

Thursday, 29 January 2026

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(10.00 am)

LADY SMITH: Good morning, and welcome back to Phase 10 of our case study hearings. As we indicated yesterday, we're going to start this morning with some evidence being read in. I'll invite Ms Forbes to introduce where we are going with that.

MS FORBES: Good morning, my Lady.

The first statement this morning is from an applicant who is not anonymous. His name is Thomas Wilson and the reference for his statement is WIT-1-000001184.

LADY SMITH: Thank you.

Thomas Wilson (read in)

MS FORBES: My Lady, Thomas was born in 1954 and he did give live evidence previously, during the Phase 8 List D case study on 7 November 2023. That was Day 385 of the Inquiry and the reference for the transcript is TRN-12-000000017.

LADY SMITH: Thank you.

MS FORBES: And he gave evidence for Rossie, Oakbank and Polmont. So, given that he has given live evidence, my Lady, I'm not going to go through a lot of his statement in detail and just maybe focus on his time in St Margaret's.

1 LADY SMITH: That's fine.

2 MS FORBES: But by way of background, Thomas was born in
3 Buckhaven, Fife, and originally stayed with his parents
4 in a council house in Fife [REDACTED]
5 [REDACTED]. He tells us more about [REDACTED]
6 later after his parents separated, and we have that
7 there in his statement.

8 He says that he was placed into care when he was
9 very young, ultimately, he says only 10 months old, and
10 the reasons seem to be as a result of neglect.

11 My Lady, we do have records for Thomas and we know
12 that from the records that the RSPCC were involved and
13 ultimately there was a petition to remove [REDACTED]
14 from the parents' home.

15 Thomas was originally in Greenbank Children's Home
16 in Leven and this was on and off. We know from his
17 records it was on and off from about [REDACTED] 1955,
18 then he would be back with his parents again, and then
19 back in Greenbank, and that happened a couple of times.
20 Then ultimately it seems that he was returned to his
21 parents for a trial period from there on [REDACTED] 1957
22 and he remained back with his parents until he was
23 admitted to St Margaret's.

24 He tells us about St Margaret's from paragraph 8
25 onwards and he was admitted there, from the records we

1 have, on [REDACTED] 1958. There were periods, my Lady,
2 where he was returned back to his parents for a trial
3 period, and this was not until [REDACTED] 1961, but then was
4 readmitted to St Margaret's again in [REDACTED] 1962. But
5 Thomas tells us, my Lady, that he was, he thinks, about
6 4 years old when he went to St Margaret's --

7 LADY SMITH: That would be about right, yes.

8 MS FORBES: Yes, and he says that he remembers not wanting
9 to leave the family home and the social worker grabbed
10 him by the arm to put him in the car.

11 From paragraph 9, he says:

12 'When I arrived at St Margaret's, I saw that it was
13 a large Victorian house. I met KNC [REDACTED], who was
14 SNR [REDACTED] for the home. David Murphy [REDACTED] as
15 the headmaster during my time at the home. He would
16 have been in his 30s then, but he has since died.
17 I also met Margaret Finlay who was in charge of the
18 girls. She did not stay at the home as she had her own
19 house nearby. We had to call the people in charge
20 "Uncle" or "Auntie".

21 'I was still upset when I arrived as I was wanting
22 to go home. I did see [REDACTED] [and he names him]
23 that first day, but he had different thoughts from me as
24 he was happy to be there. He ended up staying there
25 until he was old enough to join the army. [REDACTED]

1 [REDACTED] the same dormitory.

2 'Secondary Institutions - to there were periods where the social
3 work thought things were okay with my family and I would
4 be back staying with them. It never lasted longer than
5 a few months before I was back at St Margaret's.
6 I stayed there for about eight years.

7 'I think there would have been 15 to 20 boys and the
8 same number of girls. They would have been between the
9 ages of 4 and up to about 16. In St Margaret's, there
10 were three dormitories for boys and a large room for the
11 girls. In the dormitory I stayed in, we had bunk beds
12 and there were eight of us in there. In one of the
13 other boys' dorms, there were five or six bunks. In the
14 last boys' dorm there were 10 sets of bunks. All the
15 dormitories were on the upper floor. The toilets and
16 showers were also on this floor and there was
17 a staircase leading to the attic.

18 'On the ground floor there was the dining hall,
19 kitchen, offices for the staff and nurse, along with
20 a bedroom for staff for overnight stays. There was
21 a playroom where we could play the bagpipes, violins and
22 games. There was another bedroom for any students
23 learning to be care workers and who needed to stay
24 there. There was a kit room with a sewing machine. In
25 that room, there were lots of large, mail-type bags

1 which contained clothing that had been handed into the
2 school from charities.

3 'There was the boiler house where the laundry was
4 also done. This was in a corridor which led to the rear
5 gardens, where fresh vegetables were grown. There was
6 also an area out the back where we could sometimes play
7 football. The garden had a large stone wall surrounding
8 it. In the wall, there was a gate built into it which
9 led to Elie beach.

10 'That first morning when [REDACTED] arrived, [REDACTED] given
11 a bath, as [REDACTED] still dirty. [REDACTED] also given
12 a clean set of clothes and shoes. They also checked [REDACTED]
13 hair for nits. [REDACTED] mother and father never kept [REDACTED]
14 clean.

15 'I think we were woken up in the mornings by one of
16 the staff giving us a nudge and telling us it was time
17 to get up. I would then be washed, and we would go for
18 breakfast. After breakfast, and when I was old enough,
19 I would get ready for school. When we finished school
20 at the end of the day, we would get washed and ready for
21 our evening meal. At suppertime, we might have been
22 given a cake and cocoa before going to bed.

23 'When it came to our meals, we had our set place at
24 the table. The staff would place the meal onto the
25 tables for to us eat. Compared with what I was getting

1 at the family home, it was nicer. Other than
2 an incident with rice, there were no issues with the
3 food, as it was mostly good.

4 'When it came to washing and bathing at
5 St Margaret's, I was always having to get help from
6 Mr KNC or Mr Murphy as I had never been shown how to
7 wash myself.

8 'All the clothes I wore came from the home, as the
9 ones I wore were so dirty and scruffy. Mr Murphy or
10 later Mr KNC even had to help me get into my pyjamas
11 as I had never worn them before. When it came to going
12 to school we had to wear shorts every day, whether it
13 was summer or winter.

14 'In the evening time, we might be doing some
15 wrestling, boxing or going out to play. It would be
16 Mr Murphy that would take us for the sports. If I had
17 been bad, Mr Murphy would have me fight in the boxing
18 ring with an older boy and he would be told to give me
19 it tight for being bad. When this happened to me,
20 I would have been about 6 or 7, and the boy I had to
21 fight would have been about 12. I am not sure the older
22 boys wanted to be involved in the fights, as we all got
23 on well together.

24 'If we were in the games room, there were plenty of
25 board games, along with books. I could only look at the

1 pictures in the books as I was still not able to read
2 properly.

3 'We were taken out a few times from the home. We
4 sometimes went to Craigtoun Park near St Andrews. We
5 would travel there and back on a bus. At Christmas
6 time, they might take us to the panto. I can remember
7 Mr Murphy took us camping and hiking, sometimes to
8 a bothy in the Highlands.

9 'I went to the local school, Elie Primary, when
10 I was 5 years old. We always walked to school and for
11 the first three weeks, the staff would walk you so far,
12 and then let you go the rest. After the three weeks, we
13 walked all the way on our own.

14 'I was given a form of education at the school.
15 This also included a class in learning to knit. I did
16 not take much in but was able to read basic words, but
17 was still behind the others in the class.

18 'I did not like my time there as I was always having
19 fights with the other kids. As far as the education
20 there was concerned, I was always behind the other
21 pupils as I was still being moved from the home, back to
22 the family home, and then back to St Margaret's.

23 'We would have our lunch at the school and then back
24 to the home later in the afternoon. I was given a free
25 lunch, as neither of my parents were working at that

1 time.

2 'For any healthcare need there was a part-time
3 matron available. I think she might have been in for
4 two or three hours a week. Any other time, the staff
5 would look after any minor cuts or abrasions. I can
6 remember when I was a bit older, I would be doing pole
7 vaulting in the back and we would land in the sand pit.
8 There was one occasion in particular that when I landed,
9 I had not noticed there was a metal toy in the sand and
10 I landed my knee right on top of it. I had to go to
11 hospital for that cut and still have the scar.

12 'There was Mr Gyan who was the dentist [who] came to
13 the home. We would go to one of the Portakabins, which
14 he would use as his treatment room.

15 'When it came to birthdays, the staff would give us
16 a present and a cake, which we would share with the
17 other boys. When it came to Christmas, the staff would
18 make sure we were given a couple of presents. They
19 would have the decorations up in the home and there
20 would be a nice dinner. The one issue I can remember
21 was we were not allowed to touch the ornaments on the
22 tree. If we did, and the staff caught us, we would get
23 a slap on the hand, usually by Mr Murphy.

24 'I am sure I did get visits from the social workers
25 but they were not very often. Most of the times they

1 came, they spoke with staff. I think it would only have
2 been once, maybe twice, they spoke to me.

3 'When I was at St Margaret's, I did not see much of
4 ██████████ as he wanted to ██████████ around
5 his age.

6 'If I had spent perhaps an entire year at the home,
7 I would only ever see my mum once during that time. She
8 would be allowed to take me out of the home for
9 a certain amount of time. It would have been for a few
10 hours. During one of those visits, I did tell my mum
11 about the incident involving the rice and the sick. Her
12 response was, I should just be eating the meals I was
13 given. I got the impression she just didn't care.

14 'I can recall one visit the family made and my mum
15 arrived along with my dad and stepdad. They were all
16 visiting me together.

17 'I can remember when I was about 10 years old, I had
18 been stealing from the headmaster's desk. Mr Murphy had
19 caught me and took me to the police station in Elie.
20 The police officer locked me in a cell for about
21 an hour.

22 'Mr Murphy threatened me that if I was caught
23 stealing again, that would be where I would end up.
24 I told him that if he did that, then I would tell them
25 about the incident with the rice and sickness and the

1 abuse he was carrying out on me. He just said to me
2 that they would never believe me. I then decided I was
3 running away. I managed to get on a bus from Elie to
4 Leven and then sneaked onto another bus to mum's place
5 in Kirkcaldy.

6 'Although I knew the street she stayed in, I did not
7 know which house it was. I bumped into [REDACTED] and
8 she took me to the house. I was not there long before
9 Mr Murphy was phoned. He was on holiday at the time and
10 told mum that Margaret Finlay would deal with me. She
11 picked me up and when I was back at the home, as
12 punishment, I was kept in my room and lost privileges.

13 'At St Margaret's, I did have issues with
14 bed-wetting. The staff did try to help by getting me up
15 during the night to try and stop this, but it did not
16 always work. There was a maid at the home and she would
17 come in to clean and change my bed. The staff
18 understood and I was never punished for wetting the bed.
19 This issue stayed with me until I was about 13 or 14.'

20 Thomas then talks about abuse at St Margaret's from
21 paragraph 38:

22 'I did have an issue with some food at
23 St Margaret's, one of which was rice with my meal.
24 I had never had this before going there. The first time
25 I tried to eat the rice, but it was making me ill and

1 I was sick. Mr Murphy was trying to make me eat the
2 whole meal, rice and sickness. It took me nearly two
3 hours sitting there as he waited until I had tried to
4 finish it. He was not physically forcing me, it was
5 just his manner. I did try to eat it all, but
6 eventually he gave up and then gave me a row.

7 'I was 5 years old when there was one night
8 Mr Murphy came into my bedroom. He lifted me from my
9 bed and carried me to his own room. In that room, he
10 made me play with him and he was trying to penetrate me.
11 It was so sore I was screaming, and that was when he put
12 a pillow over my face and he raped me anally.

13 'The next day, when I was at school, I could not sit
14 on the hard wooden seats because of the pain.
15 I couldn't tell anyone as I was so scared. Because of
16 this, the teacher got annoyed with me for not sitting.
17 I was given the belt over the backside, which just made
18 the pain worse.

19 'Mr Murphy continued to do this two or three times
20 a week over the next four or five years. After the
21 first year, you just learned to accept it. When this
22 was happening, he kept telling me I was not to tell
23 anyone and if I tried, I would never be believed. He
24 started to buy me new presents and this included a new
25 bicycle. I was not the only one that he bought a bike

1 for, as there were many other boys with new bikes.

2 No one questioned why we were given the new bike.

3 'He had a choice of any of the boys in the three
4 bedrooms. Sometimes I was so scared I would go to
5 Auntie Margaret's room and sleep in her bed. She was
6 not aware of what was happening and would just try to
7 comfort me. There was also a chalet outside for the
8 girls where I used to try and hide.

9 'It was not always at night that Mr Murphy would
10 abuse us. Sometimes he would try and find someone who
11 was on their own during the day. I learned to hide in
12 different places at the house to avoid him. This
13 changed my personality and I was always so sad. Neither
14 myself or any of the other boys ever spoke about it
15 amongst ourselves.

16 'Mr Murphy had his favourites. There was a boy
17 whose second name was [REDACTED] and another boy called
18 [REDACTED]. Mr Murphy would teach them to play
19 instruments such as the violin and the bagpipes. He
20 constantly had them sitting on his knee. If anyone did
21 ask what he was doing, he would just tell them that it
22 was because the boys were being good.

23 'I did get a hiding from Mr Murphy on two or three
24 occasions for misbehaving. One of those times was for
25 taking a photograph from the headmaster's desk. This

1 would result in a slap on the bare backside.

2 'There was also an Irish student called HWO
3 HWO who was working and staying at St Margaret's
4 when I was resident there. I can remember we were to
5 call him "Uncle HWO" and he was in his 40s and had the
6 foulest breath. I think he was with the home for
7 anywhere between six months and a year. I was about 7
8 or 8 when it happened to me, but I was not the only boy
9 abused.

10 'When it happened to me, I was walking along the
11 corridor when, without warning, he pulled me into his
12 room, which was next door to Mr Murphy's. He
13 immediately pulled his trousers down and tried to make
14 me perform oral sex on him. I managed to struggle
15 enough to stop him. He tried this on four or five
16 different occasions. He also tried to penetrate me
17 anally, but again, it never happened. I would just be
18 shouting and screaming until he stopped.

19 'I am aware that one of the residents called [REDACTED]
20 [REDACTED] did try to report what HWO [REDACTED] had done to
21 him, but I don't know what happened with that.

22 'I am aware that later in my life, Mr Murphy was
23 taken to court for abusing some of the boys. It was
24 during his trial that more information came out about
25 HWO [REDACTED] also being involved in abusing some boys.

1 'After I had ran away, the staff decided that my
2 behaviour had deteriorated so badly that I was told
3 I would have to leave the home. Mr Murphy said that he
4 wanted to send [I think that should be 'wanted me to be
5 sent'] to a remand home. I had to go in front of
6 a panel and they decided that I would be sent to
7 a List D/approved school. I was about 11 years old at
8 this time. My mum was in the court but I was not
9 allowed to speak with her.

