would swat me over the head because I couldn't remember some of

the questions. He was disgusted that I couldn't spell Scotland correctly. He didn't like the fact that I was trying to change my accent and pick up the customs of the country I was living in. I was conflicted.

59. ██████ wasn't doing very well. He thought he'd be able to become a police officer in Canada, but that didn't work out. He was struggling to find work. If I tried to talk about ██████'s aggression, ██████ would justify it and tell me that he needed work and he was stressed out. It became my fault again. I spent a lot of time trying to avoid ██████ and wondering why everything I was doing was wrong.
60. With everything that was happening with ██████ my grades dropped. It turned out that 80% wasn't enough for him. I got into smoking marijuana and drinking alcohol. I faded off, out of school. I tried to go back to school a couple of times. I went back when I was 21 and working full-time.
61. We moved out into a small town, ██████ It's about thirty minutes from ██████ Unfortunately, I'm still here. It's an okay little town and it's quiet, but it's not for me. It's not my life. I didn't choose it. I reflect on that, being stuck here every day and seeing this town. It's a reminder of where I'm supposed to be and it just doesn't feel right for me.
62. I met my wife in 1989. My wife is from the next town over. We met in high school. We've had a lot of ups and downs but she's an amazing person. All of her family are here, including my son's grandparents. I don't talk to ██████ and ██████ anymore. I haven't spoken to ██████ for about twelve years. The only real family I have is my spouse, my son and my wife's half of the family. My son is 25 now.
63. I moved out of ██████ and ██████'s home at the age of fifteen. I took off across the states. I got as far as Amarillo in Texas to try and start my own life, but then I came back to Canada. I didn't actually finish high school until the age of 38.
64. After leaving Scotland in 1981, I didn't return until 2006. I went to the Registry in Edinburgh. I got some information. When I returned to Canada, I did some Facebook

research and I found my sister. It was good, but it was traumatic. The next year, in 2007, I was reunited with my birth family. A couple of my siblings were in prison and one had died. I met my mother, one sister and four brothers along with uncles, aunts and cousins. It was good, but it was difficult for me. I was happy, but I was also very angry. My life had been stolen.

65. My birth mother and my brothers and sister desperately want me to move home. I'm caught between a rock and a hard place. My wife's family are all in Canada and it wouldn't be fair on her to move. I talk to my family in Scotland on Facebook, but it's not the same as face to face. I can't hug my brother or my sister. When I'm down, there's nobody there for me.

Impact

66. Brother Peter's abuse eroded trust. I still don't trust people to this day. I remember confusion, sadness and dread, heading to his class room. I would shake when I went to his classroom and my face would twitch when he threw his duster. That carried on into adult life. Any time someone was aggressive towards me, like my father or other children later on in life, I would automatically start shaking and my face would twitch. It was a fight or flight instance and my instinct was to want to flee. It later manifested anger and aggression within myself. I do not deal with some situations very well.
67. I've told my wife about Brother Peter, the duster and the changing rooms. I've been talking to her about that for years. Although some of the things that happened at St. Columba's were horrible, I still have a lot of fond memories of the place and the people.
68. I'm surprised I'm still alive, given some of the things I have gone through in life and the emotional struggle of it all. It's been a trial. I have been on a serotonin inhibitor for many years now. It helps me to cope day to day, but I have a lot of difficulty dealing with negative situations or confrontation. I have been living with this for a long time now. I have to tell myself that I am not to blame for any other victims who may have been compromised after my time at St. Columba's.

69. I have attended Lanark County mental health services on several occasions. My therapist told me to think of a box. Most people's tolerance box is about a quarter full. My tolerance is about 98% full. If little things happen, I have a hard time coping with anything extra and it triggers me. I relate my mental health difficulties to everything that's happened in my entire life. It does relate to my time at St. Columba's, but there are other factors as well. I've [REDACTED] and tried to [REDACTED] myself. I used to [REDACTED] not to kill myself but just to feel something. I used to [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Maybe I wanted to offend my mother or be heard. It was a way to release whatever I had inside me.
70. I prefer to be alone rather than socialise. I would say I'm a hermit. I choose to be by myself a lot. I think about the past a lot. I've been living with all of this for years. It's like a perpetual loop for me. Sometimes, I get flashbacks. It's not visual flashbacks, it's bouts of rage. I've attended a support group for people with post-traumatic stress disorder. I walked away from the programme when I got back into work. Work was helping me and I couldn't take time off. The group did help me to put things into perspective a little bit, but it didn't fix the problems. I wondered why I was sitting there with the other people. Their issues were more about alcoholism or wives splitting up with them. I couldn't really relate to what they were saying.
71. My life will be upside down for the rest of my days. I struggle for normality. Since I was a little child, people have always told me that I'm different. They notice that there's something about me. They tell me I'm frowning when I'm not frowning. I just feel really out of place a lot of the time. Emotionally, I'm probably crippled because I feel like I'm not where I'm supposed to be. I'm supposed to be with my family, who are slowly dropping off one at a time. My brother, [REDACTED] passed away last year. He'd been dying to meet me. I didn't have the money to go and I was apprehensive about meeting him. That time has gone and I can't get it back. That part of my life is slowly drifting away. With each passing day, it gets a little worse. Every Christmas is hell.
72. My son is probably borderline manic depressive and borderline suicidal from being around me. He expresses that to me. He doesn't communicate much to me, but we're working on our relationship. I try to get help for him, but he won't let me help. It's a