10 'While the social work attempted to find a home for
11 me, I was back at St Margaret's and told that I had to
12 stay in my room and was not allowed to mix with anyone.
13 Mr Murphy told me that if I was to apologise, then they
14 would make the case for me for stay at St Margaret's.
15 They even tried to get [REDACTED] to make me apologise,
16 but that was never going to happen.

17 'After the panel had read the social work reports on
18 me, it was decided that I should be sent to Dale School
19 in Arbroath. This was an approved school. I was never
20 told how long I would spend there.'

21 Thomas then talks about Dale School in Arbroath from
22 paragraph 53. My Lady, we know from his records that he
23 was sent there on [REDACTED] 1965, so he would have
24 been about 11 and a half at that time.

25 LADY SMITH: And that's when he left St Margaret's.

1 MS FORBES: That's when he left St Margaret's, my Lady, yes.

2 [Redacted: Secondary Institutions - to be published later]

3 [Redacted: Secondary Institutions - to be published later] . At paragraph 94,
4 then, he says he was about 13 when he left Dale School
5 and he went home to stay with his mum, but he says he
6 got himself into trouble again and he went to a panel
7 and he was told he was being sent to Rossie Farm. And
8 he tells us about Rossie Farm between paragraphs 96 and
9 100 of his statement and, again, he gave evidence about
10 that previously.

11 LADY SMITH: Yes.

12 MS FORBES: Again, he talked about bullying there from older
13 boys and some sexual abuse or attempts from a boy.

14 He then tells us at paragraph 11 about leaving
15 Rossie --

16 LADY SMITH: 111.

17 MS FORBES: Sorry, paragraph 111, my Lady, I do apologise.

18 LADY SMITH: That's all right.

19 MS FORBES: And he says he was being allowed to leave and go
20 home because he had been behaving himself. But he says
21 when he did get home, it was about six weeks before he
22 started getting in trouble again and he was back before
23 another panel.

24 He was then at an unknown remand home in Edinburgh
25 and that is set out in his statement from paragraph 114.

1 He says he was only there for a couple of weeks and he
2 would have been about 14 when he went there.

3 He says that whilst he was there, the strap was
4 still being used as punishment, but he buckled down and
5 never got the belt, and there was also some bullying
6 from older boys but nothing from the staff.

7 After being there for two or three weeks, he went
8 back to the panel and was told he was going to Oakbank
9 in Aberdeen and, again, he gave evidence about that, and
10 that's set out in his statement between paragraphs 119
11 and 134.

12 He says that he was abused by older pupils sexually
13 there, and I think he was there twice, and the second
14 time he didn't suffer any abuse.

15 He was then sent, he says, to borstal and he talks
16 about the fact that he spent about a year in Oakbank.
17 He was back home only for a few months before he was
18 back in trouble. He then had to go on a recall back to
19 Oakbank and then, after he was released that time and
20 was back home, it was a short time before he was in
21 trouble again, and between the ages of 16 and 18, he was
22 sent to Polmont.

23 He tells us about Polmont between paragraphs 137 and
24 150. He says he was there, and it's an assessment
25 period, for eight weeks. And he tells us about physical

1 abuse from a member of staff there. And he told us in
2 evidence previously about trying to take his own life
3 whilst he was there because of the beatings from staff.

4 He then, after the assessment period, was sent to
5 Noranside Borstal in Forfar and he says he was there
6 I think for a period of eight months, and he was allowed
7 out after that because of good behaviour. And he talks
8 about Noranside from paragraph 152 and says there was no
9 abuse from either staff or other inmates whilst he was
10 there.

11 After leaving Noranside, he tells us at
12 paragraph 160 he went back to stay with his mum but was
13 again back to being in trouble again. He was imprisoned
14 in Friarton Young Offenders' Institute in Perth, he was
15 given six months and served four, and then he spent, he
16 says, short spells in different -- sorry, different
17 short spells in the prison system in a variety of
18 prisons in Scotland.

19 He then, about 1974, moved down to the Ashington
20 area, but again was getting in trouble and was sentenced
21 to 16 months but still had outstanding charges from
22 Scotland and was brought back for those to be dealt
23 with, and spent the remainder of his sentence, along
24 with another 15 months for the outstanding matters, back
25 in Scotland.

1 Thomas then tells us about his life after being in
2 care and, again, he has given evidence about much of
3 this, but at paragraph 164 he says:

4 'I can remember when I was about 26 or 27, and I was
5 in prison at that time. I had told my family not to
6 write to me. I was still feeling lonely and one day
7 I decided I would write to Mr Murphy. When I was in the
8 jail, some of the memories were coming back to me.
9 I wrote the letter and sent it to the social work and
10 asked them to forward it to him. He did reply to my
11 letter and then started sending me the local newspaper.
12 In those letters I sent, I would be asking him why he
13 had carried out the abuse on me. He never gave any
14 explanations and on one occasion he asked to come and
15 visit me when I was released from the prison, but that
16 was never going to happen. I understand he may have
17 passed.'

18 He then tells us he met his first wife and got
19 married whilst he was still in prison, and when he was
20 released he found out that she had had an affair [REDACTED]
21 [REDACTED] and he had the marriage dissolved.

22 He says that around 1990, he moved to live in the
23 Newcastle area and got married again about 1992, but he
24 tells us he had problems with drinking alcohol, and she
25 gave him a choice of marriage or drink. He chose the

1 drink, but when he got off of it, he was able to go back
2 to her. And at the time of this statement he said that
3 that was three years ago and that he hadn't touched
4 a drink since.

5 He tells us he did work during his times out of
6 prison and tells us about jobs labouring, and he says he
7 started his own pallet business and he managed to keep
8 working until he was about 60 years old.

9 He tells us about impact from paragraph 168 and he
10 talks about, again, self-harm or attempted suicide in
11 Saughton Prison. He says he blames his parents more for
12 the lack of education. And he says that there was a lot
13 of interruptions when he was actually at the schools and
14 being moved from home to home affected him badly.

15 He says as a result of his time in care, overall, he
16 had issues with alcohol and drug addiction. He has had
17 psychiatric issues. He's been prescribed with
18 painkillers, which he became addicted to and was on for
19 30 years, but at the time of this statement, had been
20 off of them for about four or five years. He said he
21 had been prescribed medication for depression from the
22 age of 10 but still takes them.

23 And he talks about the fact that [REDACTED]
24 [REDACTED] And he
25 says he wasn't even at his mother's funeral, but he made

1 it to his dad's, but has nothing to do with any of his
2 remaining family.

3 At paragraph 176 he says:

4 'Around 1990, I was living in England and saw
5 an article in newspapers that the police were looking
6 for people who had resided in St Margaret's during the
7 dates I was there. Up until that time I had not told
8 anyone and had buried all the bad memories. I just
9 burst out crying, which was noticed by my wife. I went
10 up to my room and that was when I told her of the abuse
11 I had suffered.

12 'I got in touch with the police in Glenrothes and we
13 made an appointment for me to go to them and provide
14 a statement. I think that statement only related to my
15 time in St Margaret's and David Murphy in particular.
16 About 18 months later I got a citation to go to Perth
17 High Court. He initially pled not guilty and it was
18 transferred to Glasgow High Court for trial. He
19 eventually pled guilty to many charges and made a deal
20 about those charges, some of which included having
21 abused me. He was sentenced to 15 years.

22 'About a year ago I took Fife Council to court after
23 I had been given advice from the police about taking
24 a civil action. I contacted my solicitor and he took on
25 the case against the council. He also helped me get my

1 social work records. I spent three days in the witness
2 box.'

3 And then he says that eventually, he settled for
4 a figure that he has put there from the council:

5 'I have since wrote a book about my time in care
6 called ...'

7 I think that says 'Tears of Bedtime', but it's
8 actually 'Tears at Bedtime', which was published in
9 2007.

10 He tells us then that he has some of his records
11 from his time in care and at paragraph 180 he says:

12 'I can see in one of those entries that Mr Murphy
13 was saying that I would be better off if I had no
14 contact with my mother.

15 'Another entry in those records show that when I was
16 at St Margaret's, the abuse I was suffering from led me
17 to have mental health issues. It was decided by the
18 medical authorities that I should be sent to Ovenstone
19 Residential School in Pittenweem.'

20 And he gives us the dates, which are confirmed in
21 his records, my Lady. And then he tells us that he was
22 prescribed medication for childhood depression as
23 a result of that at that time, and then he went back to
24 St Margaret's.

25 He tells us about seeing a child psychologist, which

1 he found out from the records, when he was younger as
2 well and being --

3 LADY SMITH: That's the psychologist we've seen referred to
4 in other records, isn't it?

5 MS FORBES: Yes.

6 LADY SMITH: Yes.

7 MS FORBES: And also having IQ tests administered to him,
8 showing a lower IQ.

9 In relation to lessons to be learned, Thomas says at
10 paragraph 184:

11 'None of the places I was ever in gave me any help
12 or advice about going back into the real world.

13 'The places I was abused in as a child should not
14 have had a licence to be involved in the care of
15 children. Only if the social work have more direct
16 involvement should a place be given a licence.

17 'I would like to see that all the homes today are
18 run by the social work and supervised by them. There
19 should not be any private contractor allowed to run
20 homes caring for children. I think there should be more
21 emphasis of homes employing more women, as I found that
22 most of the women I had during my time in care were much
23 more understanding and showed more care to the
24 children.'

25 And then Thomas has made the usual declaration and

1 signed his statement, it's dated 31 January 2023.

2 LADY SMITH: There's something of an irony in that comment
3 about women, given that Murphy and [REDACTED]
4 [REDACTED] KNC were appointed against the normal picture of
5 these children's homes being run only by women, and they
6 specifically were trying to get some men involved.

7 MS FORBES: Yes.

8 LADY SMITH: Yes.

9 So that completes that statement?

10 MS FORBES: Yes, my Lady.

11 My Lady, the next statement then, again it is for
12 St Margaret's, and it's from an applicant who is
13 anonymous and is known as 'Dennis', and the reference
14 for his statement is WIT-1-000000661.

15 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

16 'Dennis' (read in)

17 MS FORBES: 'Dennis' tells us he was born in 1954 and talks
18 about his life before going into care, at paragraphs 2
19 to 4. He says he was born and brought up in Dunfermline
20 and he initially was with his parents and he has two
21 siblings, a sister who's a year younger than him, and
22 another sister who's about four years younger.

23 He tells us that his mother suffered from alcohol
24 addiction and his father was a miner, and that his
25 father had a mining accident and sustained a severe leg

1 injury when he was about -- when 'Dennis' was about 5
2 years old. Between that and his mum's alcohol issues,
3 the marriage didn't last and they divorced. His mum
4 moved away and at that time they stayed with their
5 father.

6 He tells us that the social services became involved
7 and the decision was taken that his dad was not fit to
8 bring up three young children, and it was decided that
9 they would be placed into care. Rather than allowing
10 his youngest sister to go into care, his aunt stepped in
11 and adopted her, but that left him and his other sister
12 being sent to Greenbank Children's Home in Leven,
13 initially.

14 And I think, my Lady, we do have 'Dennis's' records
15 and we know that, it seems from the records, that he was
16 received into care with his sister on [REDACTED] 1962 or
17 1963. I think it might be 1963. There are different
18 years stated throughout his records but 1963 seems to
19 appear more often.

20 It seems that his father, from the records,
21 requested that the children be taken into care and that
22 he was apparently receiving inpatient psychiatric
23 treatment at Stratheden Hospital and his cohabitee was
24 unwilling to take care of the children. So that seems
25 to be the background.

1 LADY SMITH: All right, thank you.

2 MS FORBES: They were in Greenbank Children's Home then and
3 he was obviously very young, but he seems to, I think,
4 have been there for -- until [REDACTED] 1965, when both he and
5 his sister were placed in a foster home. And this was
6 for a period of about eight months. And the dates we
7 have for that are [REDACTED] 1965, and that the placement
8 broke down, according to the records, because the foster
9 parents were unable to cope with 'Dennis's' behaviour.

10 He tells us about his time in foster care from
11 paragraphs 7 to 9 and then he talks about being moved to
12 Leslie Children's Home near Glenrothes. And the date we
13 have for that is [REDACTED] 1966 from the records, and it
14 appears both he and his sister were there together until
15 around [REDACTED] 1968.

16 He tells us that he was there for a couple of years
17 and doesn't have many memories of his time there and he
18 talks about that from paragraph 10 onwards.

19 He says he doesn't know the reasons for being
20 transferred to St Margaret's from Leslie Children's
21 Home. Again, from the records, it appears in [REDACTED] 1968,
22 'Dennis' was transferred to St Margaret's on his own
23 without his sister, and the reason seems to be stated as
24 being due to his disturbed and aggressive behaviour. So
25 his sister seems to have remained at Leslie Children's

1 Home and I think she was there until [REDACTED] 1969 before
2 going somewhere else.

3 'Dennis' then talks about his time at St Margaret's
4 from paragraph 14 and he says:

5 'I would have been 8 years old when I was moved and
6 ended up staying until I was about 12. When we arrived
7 I saw the building was set off the road. There was
8 an entrance gate with a long driveway to the building
9 itself. I could see there were large gardens with
10 swings and a seesaw for playing on. To the rear of the
11 house was the beach.

12 'I did not like being there on the first day as it
13 was a different atmosphere and nothing -- '

14 LADY SMITH: Sorry, could I just take you back to these
15 dates a moment.

16 MS FORBES: Yes, my Lady.

17 LADY SMITH: Transferred -- he moved to St Margaret's at
18 what point? I think you said 1968.

19 MS FORBES: It's [REDACTED] 1968.

20 LADY SMITH: But he would have been 14 then, on the date of
21 birth that we've got. That can't be right.

22 MS FORBES: Yes, I mean that seems to be what's on the
23 record, my Lady, but yes, unfortunately the records are
24 not complete, I don't think, and they are mainly about
25 his sister.

1 LADY SMITH: It says here he was 8.

2 MS FORBES: Yes.

3 LADY SMITH: Okay.

4 MS FORBES: Yes.

5 My Lady, I think he says:

6 'I did not like being there on the first day as it
7 was a different atmosphere and nothing like living on
8 the farm. Once I settled, and apart from the abuse,
9 I liked being there.

10 'The home was run by the local authority but it was
11 managed by David Murphy. He was assisted by HDI
12 HDI. I knew her as she worked at the children's home
13 in Leslie, Fife where my previous placement had been.
14 When we were at St Margaret's, we had to call them
15 "Uncle" and "Aunt" respectively. There was also a cook
16 and a cleaner, but we did not have much interaction with
17 them.

18 'Aunt HDI was for the most times really nice.
19 She came across as quite motherly and good with us all.
20 She was also a generous woman. She entered different
21 competitions and any prizes she won, she gave to the
22 children in the home.

23 'I think there would have been about 14 or 15
24 children in the home, a mix of boys and girls. I think
25 I was one of the youngest children there and the oldest

1 was around 14 years old. There was always a changeover
2 of children. Some were being placed into foster
3 families, some were moved with age, and some of them
4 returned home. During our time in the home, [and he
5 names his sister and says she] was able to move back in
6 with my mum who was then living in Dundee.

7 'I can remember some of the children from my time
8 there. There were three from the same family.'

9 And he names them, and he names some other people as
10 well and he says that he later tried to find some of
11 them through Facebook.

12 He goes on at paragraph 20:

13 'I shared my dormitory with another three boys. The
14 girls slept in a different dormitory in the building.
15 The dormitories were a mix of beds and bunk beds. We
16 had to keep the room tidy, and if it was not to Uncle
17 Dave's satisfaction, he would punish us by taking away
18 some of our privileges.

19 'Uncle Dave and Aunt HDI would wake us up in
20 the morning. We would then get washed and dressed and
21 into the dining room for breakfast. They might help us
22 getting dressed if, for example, we were having trouble
23 tying our ties or fastening our shoelaces. That took me
24 some time to be able to do that.

25 'We went to bed between 7.30 pm and 8.00 pm. As

1 I got older, that would have been a bit later. Sometime
2 later, I would also be moved to a better room.

3 'We all ate our meals together in the dining room.
4 The boys sat at separate tables from the girls. Uncle
5 Dave supervised the boys and Aunt HDI the girls.
6 If you misbehaved, you would be made to stay in your
7 room and would have to miss the next meal.

8 'The food at St Margaret's was generally good and
9 there was enough to eat. Aside from any other issue, if
10 you did not like anything, you did without until the
11 next mealtime.

12 'If you did not like any of the food or did not
13 finish what you were fed, they would force feed you.
14 I hated sprouts. That and any other food I did not
15 like, then Uncle Dave would pinch my nose, thereby
16 making me open my mouth. He would force my head back
17 and then push the food into my mouth. He did this to
18 any of the other boys that was having problems with
19 their food. I did see Aunt HDI do that sometimes
20 to the girls. On most days there would be someone being
21 made to eat their food this way.

22 'There were separate bathrooms for boys and girls.
23 We had plenty of sinks for us to get washed and there
24 was a bath available. Uncle Dave would supervise the
25 boys and Aunt HDI supervised the girls, just to

1 make sure we were washing properly. I think we could
2 have a bath three or four days a week.

3 'I did have a problem with bed-wetting. Uncle Dave
4 would get me up two or three times during the evening or
5 night. It started with him trying to help me stop
6 wetting the bed.

7 'If I wet the bed, I had to stay in my room while
8 the others went for breakfast. While they sat
9 downstairs eating, I would have a bath. The others
10 would often laugh at me when I wet the bed. The staff
11 would not intervene to stop the kids.

12 'If we were in the home, we just wore day clothes.
13 When we were at school, we wore our uniforms. Uncle
14 Dave or Aunt **HDI** might have been given a budget by
15 the social work. If so, we were taken into town and got
16 some new clothes. Otherwise we wore hand-me-downs.

17 'With the home backing onto the beach, it made it
18 easy access for some of the boating facilities. There
19 was a rowing boat, a sailing yacht and small motorboat.
20 Once we were taught properly, we were allowed to use the
21 rowing boat. Most without staff being in the boat.
22 Obviously for the small yacht and small motorboats,
23 there were always staff with us when we were allowed out
24 on them.

25 'There was also the games room on the ground floor

1 where we would play sometimes. Also on that floor was
2 another room where we would watch some television. When
3 we got home from school in the afternoon, so long as we
4 behaved, we were allowed to play in the games room, play
5 football outdoors or watch the television. If we had
6 been bad, we were to stay in our room.

7 'We went to other children's homes for a holiday,
8 but I am not sure where they were. I can say they were
9 happy times, as I was away from Uncle Dave. There were
10 other times we would go to Burntisland and I can
11 remember being there on two or three occasions.

12 'All the children went to a primary school in
13 St Andrews. I think I eventually moved on to the high
14 school while I was in this home. There was a school bus
15 that picked us up from the front gates in the morning
16 and dropped us off after school in the afternoon. We
17 also had lunch at the school. I remember that I liked
18 going to the school.

19 'I was taken to a local GP for my inoculations and
20 for my bed-wetting issue. I was able to also go to the
21 dentist, but I can only remember that he had to use gas
22 as I was scared of needles.

23 'When I was staying at St Margaret's Children's
24 Home, I was sent to a psychiatric hospital for my
25 bed-wetting issues and mental health issues. The

1 hospital was in Cupar and was quite a big hospital. In
2 the hospital, there were other people with mental health
3 issues and some who were handicapped. I can't remember
4 the name of the psychiatrist. I did not tell him
5 anything about the abuse from Uncle Dave as I did not
6 think he would believe me and, if he did, he might tell
7 Uncle Dave and I would be punished again.

8 'When it came to my birthday, I would be given
9 presents and there would be a small party. The cook
10 would make a cake and we would share it. At Christmas
11 we were given presents, **Secondary Institutions - to be published later**
12 **Secondary Institutions - to be published later**.

13 'Mr Miller, my social worker, visited me at the home
14 about once a fortnight. Sometimes he would take me out
15 in his car. Other times it was in a room in the home.
16 When we were in the room, it was just him and I. There
17 was no staff present.'

18 Then 'Dennis' says:

19 'My sister was with me at St Margaret's and apart
20 from when we were in the separate dormitories, I saw her
21 every day.'

22 My Lady, this is another peculiar part of the
23 statement, compared to the records --

24 LADY SMITH: Yes.

25 Q. Because from the records, we don't have her going to

1 St Margaret's until [REDACTED] 1970 when, according to
2 his records, by that time, 'Dennis' was in a remand
3 home. But again, my Lady, the records are not as
4 detailed as we would like because they are mostly about
5 his sister.

6 LADY SMITH: I see.

7 MS FORBES: 'Dennis' continues and says:

8 'My dad did visit me sometimes when I was at
9 St Margaret's.

10 'I did not have any personal possessions when I was
11 there. There were toys and books, and if we were given
12 anything like that as presents, we had to share it with
13 the others. I did not need a lot while I was there and
14 just played with some of the toys.

15 'I did run away when I stayed at St Margaret's.
16 I was usually caught by the police and brought back to
17 the home. One of the times I was away, I was with [and
18 he names a boy]. We sometimes tried to get on a bus,
19 but the conductor would catch us and put us off the bus.
20 When we were back at the home, we would be taken to the
21 office where Uncle Dave would use the strap on us as
22 a punishment.

23 'Punishments usually meant loss of privileges, such
24 as not being allowed out on the bicycles, not allowed
25 out on any of the boats, and being confined to our

1 rooms. If you were confined to your room, you were not
2 allowed to play with the other children. Another
3 punishment could be a reduction or a loss of your pocket
4 money.

5 'You were the subject of punishments if perhaps you
6 were arguing with some of the other children. If that
7 was the case, they did not take into consideration who
8 started, they just sent both of you to your respective
9 rooms. Other occasions you would be punished if you
10 were somewhere you should not be, like being on the
11 beach without permission.'

12 'Dennis' then talks about abuse at St Margaret's
13 from paragraph 44:

14 'When Uncle Dave was getting me up at night, it was
15 to help me to stop wetting the bed, but this changed and
16 he started standing directly behind me. He was rubbing
17 himself against my buttocks. This progressed to him
18 reaching round and touching my penis. As I had lowered
19 my pyjama trousers to go to the toilet, he began rubbing
20 his penis against my bare buttocks. This went on most
21 nights. He told me that I had to keep it a secret.
22 I am not sure if he did this to others while I was
23 there.

24 'Uncle Dave started buying me presents. He would
25 give me sweets and he gave me a toy version of the ship,

1 "Golden Hind". These were rewards for me not telling
2 anyone what he was doing to me.

3 'When I was seeing Mr Miller, my social worker,
4 I reported to him what Uncle Dave was doing to me at
5 night. One day when I got off the bus, I was told to
6 see Uncle Dave in his office. He closed the door and
7 pulled out a strap from his desk. He told me I was
8 being punished as I had told Mr Miller about what was
9 happening. He told me to lower my trousers and pants
10 and then he hit me three or four times on the legs and
11 bare buttocks with the strap. The strap was similar to
12 that used in schools. That became a regular method of
13 punishment by Uncle Dave. I was aware that other boys
14 were also being given the strap by Uncle Dave as like
15 when I cried, I could hear them crying when he hit them.

16 'As a result of this, he also removed my privileges.
17 I was not allowed out to play, not allowed to use the
18 boats, and my pocket money was stopped. If that was not
19 working, he would also lock me in a cold room and tell
20 me I was not getting out of there until the next
21 mealtime.

22 'My next visits from Mr Miller involved him saying
23 that Uncle Dave had denied doing anything to me.
24 Mr Miller would ask me why I was making up lies about
25 Uncle Dave. He never believed a word I said and was

1 taking Uncle Dave's side.

2 'Because of the abuse, I began stealing from shops.
3 Sometimes I was caught by the shopkeeper and he would
4 tell the headmaster at the school. It turned out the
5 headmaster would then report it back to Uncle Dave.

6 'I was also playing up in school. I was stealing
7 and doing anything to get myself into trouble.

8 'Again, when I was being visited by Mr Miller, I was
9 telling him about being given the strap. Rather than
10 trying to find out why I was doing the bad things, his
11 only response was that I should not be stealing sweets.
12 The use of the strap continued and I can only presume
13 Mr Miller had agreed that this was to be allowed by
14 Uncle Dave.

15 'I also told Aunt HDI [REDACTED], but her response was
16 that there was nothing she could do and that I should
17 just learn to behave myself.

18 'As I was constantly getting into trouble,
19 a decision was made that I was leaving St Margaret's and
20 being sent to Oakbank Residential Home in Aberdeen. It
21 was just me that went there, as my sister was back with
22 mum.'

23 I think, my Lady, he then talks about Oakbank, but
24 from the records we've seen, there was a period in
25 a remand home, which, it's not stated what the name of

1 the remand home was, but this was [REDACTED] 1970, whilst
2 he was awaiting an approved school vacancy. And then he
3 was admitted to Oakbank but, again, we don't have the
4 exact dates for that, unfortunately, my Lady.

5 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

6 MS FORBES: But it seems he was there for 18 months,
7 according to the records.

8 'Dennis' then tells us about going to Oakbank from
9 paragraph 54 and he tells us that life at Oakbank was
10 quite strict.

11 LADY SMITH: Mm-hmm.

12 MS FORBES: He does go on to talk about his bed-wetting
13 continuing whilst he was there, at paragraph 64, but
14 that it settled -- as he settled, sorry, it stopped.
15 And he says at paragraph 64:

16 'This could have been because I was away from the
17 abuse by David Murphy, but also it may have been that
18 I just grew out of it. I was much happier at Oakbank.'

19 Then he tells us at paragraph 67 that:

20 'When I was 16, I knew that my time at Oakbank was
21 coming to an end. I was placed into a bedsit in Leith
22 Walk, Edinburgh.'

23 And he says it was the social work department that
24 got him a place there.

25 He then tells us about life after being in care from

1 paragraph 68, and says that he started working when he
2 was in the bedsit as a carpet salesman during the day
3 and a waiter in a restaurant at night and managed to put
4 some money away. He decided to move down to Essex and
5 then later, to Southend-on-Sea. And he says his grandad
6 lived down in Essex. He had a job and was getting paid
7 well, and at that time he felt like he was living like
8 a king.

9 He then went back to Scotland in 1978 for a short
10 time. He was back in Glenrothes, but people he knew had
11 all left, were married or were working, and he didn't
12 stay long before going back to England.

13 At paragraph 71, he says:

14 'The police came to see me about 10 years ago, maybe
15 longer. It would have been just before [REDACTED] went to
16 court. A card had been left at my home in Felixstowe
17 and I went to the police station to see them. A male
18 and a female officer had arrived from Scotland and spoke
19 to me. At that time, I was already having issues with
20 alcohol and did not want anything to do with Murphy.
21 When the --'

22 LADY SMITH: Sorry, he said [REDACTED] at the beginning of that
23 paragraph?

24 MS FORBES: Yes, he does.

25 LADY SMITH: But this paragraph seems to be about the

1 prosecution of Murphy?

2 MS FORBES: Yes, it does, my Lady.

3 LADY SMITH: '████████'?

4 MS FORBES: Yes, it might just be an error.

5 LADY SMITH: I think '████████' must be Murphy, mustn't it?

6 MS FORBES: Yes.

7 LADY SMITH: Sorry, I interrupted you.

8 MS FORBES: Sorry, my Lady:

9 'At that time I was already having issues with

10 alcohol and did not want anything to do with Murphy.

11 When the police came, it was the first time I had told

12 anyone except Mr Miller -- '

13 Ah, I think this relates to his social worker.

14 LADY SMITH: Ah.

15 MS FORBES: But I don't know what the reference to ██████████

16 going to court relates to.

17 LADY SMITH: No.

18 MS FORBES: Yes, I think we know from the indictment we've

19 seen in relation to Murphy that Mr ██████████ was a witness.

20 LADY SMITH: This applicant --

21 MS FORBES: Yes, I know, I know.

22 LADY SMITH: This applicant was on the indictment.

23 MS FORBES: Yes, yes, he was on the indictment.

24 LADY SMITH: As with the previous applicant.

25 MS FORBES: Yes. At this stage obviously he hadn't spoken

1 to the police yet but yes, he does tell us that, my
2 Lady.

3 LADY SMITH: Yes.

4 MS FORBES: No, sorry, I do apologise, my Lady, [REDACTED] was
5 not a witness.

6 LADY SMITH: I'm going to proceed on the basis that in
7 line 2, that's an error and it's meant to be 'Murphy'
8 and it wasn't picked up, because that's the only way --

9 MS FORBES: It makes sense.

10 LADY SMITH: -- the tenor of the whole paragraph makes
11 sense. Thanks.

12 MS FORBES: 'When the police came it was the first time that
13 I had told anyone except Mr Miller about what Dave
14 Murphy had done to me. It was because they came to me
15 that I opened up. Otherwise, I might never have done
16 that. I think he got 15 years for abusing me and about
17 41 other boys and girls, but I did not give evidence at
18 court.'

19 And as we've heard, my Lady, that was a result of
20 a plea deal and unfortunately he didn't plead to the
21 charges involving 'Dennis', but there were two charges
22 on the indictment that related to 'Dennis'.

23 'Dennis' then tells us about impact from
24 paragraph 72:

25 'As I grew up, and into my adult life, if anyone

1 asked what my childhood was like, I would just tell them
2 I had no childhood and that I was brought up in
3 a children's home.'

4 He tells us that he got married when he was about 22
5 and had three children, and that the marriage broke down
6 as a result of his drinking problems. He still has
7 contact with his daughters, and his sister who was also
8 in care, and their families in Scotland. He tells us
9 his father died at only 42 and his mum passed away about
10 three years ago at the time of this statement.

11 But he tells us that if his parents -- this is at
12 paragraph 74:

13 'If my parents ever came up in conversation, I would
14 tell them I had a relationship with my dad but nothing
15 with my mum.'

16 He tells us about getting psychiatric treatment in
17 hospitals in England and at paragraph 76, he says:

18 'My problems with all the abuse was that I always
19 turned to drink to try and drown the memories.'