spiral that's ongoing. It affects me, my wife, my son. I take full responsibility for it so I have to swallow that too. I'm not the nice, perfect father that I'd like to be or the perfect spouse. I have a lot of baggage and sometimes I can't help but drop that baggage on them. I don't think I'd be alive if it wasn't for my wife and son.

73. It's going to be a long road for me, probably till the day I die. I don't know who to go to talk to. Counselling didn't do much for me. I haven't had any more therapy because it costs a lot of money and it isn't covered by my insurance. I earn the minimum wage. It pays the bills, but there's not a lot left over. I can't put the financial burden of me going to therapy on the rest of my family.

Reporting of Abuse

74. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] told me that children should be seen and not heard. Maybe that's why I kept my mouth shut for so long. I spoke to my wife about my experiences. She said that I should consider coming forward to the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry. I never reported it to the police or any other authorities. I was too young when I first arrived in Canada and we did a lot of moving around. There were a lot of transitions and different schools. There was so much drama going on in my life that it slowly started to slip away. I had no ongoing contact with anybody I went to St. Columba's with. The only name I can remember is the [REDACTED] brothers.
75. The Scottish police contacted me recently via email. So far, my contact with them has been good. I sent them my statement and the photograph of me at St. Columba's. They said they would get back in touch with me.

Records

76. My wife and I have tried to get a transcript of my grades or school records from St. Columba's, but we haven't been able to get them. I don't feel that I need that for my

own history. I have the photograph of my last day at school and the letters that were sent to us in Canada, but I don't have any other documents from St. Columba's.

77. I've been in the process of trying to get my social work records back since 2006. It's been a long hack. I've contacted as many people as I can and waited as patiently as I can. There was down-time for just over a year at one point and then somebody responded out of the blue. I was originally told there was a package in Kilmarnock, but when I contacted them there was nothing. I had contact with an MP, who forwarded me on to the archives in Glasgow, who in turn forwarded me onto somebody else from North Ayrshire Council, who finally responded. They have a package with information about my life. I haven't seen my records yet.

Lessons to be Learned

78. I know things have changed nowadays, but they really should make an effort to reintegrate children in foster care into their families. There are a lot of difficulties and people might not have the means to support their children, but they should be getting financial support from the government to ensure that families are kept together. I don't think putting children into a meat market is the right solution. If people are being paid money to foster children, that seems like an opportunity for a lot of negative things to happen to children.
79. As far as schools are concerned, maybe we should be thinking about video surveillance in classrooms. There should be regular updates with children. Maybe it can be hard to get honest replies from children if they have gripes, but they could have an internal audit, asking children what's going on in their daily lives at schools. Maybe they could have school meetings where everybody congregates and talks about what's right and wrong and that they shouldn't be afraid to step forward.
80. In the school that I went to in [REDACTED] a child was being molested by a career counsellor in the office. If those children had been told to watch out for that kind of thing at the beginning of the school year, maybe that wouldn't have happened to that

individual. If everybody knew that they were all on board with one another and they all had each other's backs and wouldn't be ostracised or blamed, it might be easier for people to come forward. There is a stigma. Men are supposed to be strong people and resolve their own issues, but that's not something that can be done all the time. Children and teachers should be educated together. It should be done in a way that they're all on board together and they all know one another and trust one another. People who want to abuse children would then be afraid to come out and do the things they do because they would be afraid of getting caught.

Hopes for the Inquiry

81. I read an article about Brother Peter and it mentioned the duster. The article was on the internet just before I contacted the Inquiry. I knew the person wasn't lying because I had been telling my wife all along that I had a teacher who used to throw dusters at us. I hope that I'll find some peace from coming forward to the Inquiry, knowing that it might help someone down the road or help myself down the road. I don't want to end up killing myself over depression and things that I can't control. I'm sure other people feel the same way.

82. I have no objection to my witness statement being published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry. I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

MOV


Signed.....

Dated..... June 19th 2019