20 And then he says at the time of this statement he'd
21 been in touch with Turning Point and they had helped him
22 with his drinking problems and they were still helping
23 him. And he says that as an alcoholic he was always
24 getting into trouble with the police and he lost a lot
25 of respect he had for them. And at paragraph 77, he

1 says:

2 'I think it may also have been because I believe
3 that Murphy was an ex-police officer.'

4 And he says:

5 'Now that I am getting help and things are getting
6 better, I have built up a little respect for what they
7 do.'

8 At paragraph 79, for lessons to be learned, he says:

9 'I think there needs to be proper checks carried out
10 on people looking after children in care. There could
11 not have been proper checks carried out on David Murphy.
12 Social workers are not getting involved in more serious
13 cases until it is too late. Maybe if they listened
14 earlier to what children were telling them, then they
15 could put a stop to things a lot earlier.'

16 Then he tells us about one of his key workers, who
17 he names, helping to look after him and that she was
18 helping him with the process of giving the statement to
19 this Inquiry.

20 'Dennis' has then made the usual declaration and it
21 is signed and dated 16 April 2021.

22 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

23 MS FORBES: My Lady, that concludes the read-ins for

24 St Margaret's.

25 LADY SMITH: Yes, what's the plan now?

1 MS FORBES: I think the next thing we have is a live
2 witness, my Lady, who is due to be here to start at
3 11.45.

4 LADY SMITH: Right, very well. So you want me to rise now
5 and wait until she's ready -- it's she, isn't it?

6 MS FORBES: It is, yes.

7 I mean, I could do a read-in to start, but
8 Mr Sheldon is involved and isn't down yet.

9 LADY SMITH: I think it's better not. I think we will pause
10 now.

11 Before I rise though, let me just catch up on the
12 names of people whose identities are protected by my
13 General Restriction Order. We had HWO
14 KNC or KNC, also known as Uncle HWO.
15 and somebody called
16 . And then HDI also referred to as
17 Aunt HDI. And although their names have been used
18 just now, they're not to be identified as referred to in
19 our evidence outside this room.

20 Thank you.

21 (11.03 am)

22 (A short break)

23 (11.45 am)

24 LADY SMITH: Mr Sheldon.

25 MR SHELDON: My Lady, we move on now to hear some evidence

1 about Coblehaugh Children's Home in Inverurie, which
2 appears to have started operations in about 1950. It's
3 not entirely clear because, in common with many of these
4 homes, there isn't much in the way of records, at least
5 from the earlier period, and Coblehaugh still is in
6 operation, albeit in different premises, much smaller
7 premises, and more modern as well.

8 LADY SMITH: So that fits the pattern we've come across in
9 many other cases as well.

10 MR SHELDON: Indeed, my Lady.

11 LADY SMITH: Yes.

12 MR SHELDON: So we have two applicant witnesses in person
13 and the first of those is a witness who wishes to remain
14 anonymous and her pseudonym is 'Megan'.

15 LADY SMITH: Thank you. (Pause)

16 'Megan' (sworn)

17 LADY SMITH: 'Megan', do sit down and make yourself
18 comfortable.

19 A. Thank you very much.

20 Thank you.

21 LADY SMITH: 'Megan', can I say welcome back.

22 A. I know.

23 LADY SMITH: Thank you for coming again to provide your oral
24 evidence in relation to another place that we're
25 interested in finding out about. I'm really grateful to

1 you for doing that.

2 I don't have to go through a detailed explanation of
3 what happens because you are an old hand at that. But
4 do let me remind you, if you're struggling at any time,
5 you want a break or a pause, please don't hesitate to
6 let me know. Just because you've done this before, it
7 doesn't mean that I think that you won't find it
8 difficult. You may well do that.

9 A. Okay, thank you.

10 LADY SMITH: And do remember, if you don't understand our
11 questions, that's our fault, not yours. We're not
12 explaining ourselves properly. So speak up if there's
13 a problem of that sort.

14 If you're ready, 'Megan', I'll hand over to
15 Mr Sheldon and he'll take it from there, okay?

16 A. Yes. Mm-hmm.

17 LADY SMITH: Mr Sheldon.

18 Questions from Mr Sheldon

19 MR SHELDON: Thank you, my Lady.

20 'Megan', as Lady Smith has said, you've given
21 evidence to the Inquiry before and covered quite a bit
22 of the ground that's in your statement, and I'll try not
23 to go over old material, but we may recap just a little
24 and there are still some formalities that I need to go
25 through, just for our purposes.

1 A. Okay.

2 Q. So just to get the reference of your statement into the
3 record, I will say that its number is WIT-1-000000649.
4 And turning to the last page of your statement, which is
5 page 36, I think we see that you signed your statement
6 in March 2021?

7 A. Yes. Yes, I did, yes.

8 Q. And you said at that time, in the statement,
9 paragraph 154:
10 'I have no objection to my witness statement being
11 published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry.
12 I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are
13 true.'

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Is that right?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Thank you.
18 And turning back to the start of your statement
19 then, I think we see there that you were born in 1957?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And you tell us in the first part of your statement
22 about your very early life growing up in a traveller
23 family.

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. But you don't have very many memories of that.

1 A. No.

2 Q. And you were taken into care when you were really very
3 young.

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. And you are not entirely sure who it was that did that.
6 It was a man in a uniform, says paragraph 3, and you
7 thought later that it might have been someone from the
8 RSPCC?

9 A. I thought that, yes.

10 Q. Can you remember what made you think that, as opposed to
11 a police officer?

12 A. Because he wasn't a policeman.

13 Q. Right.

14 A. And there was a lady with him at the time. But I can
15 remember being taken -- I remember being taken and I
16 only had my vest on. I remember all I was bothered
17 about was my doll, losing my doll.

18 Q. This was the red-haired doll, Audrey?

19 A. Aye, Audrey.

20 Q. You said that a lady was with this person. Would that
21 have been Mrs Urquhart?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And so would that have been the first time you'd met
24 Mrs Urquhart?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. And you tell us, page 2, that you were then taken to
2 a children's home in Ellon?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Is that 'arn-ha' you pronounce it?

5 A. Arnha', that's correct, yes.

6 Q. And was that just on the same day that you were taken
7 away from your family?

8 A. It must have been, but, er, my sister was with me.

9 Q. Yes. So the two of you were taken to this --

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. -- children's home and you think that at that time you
12 were maybe 2 or 3?

13 A. Yes. My brother was left with the family, my own
14 family.

15 Q. And you say at paragraph 7 that the social worker was
16 there. This was at Arnha, the children's home?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. And she didn't explain to you what was happening?

19 A. No.

20 Q. Did she say anything? Did she tell you anything?

21 A. No **Secondary Institutions - to be published later**

22 **Secondary Institutions - to b** My sister had a bad speech impediment
23 and I was the only one that understood what she said,
24 and I was more concerned about my sister, them not
25 understanding what she wanted.

1 Q. Sure. And you tell us that that was the last time you
2 ever saw your mum and dad?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. I think you tell us that your father sometimes went to
5 Coblehaugh --

6 A. He did.

7 Q. -- Children's Home, trying to find you?

8 A. Yes, he did.

9 Q. But you never saw him?

10 A. No.

11 Q. And the people SNR didn't make any arrangements
12 for you to see him?

13 A. No.

14 Uncle HAK, who we called -- we called them Aunt
15 HAF and Uncle HAK. Uncle HAK, when I walked into
16 the children's home --

17 Q. Sorry to stop you there.

18 A. Sorry.

19 Q. But this is Coblehaugh you're talking about?

20 A. Coblehaugh.

21 Q. And Uncle HAK was one of the people SNR?

22 A. He was -- he worked outside the home but Aunt HAF SNR
23 SNR she was . And when I walked in, Uncle
24 HAK says, 'I know who you are'. And I said, 'How do
25 you --' He says, 'You're 's daughter'. He

1 used -- they had a lot of grounds at the children's home
2 and my father used to work on the grounds sometimes.

3 Q. All right.

4 But even though he worked --

5 A. No.

6 Q. -- there, you never got to see him?

7 A. No.

8 Q. Well, you tell us then, 'Megan', that you were sent to
9 stay with foster carers, foster parents, and you've
10 given evidence about that and in short, you didn't have
11 a great experience with them?

12 A. No.

13 Q. And you were there for some time and then at some point,
14 and I'm looking at page 9 of your statement now,
15 paragraph 35, you say that on leaving FNZ-SPO you
16 went to this other children's home, Craiglarach?

17 A. Craiglarach, that was in Aboyne.

18 Q. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

19

20 A.

21 Q.

22 A.

23

24

25 Q.

1 A. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

2 Q.

3 A.

4 Q.

5 A.

6 Q.

7 A.

8 Q. But then you tell us that from Craighlarach, you went to
9 the Royal Hospital for Sick Children in Aberdeen.

10 A. Mm, mm.

11 Q. How did that come about? Whose idea was that?

12 A. Ms Urquhart. She said that I was retarded. She, well,
13 presumed it. But I was very quiet, but -- and I was
14 still wetting the bed at that time and -- and I do admit
15 I had a temper, 'cause I lost my temper in the end with
16 the foster parents, my foster mum, but -- but I ended up
17 there.

18 Q. And Ms Urquhart said that that was because you were
19 retarded?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Did she say that to you?

22 A. She said that to Dr Simone.

23 Q. All right, okay.

24 Yes, you tell us -- this is paragraph 39 of your
25 statement -- that there was a Dr Simone there?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And that she was very kind?

3 A. She was very kind to me, yes, she was.

4 Q. And I think she clearly felt that you weren't retarded?

5 A. Correct.

6 Q. And was keen for you to be able to show Ms Urquhart,
7 Ms Urquhart, that that was the case?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. So I think you did an exam. Do you remember much about
10 the exam?

11 A. Yeah, I did an exam. I failed the maths but I passed
12 English and the other subject. And it was for a
13 boarding school in [REDACTED], Yorkshire, so I got sent
14 there.

15 Q. We will, as it were, skip over your time at boarding
16 school because that's obviously down south and not
17 covered by this Inquiry.

18 A. Yeah, not up here.

19 Q. But just briefly; did you understand what kind of school
20 it was, what the point of sending you there was?

21 A. No, I just was glad to get out of the hospital. And the
22 school, Dr Simone said that I'd do very well but
23 unfortunately I didn't. But, erm, it was a very
24 permissive school. You called the teachers by their
25 first names. You had to be in, in the morning. It was

1 a very strange school. But that changed and Mr --
2 Dr [REDACTED] came to run the school. But he was not a doctor
3 as such. His name was doctor, probably because of
4 certificates, whatever.

5 Q. Sure.

6 A. And he changed it about a bit.

7 Q. But on the whole, and again just taking this briefly,
8 'Megan', I think you say that until you left the school,
9 you had really quite a good experience there, the people
10 were quite nice, you say?

11 A. They were nice. I made two good friends, there. Yes,
12 I did. Mm-hmm.

13 Q. Sure.

14 A. Learned to smoke there.

15 Q. Okay.

16 So you were then briefly back at the foster carers'?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. And then off to yet another children's home?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. This was one in Aberdeen, is that right?

21 A. Yeah, [REDACTED] I think it was
22 [REDACTED] I can't remember the name.

23 Q. Sorry, what was the school you mentioned?

24 A. [REDACTED]

25 Q. Right. And I'm looking at page 15 now of your

1 statement. And so you were going to the school but at
2 the time you were staying at another children's home
3 called St Clair's, is that right?

4 A. That's right, St Clair's Home for Girls.

5 Q. Do you recall what age you would have been by this
6 point?

7 A. About 9, 10 -- 10? Maybe 10. I think 10. Just going
8 on 11. I'd been expelled from boarding school.

9 Q. Yes.

10 A. Secondary Institutions - to be published later

11

12

13 Q.

14 A.

15 Q.

16 A.

17

18

19

20

21

22 Q. I think you tell us that, at page 16, well, you perhaps
23 can't see this, but I think we understand that you were
24 about 12 when you were at St Clair's. Would that sound
25 about right?


1 A. 11 or 12. Mm, 11 or 12. 'Cause I was at boarding
2 school -- yes, it would be 11 or 12.

3 Q. I think you say that -- and I'm jumping about a bit, I'm
4 afraid. And you don't have to do this but you tell us
5 at paragraph 41 that you were about 8 or 9 when you went
6 to the boarding school; would that sound about right?

7 A. Yes, I was 9. Because I can remember leaving the
8 hospital. Yeah, 9.

9 Q. So maybe 11 or 12 when you were at St Clair's?

10 A. 12, yeah. Didn't stay there long.

11 Q. Secondary Institutions - to be published later
12 A. 
13

14 Q. Right. And the more long-term place they found for you
15 was Coblehaugh, is that right?

16 A. Coblehaugh, yes.

17 Q. Right.

18 But you tell us, just before you tell us about
19 Coblehaugh, and I'm looking at page 18 now, paragraph 75
20 and 76.

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. You say that the female foster carer had referred to you
23 as 'a tinker' and Ms Urquhart always said you wouldn't
24 amount to much because you were a traveller, and you say
25 that she said, 'You'll end up with lots of kids and be

1 an alcoholic'?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. But you proved that wrong, didn't you?

4 A. Yes. I don't drink at all.

5 Q. But you say at paragraph 76 that Ms Urquhart wasn't

6 happy with you not going to school?

7 A. Mm-hmm.

8 Q. Is that right, were you not going to school?

9 A. I was bad at not going to school. I found the change

10 from boarding school to, like, the way you had to wear

11 uniform and where you had to call the teachers 'Sir'

12 and, I found it very difficult. But, erm, at Coblehaugh

13 I went to Inverurie Academy and I must admit the

14 headmaster, Mr Slater, I can remember him well, was very

15 good with me. But he only -- he expelled me and let me

16 come back because I wrote poetry and he wanted it in the

17 school magazine.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. But --

20 Q. So he was someone that saw the potential?

21 A. He was a good man, yeah, but I used to not go to school.

22 When I didn't go to school, I used to go maybe with

23 [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] they were two other girls, and I'd

24 come home and Aunt Lilly, who put the food out at night,

25 because we all called them 'Aunt', would wink at me and

1 then I knew, 'Oh, I've been caught, they know I've not
2 been at school', and I'd know Ms Urquhart was in the
3 office.

4 So she called me through and she'd say, 'You know,
5 you can do what you want, but don't take [REDACTED]'. You
6 know, I maybe shouldn't have mentioned her name, but,
7 'Don't take her with you because she'll do well, I'm not
8 bothered about you'. And that's the truth.

9 Q. We might come back to that just in a minute or two,
10 'Megan'.

11 A. Mm-hmm.

12 Q. But I just want to ask you a bit about Coblehaugh.

13 You tell us about Inverurie at paragraph 77 of your
14 statement and you say at that paragraph that Ms Urquhart
15 came every week and saw different children?

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. So it sounds like she was quite hands on, quite involved
18 with you and the other children; is that right?

19 A. Well, she'd come on a Friday but generally, well, to my
20 knowledge and to my recollection, it was to -- she only
21 came out if someone was in trouble.

22 Q. Right.

23 A. And there was a young boy there, who now I learn had
24 a learning disability -- well, now I know he had a
25 learning -- at the time I didn't know -- and she turned

1 round and said to him in front of everyone, you know,
2 'You go round people's doors for your mother getting
3 sugar', you know, 'Be quiet'. And I thought, no you
4 don't -- it's not right.

5 Q. She was very dismissive of this boy?

6 A. Yeah, just like she was of me. Yeah.

7 Q. But you thought that with you it was particularly
8 because you came from a travelling family?

9 A. Yes. And I have -- yeah, I've found out since through
10 meeting my cousin and brother, they were treated more or
11 less the same.

12 Q. They were treated the same? Right. Did you get that
13 from anybody else, 'Megan'? Was it just Ms Urquhart or
14 did other people treat you in that sort of way?

15 A. No. No. At school they made no difference. At school,
16 they were fine. There was no talk about it at school.
17 And in Coblehaugh, as I say, Uncle HAK had said that he
18 knew my father, but then I suppose I was a bit
19 dismissive 'cause I didn't really want to know. So --
20 I must say that Uncle HAK and Aunt HAF, to my
21 recollection, did the best they could, in the
22 circumstances.

23 Q. Yes, you say at paragraph 78 that they were, in your
24 experience, they were nice. You talk about Aunt Lilly
25 that you've just mentioned who was the cook?

1 A. Aye.

2 Q. And we'll come back to her. And you thought that there
3 were perhaps seven or eight of you, that's seven or
4 eight children at Coblehaugh at that time, is that
5 right?

6 A. Yes. Maybe, maybe at the most 10, but as far as I -- it
7 was mixed, it was boys and girls.

8 Q. All right. Did you have your own rooms or were you in
9 dormitories or anything like that?

10 A. It was like, where I was, it was four-bedded.
11 Four-bedded, like. But there was two gentlemen that had
12 a room each, but that's a different thing.

13 Q. Well, you call them 'gentlemen', were they older then?

14 A. Yes, they were in the Merchant Navy.

15 Q. Right. So what were they doing there?

16 A. I don't know. [REDACTED] and the other gentleman.

17 Q. Yes, well, we'll come back to that.

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. So roughly what sort of age were they?

20 A. He would have been, at the youngest, 19, at the
21 youngest. Between 19 and 21.

22 Q. Okay. But a lot older than you and --

23 A. Oh yes, much older than us.

24 Q. And other children.

25 A. Yep.

1 Q. So you tell us a bit about Uncle HAK . It was HAK and
2 HAF who home, is that right?
3 A. Yes.
4 Q. Did you recall their second name?
5 A. HAF-HAK
6 Q. And I think you've told us this before, but perhaps you
7 can just explain. It seems he didn't actually work in
8 the home, Uncle HAK , is that right?
9 A. No. He had -- I really don't know what he did, but
10 I assume it was in an office and he worked there right
11 up until he retired.
12 Q. Oh right.
13 A. He used to come -- go away in the morning and come home
14 at night.
15 Q. So did he work with -- was he around the children much
16 or --
17 A. No.
18 Q. -- not very much?
19 A. Not very much, no.
20 Q. Was it really Aunt HAF then who --
21 A. Really Aunt HAF that done most of the work.
22 Q. And the cook, I suppose?
23 A. And the cook.
24 Q. Were there other staff or was it just those three?
25 A. Yes, there was young girls, and there was a lady that

1 came once, but she only stayed overnight and I never saw
2 her again. She walked out.

3 Q. Right, so just there for one night --

4 A. So I don't know what happened to her.

5 Q. She was just there for one night?

6 A. One lady that I remember was only there for one night,
7 but it was -- they came from, like, Inverurie, the young
8 girls came and helped.

9 Q. Right, how many of them were there?

10 A. Three or four.

11 Q. Right, and what sort of age would they have been?

12 A. It's hard -- 20s, 30s, something like that.

13 Q. I know it's difficult when you're very young, age is
14 quite difficult to judge, but you thought maybe 20s or
15 30s?

16 A. Mm-hmm, yep.

17 Q. Okay.

18 A. But I was out at school, you see, well, supposed to be
19 at school, and they were away generally when we came
20 home at night.

21 Q. Right. You say that Uncle **HAK** and Aunt **HAF**, you
22 thought they were really nice people, you couldn't fault
23 them and they had a Golden Labrador dog that you loved?

24 A. I liked the dog.

25 Q. And you then go on to talk a little bit about your

1 routine during the day. You mentioned that you went to
2 Inverurie Academy. And you say at paragraph 81 you
3 queued up in the home and got a plastic dinner token for
4 school dinner and went to school, and you say that you
5 used to sell your dinner tokens so that you could buy
6 cigarettes with the money?

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. But just asking you about the token, was that something
9 that other children had, or was it just the children
10 from the home that had that?

11 A. Children from the home.

12 Q. Right. So I suppose when it came to getting the food at
13 the school, everyone would know that you were from the
14 home?

15 A. Yes, they did. They knew we were from the home anyway.

16 Q. Right. How did they know that?

17 A. I don't know. I remember there was a girl and she said,
18 'I really can't be friends with you'. I liked her, her
19 name was [REDACTED] too, and she said, 'I can't be
20 friends with you because you're from the home, my mum
21 says'.

22 Q. Yes, you got called names I think?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. What sort of names did you get called?

25 A. Just 'homers' and things like that, just daft silly

1 names. We used to walk home together, or generally, if
2 you were late and kept behind, you had to walk home
3 alone. I didn't like walking home alone.

4 Q. You've already told us a little bit about the
5 headmaster, who you describe as a very nice man. This
6 is paragraph 83. And that it took you a bit of time to
7 settle down, but the headmaster was someone that showed
8 you a bit of patience and kindness, is that right?

9 A. He did, yes.

10 Q. And --

11 A. But the other teachers would put me at the back of class
12 and unfortunately I don't hear very well, so I didn't
13 hear them in there.

14 Q. So that was a problem, that you were put to the back of
15 the class, for you?

16 A. Mm-hmm.

17 Q. And I suppose it didn't help with your education?

18 A. No.

19 Q. And still thinking about you being from the home, and
20 other kids who weren't, I think there was an occasion
21 where you tried to go to the local youth club?

22 A. That's right.

23 Q. And that caused a problem?

24 A. Yes, it did.

25 Q. Can you tell us about that?

1 A. I went with another girl, me -- and Aunt HAF had said
2 it'd be nice for us to go to the youth club. So we
3 went. And as we were walking home, these girls jumped
4 on top of me.

5 Q. Right.

6 A. And all I did -- I remember having a parka anorak on and
7 they thumped me, and then they were calling us names,
8 and -- the girl I was with ran away, which I don't blame
9 her, but I was too slow, and they -- I never went back.
10 We never went back. And Aunt -- but Aunt HAF did do
11 something about it.

12 Q. Do you remember what she did?

13 A. I can't remember if she phoned the police or something
14 but I remember, she was very angry about it.

15 Q. Mm-hmm. Had you come back to the home with scratches
16 and bruises?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. Right. And did Aunt HAF ask you what had happened?

19 A. Yes. But I wasn't ever in trouble for fighting or
20 anything, so she knew I hadn't done, like, anything like
21 that, and it was [REDACTED] that had already told her what
22 had happened in the youth club.

23 Q. You tell us that, although you saw Ms Urquhart from time
24 to time, there weren't any other visitors?

25 A. No.

1 Q. So no family?

2 A. No.

3 Q. And no one else that you would have thought of as
4 an outside person that you could talk to?

5 A. There was a lady called Miss Anderson and she took over
6 from Ms Urquhart when Ms Urquhart wasn't available. She
7 was very kind. She was nice, Miss Anderson, but
8 I rarely saw her.

9 Q. Okay. Was she someone that you could have talked to,
10 that you could have confided in perhaps?

11 A. I couldn't confide in anyone.

12 Q. Right. Why was that?

13 A. I remember once, I was in my bed and there was --
14 Ms Urquhart came in, it was late, late at night, and
15 brought a girl in. And this girl, I remember
16 distinctly, I don't know what she'd done or what had
17 happened, but she was crying, she was very upset and
18 distressed. And she was put in my room on the bottom
19 bunk. And I always remember Ms Urquhart said, 'You're
20 just like a bitch on heat, you're just like a bitch on
21 heat, and this is what happens'. I never saw the girl
22 again. But it was upsetting.

23 Q. Yes, you go on to talk about an occasion when -- I think
24 this is what you'd mentioned earlier on, that Aunt Lilly
25 had found that you were skipping school?

1 A. Aye.

2 Q. And she, I think, just winked at you?

3 A. So I would know.

4 Q. Do we understand that she must have told Ms Urquhart?

5 Or someone?

6 A. No, she didn't tell. She would let me know she was

7 there.

8 Q. Right. So how did Ms Urquhart come to find out that you

9 hadn't been at school?

10 A. Probably the school.

11 Q. Right. Okay.

12 So tell us then, what did Ms Urquhart say or do

13 about that?

14 A. As I say, she would ask me what I'd been doing and

15 I would go with maybe one of the other girls or two of

16 the other girls and she would say to me, you know,

17 'I don't mind what you do, you just do what you want

18 because you're not going to amount to anything anyway,

19 but don't take so-and-so and so-and-so with you

20 because', you know. And she got very angry. And

21 I always remember Aunt HAF was standing at the

22 fireplace and she slapped me. And Aunt HAF looked

23 shocked but she didn't say anything, she just looked

24 shocked.

25 Q. Sorry, Ms Urquhart slapped you?

1 A. Yes. I must have been cheeky back or defiant, I don't
2 really remember.

3 Q. And Aunt HAF saw this and I think you say she looked
4 shocked?

5 A. She looked shocked.

6 Q. Did she do anything or say anything?

7 A. No.

8 Q. Was Ms Urquhart the kind of person that you could say
9 anything to, that you could stand up to in that sort of
10 way?

11 A. No.

12 Q. Why was that?

13 A. She came across as quiet, oh, she had been the head of,
14 to my knowledge, the Metropolitan Police at one time in
15 London, and she came across as -- I mean, she had no --
16 she was difficult. I mean, her approach to everyone was
17 like you were in the army or something, very, very
18 military, very disciplined, very -- she had who she
19 liked, who she didn't like.

20 Q. We know, 'Megan', that you were right about that,
21 Ms Urquhart had been in the Metropolitan Police and then
22 changed to working with children.

23 Given your experiences, what would you say about her
24 suitability or ability to work with children?

25 A. It could be because I had such a difficult time with her

1 that my experience with Ms Urquhart was a really, really
2 bad one. She was the first person I met and she stayed
3 with me -- well, till I was 15, but she never came to
4 see me anywhere or anything, but, erm ... No, she
5 wasn't suitable, because I think in the -- going back,
6 so many years, I don't know about qualifications or
7 whether she had any -- she had no children, no
8 experience with children.

9 She -- she probably did everything right, by the
10 book, but it was wrong. It's hard to explain. It was
11 wrong.

12 Q. Well, slapping you doesn't seem like it was doing it by
13 the book.

14 A. That's not right, no.

15 LADY SMITH: So, just thinking back then, 'Megan', was your
16 experience of Ms Urquhart in complete contrast to your
17 experience of some other people who you've said were
18 nice and helpful, whether it was the head at the school
19 or Uncle HAK or Aunt HAF ?

20 A. Yes, the head of school, whether he saw something in
21 me -- I mean, I did try at school. But he was very
22 nice.

23 Aunt HAF -- they weren't affectionate, but they
24 were -- you knew where you were with them. And Aunt
25 Lilly, I think she had a soft spot for me because she

1 used to know I was always getting into trouble.

2 LADY SMITH: Yes. But Ms Urquhart was quite different, you
3 say?

4 A. Very different. Ms Urquhart's approach. I don't like
5 speaking about her 'cause she's gone now, but her
6 approach was very disciplinary. I don't know. I mean
7 the things -- no, I just -- it's hard to explain. She
8 was just so -- I mean, I since met my cousin who -- and
9 he told me that he had asked for his mother's notes and
10 she said, 'There they are', threw 'em at 'im, and he
11 went and joined the army.

12 Now, he was the same, he was a traveller. I think,
13 going back then, travellers were renowned to be a bit,
14 you know, in trouble a lot and that, but I was only
15 a child. I wasn't an adult.

16 MR SHELDON: Yes, you'd be about 13 by the time you got to
17 Coblehaugh, is that right? 12 or 13.

18 A. 12. Yeah.

19 Q. Did you ever see Ms Urquhart hit anyone else?

20 A. No.

21 Q. And you tell us that that was the only time that she hit
22 you?

23 A. Yes, she lost her temper. She never -- she never done
24 that before. No.

25 Q. Right.

1 Did you see any of the other staff hit children?

2 A. No.

3 Q. Okay. Can I ask you this; what was the atmosphere like

4 in the home in Coblehaugh? Was it friendly, was it

5 relaxed? What was it like?

6 A. It was just a children's home, like, there was a pool

7 table. I was good at pool, I liked playing pool, and

8 table tennis, you could play table tennis. Erm, the

9 girls were older than me and there was one girl around

10 the same age as me, but the other girls were a lot older

11 than me. And there was a couple of male people, younger

12 boys who were quite nice; [REDACTED], [REDACTED]. Well, the man --

13 the boy that I talked about. But I didn't really mix

14 with people much.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. Didn't mix.

17 Q. I mean, were people -- did you have to be wary? Were

18 people frightened when they were in the home, or was

19 that not really an issue?

20 A. You were if you didn't do, you know, what you were

21 supposed to. Like when you came home from school, you

22 had to take your school uniform off, wash your socks and

23 that, and put on an apron and go for your tea.

24 Q. So quite regimented, quite routine?

25 A. Quite -- yes. Yes, yes, yes.

1 Q. But you weren't frightened of being hit, you said the
2 staff didn't hit -- you certainly didn't see that?

3 A. No. No, no.

4 Q. But you talked about two other boys, men really, older,
5 who also stayed in the home?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. You thought they were in the Merchant Navy?

8 A. They were.

9 Q. And something happened with one of those at one point,
10 is that right?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Can you tell us about that?

13 A. I was 12 and at the weekend, we had to do rooms, to
14 clean, like you had to do chores. So I had to clean
15 rooms. So I was assigned to do my room and this
16 gentleman's -- this man's room. At the weekend.

17 And I felt uncomfortable with him, but I was very --
18 I mean, for all I was 12, 13, I wasn't physically
19 developed very well. I was young -- I was very slim,
20 very -- I looked more like maybe 10 or 9. I looked
21 younger. He was very -- he made me very uncomfortable
22 and I didn't like doing his room.

23 Q. Can you tell us how he made you uncomfortable?

24 A. Well, he would -- like he'd say, 'You've not done the
25 bed right', so I'd go back and do the bed and he would

1 touch me while I was trying to do the bed, and I just
2 didn't like it.

3 Q. How would he touch you?

4 A. Like, he would -- initially, he would just, you know,
5 touch you on the back or, you know, but then eventually
6 it got more physical and like, yeah.

7 Q. You say that this culminated one day when you were
8 walking back from school?

9 A. From school.

10 Q. Are you okay to tell us about that?

11 A. Yes. I was coming home from school and I'd been kept
12 behind at school, so I was walking home from school, and
13 to be quick, I went to go under the bridge, at school.
14 And as I was coming, he was coming along. And he raped
15 me.

16 Q. He caught up with you and --

17 A. Raped me.

18 Q. -- he raped you.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. This was -- was this under the bridge coming back
21 from --

22 A. School, yeah.

23 Q. Okay.

24 'Megan', you tell us, this is paragraph 91, that you
25 didn't report it because you thought it was your fault?

1 A. I did.

2 Q. Why did you think that?

3 A. I don't know. Because -- I don't know. I just,
4 I didn't really understand much about -- I mean ... And
5 then he more or less made out to me that if I said
6 anything that I would get into trouble and I'd be
7 removed from where I was and taken somewhere else. And
8 I knew I couldn't tell Ms Urquhart. There was no way.
9 And I couldn't tell any staff. So I went up to my room,
10 had a wash and just went down like normal.

11 Q. Did that ever happen again?

12 A. I told the police that I had no contact with him again
13 because I was feeling ashamed, but it was very
14 difficult, the statements to the police, because they
15 were quite long and withdrawn, so. But I did say to him
16 once, 'I'm going to run away', and he says, 'Go to my
17 mother', and I says, 'Where does your mother --' Anyway,
18 I went there and he was there and -- no. I ran away.
19 I had enough.

20 Q. You mentioned just there talking to the police about
21 this. When was that, 'Megan'?

22 A. That was about four or five years ago.

23 Q. All right. All right, so this was quite a bit later?

24 A. Mm-hmm.

25 Q. All right. You didn't report it to the police at the

1 time?

2 A. No. It was actually a social worker that I met when
3 I had my daughter, that suggested. But I never did it
4 but then I thought, no, I will report it, I will say.
5 Because he shouldn't have been living there.

6 Q. Yes. And did he continue to live there after this had
7 happened?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. All right.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. So how long were you there while he was still there?

12 A. Not long.

13 Q. All right, okay.

14 A. Because after all that, he kept pestering me and then
15 I just -- I went to London. That was it.

16 Q. Well, I'm just going to ask you about that, 'Megan'.
17 You talk about an incident, this is paragraph 92,
18 page 21 and over the page to 22. An incident where you
19 were queuing for your dinner token and Ms Urquhart
20 shouted at you and said your dad had died?

21 A. My father passed away.

22 Q. What was said, how was she saying that?

23 A. Hmm. I was queuing up for my dinner token like I would
24 and she says, 'Your dad's passed away' -- no, 'Your
25 dad's died, probably on the way to the bu -- . I didn't

1 understand what she was talking about.

2 LADY SMITH: So she said he died, probably on the way --

3 A. To the buroo, mm-hmm.

4 LADY SMITH: -- to the 'buroo', which is the bureau where

5 you get your benefits.

6 A. Yeah, yeah. That was the word. But at the time

7 I didn't know what it was, but finally I did find out

8 what it was. But it wasn't true. He'd been walking --

9 he maybe had been a bit drunk, but he was walking late

10 at night by a notorious bit of Eildon Road, and he got

11 knocked down. And killed.

12 That's what she told me. So I just went 'Oh right',

13 and went to school. And never went back.

14 MR SHELDON: Okay. And you tell us that you then ran away.

15 Can you remember what was going through your mind when

16 you decided to run away? Why did you do that?

17 A. Part of me maybe had wished that my parents would come

18 back for me, which I knew wouldn't happen anyway, but,

19 to get away from him, and I thought I wasn't getting on

20 that well at school and I had no -- I didn't really have

21 anybody close. So I thought, what's the point, I'll

22 go -- of course I went to London, but I just wanted to

23 get as far away as I could.

24 Q. You tell us then about your time in London and that you

25 didn't know anyone and ended up sleeping on a park bench

1 for the first night?

2 A. I did. I hitched my way down there and I slept on the
3 park bench the first night, yeah.

4 Q. What time of year would this have been?

5 A. Pardon?

6 Q. What time of year would this have been, do you remember?

7 A. It was about [REDACTED], I think. It was cold.

8 Q. It would have been very cold, yes.

9 And you met someone who pointed you in the direction
10 of a sort of, was it a hostel, this place, Centrepoint,
11 a sort of hostel?

12 A. Yeah, it was a place called Centrepoint and they --
13 I went there, but of course I didn't give my right name
14 because of all the -- but then, they gave me a bed. But
15 they kept quizzing about things and asking questions, so
16 I left.

17 Q. What sort of things were they asking you?

18 A. How old I was.

19 LADY SMITH: What did you tell them?

20 A. Pardon?

21 LADY SMITH: What did you tell them, 'Megan', when they
22 asked how old you were?

23 A. I didn't answer.

24 LADY SMITH: You didn't answer at all?

25 A. No.

1 MR SHELDON: At all events, you leave Centrepoint and you
2 were pointed in the direction of a squat.

3 A. A squat.

4 Q. So what was the squat like, what were the conditions
5 like in the squat?

6 A. There was three men, but it was like on three levels,
7 flats. And the man at the bottom was like -- Ted had
8 said he had got his records or something, some records,
9 vinyls that you play, and I went in and this man [REDACTED]
10 said, 'If you're stuck, you can stay here'.

11 I had -- Bob was a nice man. He just painted all
12 the time. It was in Archway, London. But, erm, [REDACTED]
13 was Irish and he was a very heavy drinker.

14 Q. Right.

15 A. Mm-hmm.

16 Q. And he wasn't perhaps so nice?

17 A. No.

18 Q. Can you tell us about [REDACTED]?

19 A. [REDACTED] was 28 years old and he -- I just stayed with
20 him, but at that time it was so difficult to know --
21 I always assumed, in fact until I got married for the
22 second time, that if you stayed with 'em, you would have
23 to sleep with 'em. It was -- it was sort of expected of
24 you.

25 Q. That's what you --

1 A. That's what I thought.

2 Q. All right.

3 And in fact [REDACTED] did --

4 A. Sleep with me, yes.

5 Q. Well, that's -- yes. He just got into bed with you and

6 had sex with you?

7 A. Yes. Yes.

8 Q. Can you remind us how old you were at this time,

9 'Megan'?

10 A. Only 13 and a half, nearly 14.

11 Q. And he was about 28?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. And you say that you took it for granted --

14 A. I just thought it was expected.

15 Q. And that, you say that continued all time you were

16 there?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. So how often would this happen?

19 A. Mostly every night, but I took really unwell. I took --

20 I think it was an ovarian cyst. And I had to go to the

21 hospital because I took really unwell.

22 And then -- I went to the hospital and I -- I should

23 have realised then. I did not know it was against the

24 law for them. So -- but I should have realised because

25 the doctor in the hospital had said to me that I had to

1 stay in and I had to go to convalescence after they'd
2 operated. And [REDACTED] came in, he said, 'Get your
3 clothes on', and I left.

4 Q. So you didn't get to go to convalesce at all?

5 A. No.

6 Q. All right. How soon was this after your operation?

7 A. I still had the stitches in my tummy, yeah.

8 Q. So they'd operated on you for the ovarian cyst?

9 A. Mm-hmm.

10 Q. And you had stitches?

11 A. On my -- yes.

12 Q. And [REDACTED] came and just took you away?

13 A. Told me I had to go.

14 Q. All right. How soon was that after the operation, do
15 you remember?

16 A. About three days.

17 Q. Right.

18 A. I think. But yeah. Mm-hmm, about three days.

19 Q. And you tell us that after being in hospital, you were
20 arrested and by this time the stitches in your stomach
21 had -- well what had happened to them? What sort of
22 condition were the stitches in?

23 A. A mess.

24 Q. Right. Were they infected?

25 A. They were infected, mm-hmm.

1 Q. And you tell us at paragraph 100 that when you were
2 arrested, a male plain clothes police officer battered
3 you. What happened then?

4 A. I -- [REDACTED] had, erm, choked on his own vomit. So
5 I didn't realise when all these policemen came, and Pat
6 says -- 'FKW you're' -- you know, 'The police are here,
7 they want to see' -- so -- and they said, 'Empty your
8 pocket', which I did. And I had a small amount of
9 cannabis in my pocket, which I didn't know was illegal
10 neither at the time. Gave them that.

11 So I was arrested, taken along to Holloway Police
12 Station and there was a police officer. He said, 'If my
13 daughter was like you, a prostitute, I'll show you what
14 I woulda done to her'.

15 Q. And he --

16 A. Hit me.

17 Q. He hit you.

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. How many times did he hit you?

20 A. A few times, a good few times.

21 Q. Where did he hit you?

22 A. Mostly on the back.

23 Q. Mostly on your?

24 A. Back.

25 Q. On your back. And were these blows with a fist or

1 an open hand or --

2 A. Open hand.

3 Q. All right.

4 And so you're then, I think, in the police station

5 for a bit. How long were you there?

6 A. Overnight.

7 Q. Okay. But you tell us that a young female police

8 officer from Aberdeen came and you say she was very

9 nice?

10 A. She was very nice.

11 Q. And showed you, I think, some degree of kindness?

12 A. She did. She asked what happened to me because I didn't

13 look very well, you can imagine, I was squatting about

14 the place and I didn't look very clean or very healthy.

15 So she gave me a shirt to change and she asked what

16 happened to my back.

17 Q. And did you tell her?

18 A. I told her. 'Cause I thought that's the way -- that's

19 what happened.

20 Q. How did she respond to that?

21 A. She wasn't very happy about it.

22 Q. Did she say she would do anything about it?

23 A. Not to me.

24 Q. Okay.

25 At all events, you get back to Aberdeen and go to

1 Aberdeen Sheriff Court. 'Megan', you're still, you
2 think, about 13 and a half or 14 --

3 A. 14 --

4 Q. -- at this point?

5 A. -- I would have been.

6 Q. Did you understand what was going on, did anyone tell
7 you what was going on at this point?

8 A. No, because I -- I didn't even have shoes because
9 I thought that I was actually -- well, I was in the cell
10 with a lady who had not paid her hotel bill or
11 something, and another lady, which was a shame, who
12 I think had just recently had a child. And I thought
13 that I had killed ██████████. I didn't realise it was for
14 cannabis at the beginning. I really thought it was
15 because of ██████████'s death.

16 Q. Right. Yes, I think you mentioned earlier on that
17 ██████████ had died because he choked on his own vomit?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. But you thought this was because --

20 A. I thought I had something to do with it, that I was
21 there.

22 LADY SMITH: And you didn't realise it was --

23 A. Cannabis.

24 LADY SMITH: -- for the cannabis that was in your pocket?

25 A. No, not until I appeared in court.

1 LADY SMITH: Okay.

2 MR SHELDON: So did someone at some point tell you what the
3 charge was that you were facing? How did you find out
4 what the issue was?

5 A. The warden, the prison warden told me.

6 Q. All right, okay.

7 A. She gave me hot chocolate and she told me. But I still
8 couldn't understand what was going on.

9 Q. Okay.

10 So you tell us that you were in Craiginches in
11 Aberdeen for a while?

12 A. Mm-hmm.

13 Q. And you appeared in court three times?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. But the third time, a sheriff, who again you describe as
16 being a nice man, a nice person, became angry and said,
17 'This is ridiculous'?

18 A. He did.

19 Q. Can you tell us about that?

20 A. I appeared once, and I don't know about lawyers, but
21 I don't think -- this lawyer said, 'I don't like these
22 people coming up and down from England selling drugs',
23 but I wasn't doing nothing like that. But anyway,
24 that's what he said to court. So the judge said, 'Well,
25 you need to be remanded again till we sort this'. So

1 I went back to Craiginches, up again. And they didn't
2 know what to do. They -- 'cause Ms Urquhart didn't want
3 to help. She didn't want nothing to do with me.

4 So I went up for the third time, I think it was, and
5 the sheriff, I can't remember his name, but he was
6 a very nice gentleman and he said, 'This is thoroughly
7 ridiculous'. He says, 'You're only 14'. He says, 'You
8 shouldn't even be in prison'. He said, 'You really need
9 a care and protection order'. I remember that.

10 Q. Okay. And it's at that point that you are sent to
11 St Euphrasia's in Bishopton?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. And you've given us evidence about that already,
14 'Megan', but I just want to ask you briefly. You
15 mentioned Ms Urquhart again. Did she visit you in
16 prison at all when you were there?

17 A. No.

18 Q. Did she -- there was no -- was there any contact with
19 her?

20 A. Not to my knowledge, unless she was doing it without me
21 knowing, I don't know.

22 Q. Okay.

23 Did anyone like a social worker come to see you when
24 you were in Craiginches?

25 A. No.

1 Q. Right. Anyone at all come to see you?

2 A. My foster mother came, who I hadn't seen in years,
3 because years back, going back then, they had what was
4 like a savings book and you put some -- they put some
5 money in it. And she asked me to sign over the money to
6 her. Then she said she knew I'd end up where I was.

7 Q. Mm-hmm, okay.

8 You have told us already about your experiences in
9 St Euphrasia's and about your relationship with one of
10 the staff there?

11 A. FSH .

12 Q. Who was good to you?

13 A. She was.

14 Q. And that was a bit of support for you?

15 A. Positive, yeah.

16 Q. And you've told us already about your life after being
17 in care and something about the impact that all this has
18 had on you?

19 A. Well, I got married more or less not very long after
20 coming out of care. My first husband was a persistent
21 offender, which -- and he told the psychiatrist -- I was
22 under a lot of psychiatric things by this time. And he
23 told the psychiatrist that I was frigid and cold and not
24 very nice as a wife.

25 Because I didn't know how to be a wife, probably.

1 I don't know.

2 Q. But you then married again?

3 A. I did.

4 Q. And that was a better -- a better experience for you?

5 A. He was a really good man. He knew everything about me
6 and he never, ever judged me, and he taught me how to
7 love somebody properly and how to respect people
8 properly. To, well, to respect women. And he
9 encouraged me to go to college, encouraged me to do
10 things and, er -- he was a lovely man. Yeah.

11 Q. Well, as I say, 'Megan', you've told us and helped us
12 a great deal already with the evidence that you've
13 given.

14 I just want to ask you though, thinking back on all
15 your experiences in care, all the different places that
16 you were and the different types of 'care', if that's
17 the right word for it, that you had, can you just help
18 us a little more about how we can make things -- how we
19 can help to make things better, what lessons can be
20 learned, and what hopes do you have about what the
21 Inquiry might be able to do?

22 A. I think all I ever wanted, and I'm being completely
23 honest, was an apology from someone. I never -- I did
24 receive, but not the way I wanted. And I think, looking
25 back, I know the care system is very different now, but,

1 you know, they have not to judge people because they are
2 a traveller, or maybe have a learning disability, or
3 maybe, maybe temperamental or difficult or -- children,
4 I'm not saying all of the time, but should be listened
5 to or feel the ability they have someone to talk to.

6 I never had someone to talk to. And I really, really,
7 really, until -- being honest, till I met Shulah Lee(?)
8 I didn't have anyone to talk to. That's the truth.

9 Q. It certainly sounds as though at various points, it
10 would have really helped if you could --

11 A. It would have helped.

12 Q. -- have confided in someone?

13 A. Like -- yes, it would have. It ended up that I spent
14 a long year in Dingleton Hospital, Melrose, under
15 psychiatric help, trying to get to the bottom of why
16 I suffer from such bad depression. I had lots of bouts
17 of depression. Thankfully now, it's under -- I'm not so
18 bad, and I have days when I'm not too good, but not the
19 way I was.

20 But it took all that, years of psychiatric help and
21 a good friend helping me that finally got me on my feet.
22 But I'm very, very -- I don't trust people very easily,
23 unfortunately.

24 Q. Perhaps not surprising given some of the things that
25 happened to you but --

1 A. Yeah. And I think, if there's anything to be learned,
2 I mean, this is going back 50 years maybe, but if
3 there's anything to be learned, it's, I think, most --
4 the biggest thing is not to be judgmental. I think
5 that's the biggest thing for me. And for people that
6 want to work with children, like social workers and
7 that, they should have some empathy. I'm not saying
8 they should be -- strictness is good, I mean, you have
9 to have boundaries, everyone has to have boundaries.
10 But there's boundaries and there's being disciplinary
11 and there's being wicked. And there's no need for that.

12 MR SHELDON: Thank you very much, 'Megan'.

13 LADY SMITH: 'Megan', can I add my thanks to you for coming
14 here again today.

15 A. Thank you.

16 LADY SMITH: You've helped us with another part of your
17 experiences in childhood and it's been so good to hear
18 from you and your description in person of what
19 happened, so thank you for that.

20 A. Thank you.

21 LADY SMITH: And now feel free to go and have a restful
22 afternoon, which you've earned, I think.

23 A. Thank you. Thank you very much.

24 Thank you.

25 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

1 (The witness withdrew)

2 Now, one or two names I want to mention of people
3 whose identities are protected by my General Restriction
4 Order, although we've used their names in the course of
5 this witness's evidence.

6 There is Uncle HAK and Aunt HAF, and Ms ██████████,
7 ██████████ and at one point the witness used her own
8 first name. None of these people are to be identified
9 as referred to in our evidence outside this room.

10 Now, I think the next witness is due to join by
11 Webex at 2 o'clock, is that right?

12 MR SHELDON: I believe that's right, my Lady, yes, at 2
13 o'clock.

14 LADY SMITH: 2 o'clock. Well, I'll rise until then. Thank
15 you very much.

16 (12.48 pm)

17 (The luncheon adjournment)

18 (2.00 pm)

19 LADY SMITH: Good afternoon. Now, we turn to the witness
20 who's joining us by Webex, yes?

21 MS FORBES: That's right, my Lady. Good afternoon. The
22 next witness is an applicant, and is known as 'Bill'.

23 LADY SMITH: 'Bill', good afternoon.

24 A. Yeah.

25 LADY SMITH: Can you see me all right?

1 A. Aye.

2 LADY SMITH: Good. And you can hear me all right?

3 A. All right.

4 'Bill' (affirmed)

5 LADY SMITH: Well done, thank you, 'Bill', I got all that.

6 Now, 'Bill', I think it has been explained to you
7 who I am, I chair the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry, I'm
8 Lady Smith, and I'm sitting here in Edinburgh in our
9 premises here.

10 Thank you very much for joining us over the Webex
11 link this afternoon. It's very helpful that you're
12 doing that. I'm sure it's been an inconvenience to you,
13 but it really helps the work that we're doing here.

14 Now, 'Bill', as we're going through your evidence,
15 if you want a break at any time, don't hesitate to let
16 me know, because I want to try and make you as
17 comfortable as you can be, doing what I know is
18 a difficult thing to do, because we've got questions to
19 ask you about when you were a child. And I know it's
20 not going to be easy to handle.

21 So you say if you need a break or if you want
22 a pause, or if you've got any questions, you just ask us
23 if you've got anything that's troubling you that you
24 want us to try and answer. Don't hesitate to do that.

25 A. So what happens at the end of this, then?

1 LADY SMITH: Okay.

2 A. What happens at the end of this, what do you do?

3 LADY SMITH: Now, you tell me that again, 'Bill'?

4 A. I said what do you do, what do you do at the end of
5 this? At the end of this, er -- whatever you call it.
6 What happens at the end, once I've given you evidence,
7 what happens then?

8 LADY SMITH: When you've given your evidence -- all your
9 evidence is being recorded. We have stenographers here
10 in the same room as me and they are making an accurate
11 record of what you tell me in your evidence. And once
12 that's all been prepared and tidied up, and the spelling
13 corrections done, if you like, it will, in a little
14 while, go onto our website, so the transcript of what
15 you say will be made public. Does that make sense to
16 you?

17 A. All right.

18 LADY SMITH: And of course I've got your written statement
19 as well and it's been really helpful to be able to see
20 that and read it in advance. And that's evidence to the
21 Inquiry too, and it will be published on our website as
22 well.

23 So anyone who wants to know about our work and wants
24 to know what happened at the place that you were in care
25 will be able to read that to find out.

1 Now, quite separately, it's really helpful to me to
2 have this evidence for all the work we are doing in
3 analysing what happened to children in the days when you
4 were a child, when they were in care. And in
5 particular, the bad things that happened, to help us
6 come up with recommendations to the government about how
7 to make things better for children now and better for
8 children in the future, so as to protect them properly
9 from bad things happening.

10 Does that all make sense?

11 A. All right, but what are you going to do at the end of
12 the day? I want four warrants issued for people to be
13 arrested and taken to court over what's happened.

14 LADY SMITH: Yes, 'Bill', I can well understand.

15 A. And the NHS, and the social work department.

16 LADY SMITH: Okay. Now, when it comes to anybody getting
17 into trouble in any way on the basis of your evidence,
18 it's not for me to make that happen. I don't have the
19 power to make that happen, but because --

20 A. Who does?

21 LADY SMITH: Well, because all our evidence becomes public,
22 then the authorities who could make that happen, if they
23 think it's the right thing to do, have that available to
24 them to help them in their decision-making. I can't
25 force them to do it, 'Bill'. It's not in my power to do

1 that. And I'm sorry if that disappoints you, but I have
2 to be frank with you about that.

3 A. It does.

4 LADY SMITH: All right?

5 A. I'll have to go to a private prosecution then.

6 LADY SMITH: Well, decisions on prosecution aren't made by
7 me, they're made by the prosecuting authorities in this
8 country. Even, although I'm a judge, it's never for
9 a judge to decide who should and shouldn't be
10 prosecuted.

11 A. Why should they walk free? Tell me that.

12 LADY SMITH: Tell me that again?

13 A. Why should people be walking free for what they've done?

14 LADY SMITH: The police?

15 A. No, the people that bad used us, why in the hell should
16 they be walking free? (Several inaudible words), at the
17 end of the day.

18 LADY SMITH: Yes, okay, 'Bill'. Okay, 'Bill', now what I'd
19 like to do now is get the evidence that you want to give
20 me today, so that's the evidence about what happened to
21 you, and I'm going to start by inviting Ms Forbes, and
22 I think you've already met her over the screen.

23 A. Aye.

24 LADY SMITH: To help you to explain your evidence to me.

25 But, do, 'Bill', remember, I know how angry you are,

1 I can see that, and I know how keen you are for the
2 authorities to do something about the things that so
3 bother you, and I'm sure they're listening and there are
4 people who are watching your evidence now and listening
5 to your evidence now, who will be listening to how upset
6 you are and how strongly you feel about that.

7 I understand that. But let's get your evidence first
8 because that's the first step for you to help yourself,
9 let's get your evidence, and I'll ask Ms Forbes to do
10 that.

11 Ms Forbes.

12 Questions by Ms Forbes

13 MS FORBES: Thank you, my Lady.

14 Good afternoon, 'Bill', can you see me now?

15 A. Aye.

16 Q. 'Bill', I think you've got your statement in front of
17 you. Is that right, in a red folder?

18 A. Oh aye, something or other. Something -- I don't know,
19 I don't know maybe what to do. My eyesight's nae what
20 it was. (Pause)

21 Q. Have you got that now, 'Bill'?

22 A. Aye, hang on.

23 Q. You're going to change your other glasses? Great.

24 A. Right, go on.

25 Q. So 'Bill', if I could just ask you to go to the very

1 last page of your statement, there's just one thing that
2 we do just to make sure that you're happy with your
3 statement. At the very last page, at paragraph 66 on
4 page 11, there's a paragraph that says:

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

9 And you've signed that and it's dated
10 22 November 2017. And is that still the position
11 'Bill', that --

12 A. Aye.

13 Q. Okay, that's great?

14 A. Why's it took this long to get here now?

15 Q. Great.

16 A. It's taken bloody ten year.

17 Q. It's just to check -- I know it's a long time ago,
18 'Bill', but it's just to check --

19 A. Aye.

20 Q. -- that you are quite happy that you signed that
21 statement?

22 A. Aye.

23 Q. And that's the truth.

24 So you can go back to the beginning --

25 A. There's nae bullshit in there, I'll tell you now.

1 Q. If you can go back to the beginning of your statement,
2 'Bill', if you want, or you could put it to one side,
3 it's up to you, whatever helps you, you don't have to
4 look at it.

5 I'm just going to read out a reference number, this
6 is nothing for you to worry about, it's just we give
7 your statement a reference number, and it's -- I'm just
8 going to read it out now, it's WIT.001.001.6705.

9 So now --

10 A. Aye.

11 Q. Now I've got that out of the way, 'Bill', we can start
12 having a look at your statement and the evidence that
13 you want to give.

14 A. Go on.

15 Q. 'Bill', you tell us you were born in 1952, is that
16 right?

17 A. Aye, [REDACTED] up the Jubilee Hospital.

18 Q. And you then go on, 'Bill', to tell us about your life
19 before you ended up in care. And you tell us about that
20 from paragraph 2, so I'm just going to ask you some
21 questions about that now, is that okay?

22 A. Aye.

23 Q. Okay, I think you say, 'Bill', that you were [REDACTED]
24 with your parents, is that right?

25 A. (Inaudible) yeah, [REDACTED] aye, Drumblade.

1 Q. Drumblade, and I think you stayed there with --
2 A. Drumblade, not Dunblane, Drumblade.
3 Q. Drumblade. Am I saying it right?
4 A. Drumblade.
5 Q. Apologies, 'Bill' that's my fault. Drumblade.
6 And you tell us you had two sisters, is that right,
7 one older and one younger?
8 A. No. I had one sister.
9 Q. One sister.
10 A. I had an older brother, he was born in 1951. He died in
11 1951. He lived for three months. He died of jaundice
12 and heart problems.
13 Q. Okay.
14 A. He was [REDACTED], [REDACTED] was his name.
15 Q. Okay, well thank you for clearing that up, 'Bill'.
16 And I think --
17 A. My sister [REDACTED], my sister [REDACTED] in '59, died of
18 pancreatic cancer. She'd have been, what, 78 this year.
19 Q. But growing up on the farm, 'Bill', I think for a time
20 before you went into care, there was you, your parents
21 and your sister, is that right?
22 A. Right. And my granda, me uncle [REDACTED]
23 Q. So other members of the family as well?
24 A. Me uncle [REDACTED] me granda and all. Yeah.
25 Q. You tell us, 'Bill', about some chores that you would

1 do, I think there was -- you basically lived off the
2 land, is that right, you and your family, you had cattle
3 and you had --

4 A. Yeah, yes, we were. Milk coos, I used to get up at
5 3 o'clock in the morning, take the coos in, into byre,
6 milk them and then put them back and then put them into
7 the loose box. It was about 7 or 8 o'clock and then put
8 them back out to the fields before I went to school.
9 I worked farm before I went to school, milking.

10 Q. So 'Bill', you had a lot to do, I think, as a young boy
11 during the day --

12 A. Yeah, but I mean, see, I'm a kid. That's what we do.
13 That's a farmer's kid deal.

14 Q. So that was the deal, as a boy on a farm?

15 A. Yeah. My sister did one part, I did the other.

16 Q. And I think you even tell us that by the age of 7, you
17 were driving the tractor on the farm?

18 A. Aye, driving tractors in the corn, aye, driving
19 tractors. Tractors, combi, bulldozers. By the time
20 I used to help, time I was 9 year old, started driving
21 combine. Massive heavy -- massive heavy combine we had.
22 It was a bugger. Before the old chute come in. You had
23 to fill the bags up, fill them bags up aground and then
24 slid them, slide them down the chute.

25 You get me? Can you understand that?

1 Q. Yes, it's being typed, 'Bill', we can understand it.

2 LADY SMITH: Yes.

3 A. You're understanding the Doric?

4 MS FORBES: We can understand it, you're doing great, thank
5 you very much.

6 A. Oh aye.

7 LADY SMITH: Yes. That was hard work, 'Bill', and you were
8 very young.

9 A. That was -- we were kids though, you're brought up on
10 a farm, that's what you do, get off your arse at
11 3 o'clock in the morning and go on, go out and milk
12 coos, feed the pigs and what have you. And when you
13 come hame fae school you change oot your school clothes
14 and got stuck into -- stuck into doing. All you need
15 for a Sunday. And you'd do ploughing till 3.00 am,
16 4.00 am in the morning.

17 LADY SMITH: Yes.

18 A. That was part and parcel of being a fermer's kid.

19 MS FORBES: And 'Bill' --

20 A. We weren't brought up with a silver spoon in yer mooth.
21 Mm.

22 Q. I think the way you describe it, 'Bill', is you were up
23 early, you were helping on the farm, you'd go to school
24 and even when you came back after school, again you were
25 helping on the farm. And that was something you and

1 your sister did as well?

2 A. Aye, I'm proud of it.

3 Q. You say, 'Bill', that if you did something bad at home

4 with your family, you might get a slapping --

5 A. Oh, my arse was kicked, oh aye, got my arse skelped,

6 aye. That was just part and parcel. You stepped out of

7 line, your old man would've leathered yer erse, end of

8 story.

9 LADY SMITH: Yes.

10 A. There's nothing bad about that.

11 MS FORBES: No, I think the way you've described it is --

12 A. It's strict parents.

13 Q. You say that it didn't do you any harm and it kept you

14 in line?

15 A. Yeah, no. No bloody harm at all. I don't ken where the

16 hell you're going with this, like.

17 Q. No, I'm just going through, 'Bill', what you said,

18 because you're going to go on and tell us about the

19 difference really between that and what happened to you

20 when you went into care.

21 So what happened to you at home I think you describe

22 is the usual --

23 A. I was taken oot of school at 13 year old, [REDACTED]

24 [REDACTED], I was taken oot 'cause I used to shit me pants

25 and the doctors and that couldnae -- didn't understand

1 what was wrong with me, and they put me into Coblehaugh
2 Children's Home and that's where I met Marjorie
3 Urquhart, the social worker. She was a nasty bastard.
4 She used to --

5 LADY SMITH: 'Bill', hang on.

6 A. (Several inaudible words) I mean, she's walking off and
7 getting away wi' it --

8 LADY SMITH: 'Bill', one thing I want to check -- we'll get
9 back to all this in a minute. One thing I want to
10 check, did you say you think you were about 13 years old
11 when they took you out of school?

12 A. Yeah, I was 13 year old, aye.

13 LADY SMITH: Okay, thank you.

14 MS FORBES: So 'Bill', just to make sure we get all this
15 down, from what you've just told us there, you had
16 an issue with your bowels and it really meant that you
17 couldn't tell when you needed to go to the toilet, and
18 so sometimes you would soil yourself and the school
19 noticed this?

20 A. Aye.

21 Q. Is that right? And the school then got other people
22 involved?

23 A. Aye.

24 Q. And it was then the social work got involved and decided
25 that because of that, you were going to be put in

1 a children's home. I think that's where we got to?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. Now, there was no need for the social work to be
4 involved at your home life because everything was good,
5 and you've explained, I think already, you had a happy
6 childhood?

7 A. Yeah, and she's a nosy cow. That's all she was. Stuck
8 in a fucking hame where I fucking wisnae wanted. She
9 goes 'Oh, it's the fault of the education authority',
10 and all this load of crap, like. It's a load of shite
11 to be honest. It's utter bullshit, the whole bloody
12 lot. I mean, when she come up the house to tak me awa,
13 me mum -- me mum -- me mum had a right go at her and we
14 all wanted a go and so did me grandad, and we all had
15 a go at her, said, 'Why are you taking him?' 'Oh, he's
16 nae fit to look after hisself' and all this bullshit.
17 And that was the day when we realised it was a paralysed
18 bowel. I finished up, was fucking laying in Ladysbridge
19 Hospital in a mental asylum, a mental institution, a
20 fucking 14-year-old, right?

21 Q. 'Bill' --

22 A. And you're nae -- you can't be sent in there till you're
23 bloody 18 unless with a court order. And you explain
24 that to me.

25 LADY SMITH: Okay. 'Bill', what I can see from your

1 statement is it wasn't just you that was upset about
2 being taken away, but your mum was furious.

3 A. Oh aye.

4 LADY SMITH: Your mum was furious.

5 A. Aye, she was. The doctor, she was gonna knock seven
6 bells of shit oot the fucking Marjorie Urquhart. Nae
7 mistake about that. My mum was 5 foot 3. She woulda
8 knocked seven bells of shit oot of her. In fact once
9 she found oot that Marjorie Urquhart was bad using me,
10 she went doon tae Aberdeen with me dad's shotgun. And
11 she went down to (several inaudible words) blast the
12 fucking heid off with the shotgun.

13 LADY SMITH: Okay.

14 A. They were (inaudible) shotgun. The police come up,
15 turned up, and they took the gun off her. They opened
16 the gun up, they said, 'Well, there's nae bullets in
17 it'. She says, 'No', she says, 'I've got bullets in me
18 pocket'. And the bobbies handed the gun back to her and
19 went, 'Away you go hame'.

20 LADY SMITH: Yes, I can see --

21 A. I mean, Marjorie Urquhart was the most unbelievable
22 person that ever worked as a social worker. She was
23 a nasty piece of bastard work.

24 LADY SMITH: Okay, we'll get back to what you want to say
25 about her in a minute, but I can see that this time,

1 when you were taken away, was dreadful for all of you
2 and you've made that really clear in your statement.
3 That's really helpful to me.

4 Now, let Ms Forbes go on to the next stage.

5 A. Well --

6 LADY SMITH: Sorry if we seem to be taking it slowly for
7 you, but it helps me to get it in order if we can do
8 that.

9 A. Aye, all right, on you go.

10 LADY SMITH: Ms Forbes.

11 MS FORBES: My Lady.

12 'Bill', you mentioned a name, Marjorie Urquhart, and
13 we are going to get back to her a little bit later on.
14 But she was the one who came to take you from school and
15 then she took you to your parents' house, and this is
16 when there was this altercation between her and your mum
17 and the police had to be involved.

18 A. Go on.

19 Q. Now --

20 A. She got on the tractor and then turned to the muck
21 loader in front of her, she picked up the front of the
22 car up in the air with the muck loader and she wouldnae
23 let the car doon, and walked up there and 'Alright,
24 explain yourself'.

25 Q. So this was your mum?

1 A. She finally explained herself and me mum, me mum dropped
2 the car down and dropped the shovel doon and turned car
3 back on its wheels.

4 Q. I think what you've said there is that they were
5 thinking this problem you had with soiling yourself was
6 neglect, but actually, as we'll come to talk about in
7 a little while, 'Bill', you found out later that there
8 was a medical problem and we'll come to that.

9 A. Aye.

10 Q. Essentially you were taken from your parents, there was
11 no neglect, there was no reason for you to go to this
12 children's home, and --

13 A. No.

14 Q. -- as you've said, your mum and dad were very upset and
15 I think you've told us, as were you.

16 So --

17 A. Aye.

18 Q. -- we then go to what you tell us about the place you
19 were taken to, 'Bill', and it's -- I might say this
20 wrong so forgive me, but is it Coblehaugh that you were
21 taken to?

22 A. Coblehaugh, aye.

23 Q. Coblehaugh.

24 A. Coblehaugh Children's Home. Yep.

25 Q. Okay, Coblehaugh Children's Home. And you tell us,

1 'Bill', that this was a place that was [REDACTED] you say,
2 two people, HAK [REDACTED] and his wife --

3 A. Aberdeenshire Council. The boy who [REDACTED] was HAK
4 HAK and HAF [REDACTED]. He was a county councillor he was
5 a nasty bastard. He would belt us and belt shit out us.

6 Q. So I think you say HAK [REDACTED] was there maybe at nights and
7 weekends, and it was HAF [REDACTED] involved in the day-to-day?

8 A. Yeah. He worked in Aberdeen all the week, all week. He
9 would come home every night on the Alexander's bus. I
10 don't know if you know Port Elphinstone, a place called
11 the Bridge Bar, you walked up a weir and our glen was
12 there and you walked up a way and that's where they took
13 you to -- and took you to, took you down -- well, you
14 couldn't go anywhere. In front of Coblehaugh the road
15 finished. Down the road you turned left. That took you
16 up to Kentney(?) Road, you went straight on, that took
17 you out onto the fermyard. And you went to the
18 fermyard, as in the ferm.

19 Q. Okay. So I think you explain, 'Bill', that HAK [REDACTED] would
20 be there at the nights and weekends and you tell us that
21 you never messed with him because --

22 A. No.

23 Q. -- if you did, he would give you --

24 A. We were put to bed at half past 7 every night.

25 Q. I think you say --

1 A. We used to wake up in the bedroom one day and -- all
2 right, go on?

3 Q. Sorry, 'Bill', I don't want to speak over you. I think
4 you tell us, 'Bill', about **HAK**, that if you messed with
5 him, he would give you a backhander and knock you across
6 the room?

7 A. Aye, oh aye, fucking mair times than one. I don't ken
8 how many times my fucking heid bounced off the --
9 sitting on my arse in that kids' home. I hit every
10 fucking wall, four walls. I bounced off every fucking
11 one of them.

12 Q. You tell us about another member of staff as well,
13 'Bill', called **RDX**?

14 A. The housekeeper, she was a nasty cow. I can't remember,
15 what'd you call her, I think **RIF** something you called
16 her. She had black hair with glasses. She was a nasty
17 bastard and all. She used to knock seven bells of shit
18 oot of you.

19 Q. So you've talked about --

20 A. I'd love one day to get her fucking back.

21 Q. You talked about **RDX**, 'Bill', and you mentioned
22 somebody there, was it **RIF**? Did you say somebody
23 called **RIF**?

24 A. I think it was called **RIF**, but I'm nae sure. I can't
25 really remember. I'd say her name was **RIF** but I'm

1 nae sure. I can't remember her name.

2 Q. Both of those people worked there and would they --

3 A. Aye.

4 Q. Would they also be involved in hitting you, 'Bill'?

5 A. Between him and her, aye, the pair of them. Both pair

6 of nasty bastards.

7 Q. So is this RDX and RIF ?

8 A. Aye. Aye.

9 Q. And --

10 A. Black hair with glasses.

11 Q. So RIF 's got --

12 A. Right fat cow she was.

13 Q. -- black hair with glasses. Okay.

14 'Bill', you go on to tell us --

15 A. She lived in Inverurie somewhere, I don't know where she

16 lived.

17 Q. We're just going to get into the record a little bit,

18 'Bill', about where you stayed when you were in

19 Coblehaugh, and you talk about being in a bedroom with

20 four beds that you shared with --

21 A. Aye.

22 Q. -- other boys?

23 A. It was me -- it was me, █████, er, █████ and █████.

24 It was the four of us in that room. It was at half

25 past -- we were sent to bed at half past 7. Half 9,

1 we'd open the bedroom and just shin doon the drainpipe
2 and fucking leg it doon the road. We used to go, we
3 used to go out, we used to hide doon Charlie Alexander's
4 luggage wagons and jump in the back of them and they
5 would take us up to Inverness or wherever they were
6 going. They used to drop us off. And we were going
7 down to Inverness at 3.00 am, 4.00 am in the morning.

8 LADY SMITH: So have I got this right, 'Bill', you had to be
9 in bed at 7.30?

10 A. Aye.

11 LADY SMITH: But by about 9.30 pm, the four of you got out
12 of the place and you went off?

13 A. Yep. Opened the window, shinned doon the drainpipe and
14 legged it.

15 LADY SMITH: Okay. Right, I've got the picture, thank you.

16 A. Said about getting back(?).

17 MS FORBES: Now, 'Bill', we will come to what happened to
18 you when you came back from escaping in a minute, but
19 I think what you tell us, first of all, is even on your
20 first night there, you and the other two boys from your
21 room ran away, is that right?

22 A. Aye, yeah. Yeah, we went to, er -- I can't remember
23 where we went, I think Peterhead(?) or Fraserburgh(?) or
24 something like that but (several inaudible words) and
25 then we finished up the first night there.

1 Q. You tell us that you hitched a lift and were picked up
2 by a driver and you ended up at [REDACTED]'s gran's house, do
3 you remember that?

4 A. Aye, yeah, oh aye. Yeah. It was Charlie Alexander's
5 lad who used to pick us up. Charlie and Charlie's
6 lodger when he moved to Aberdeen.

7 Q. And I think you say that night she fed you, but got in
8 touch with the police who took you back to Coblehaugh?

9 A. Yeah. Yeah.

10 Q. Sorry. The police didn't take you back. You were
11 returned to Coblehaugh?

12 A. No, she turned up and took us back, and she battered
13 seven bells of fucking shit out of us when we were in
14 the back of the car.

15 Q. So there's two people, 'Bill', you mention about this.
16 You say there's a Miss Mitchell who was a senior social
17 worker, that she had a car?

18 A. Aye, she was her -- she was her sidekick. She did aw
19 the driving.

20 Q. So she was her sidekick, and then you mention Marjorie
21 Urquhart? This is the woman who --

22 A. Aye, she was the main social worker, she was a nasty,
23 fat cow, mm.

24 Q. You say that Miss Mitchell would drive and Marjorie
25 would sit on the back seat with you and the other boys?

1 A. Aye, yeah, she was there with us on the back seat,
2 belting seven bells of shit oot of us.

3 Q. And the way you've said it is that she would belt the
4 shit out of you, that's what you have just said, 'Bill',
5 is that right?

6 A. Aye, yeah. Aye.

7 Q. You say though, 'Bill', I think you tell us later she
8 was clever, because you tell us she never hit you in the
9 face, it was always on the body and legs?

10 A. No, it was always on the body. I mean, we went off to
11 Inverness one night and the lorry driver dropped us and
12 then we had to get to Inverness. We were down to
13 Inverness town centre probably 2.00 am, 3.00 am in the
14 morning, and the bobbies picked us up and took us to the
15 police station. And Sergeant Nicholson(?), who was the
16 boy in charge, he was night duty sergeant, and he says,
17 'You been hit?', and I says, 'Yeah, little bit, like, oh
18 aye'. He says, 'Like, I want to examine you, I want you
19 to open your shirt up', and he says, 'Come on, get your
20 bloody shirt off'. And then he'd an officer, police
21 officer there wi' him, and they stripped us, they
22 stripped all four of us. All four or all three of us,
23 like. And, er, they said -- they took us down to
24 Edinburgh Hospital. We were black and blue from our
25 neck to me belly button, and from me neck to spinal

1 cord.

2 Q. 'Bill', I think you're talking about --

3 A. We were black and blue.

4 Q. Just correct me if I'm wrong, but I think you're talking
5 about a time later on in your statement when, after
6 you'd been battered by Marjorie Urquhart and you had run
7 away, the police had picked you up and noticed that you
8 were injured and wanted to see your body; is that right?

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. And you showed them your injuries, and you're telling us
11 that you had bruises and you were black and blue all
12 over?

13 A. Yeah. They took us to Edinburgh Hospital and we spent
14 seven days in there.

15 Q. And I think later in your statement --

16 A. Because they refused -- they refused to return to us the
17 home.

18 Q. Yes, I think --

19 A. The police said they were going to do a warrant to see
20 what the hell, what the hell (inaudible). Because they
21 were in Inverness, and the police force were asked to
22 open -- the Highland Police. And so they went doon to
23 just about Nairn, then the Elgin Police took us fae
24 Nairn, back doon to, almost to Huntly, and then Huntly
25 Police took us almost to Inverurie, then the Inverurie

1 Police to the outskirts of Bucksburn. Then the Aberdeen
2 city police took over from there. It was all sorts of
3 different forces.

4 Q. I think you say the police officer didn't want to take
5 you back to the home because of what they saw -- what he
6 saw on you, the injuries?

7 A. Yeah. They wouldn't take us back. He refused.

8 Q. Did you tell the police officer who'd done that to you?

9 A. Aye. Told 'em. She was threatened -- she come to
10 collect us and Sergeant Nicholson telt her, says, 'If
11 you don't fuck off out of here', he says, 'Or I'll lock
12 you up'. He said he'll throw her in a cell and lock her
13 up. And she buggered off. We never saw her for about a
14 week after that, 'cause we was over in Edinburgh
15 Hospital for a week.

16 Q. So you were in hospital for about a week? And I think
17 you also tell us --

18 A. Aye, me, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. Me, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were all in
19 hospital. We were all black and blue. The bloody
20 nursing staff couldn't believe it.

21 Q. And 'Bill', I think you say that after that, you found
22 out that perhaps Marjorie Urquhart had some kind of
23 suspension, but it was only really for a few days. Is
24 that right?

25 A. No. She no got suspended.

1 Q. She didn't get suspended?

2 A. She were told off. That was it.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. Aye, she didnae get suspended. She fucking should have
5 been.

6 Q. Okay. Just to go back, 'Bill', to --

7 A. Should have been. Because the guy -- the company, her
8 bosses, turned round and said, 'Oh, it was a one-off and
9 it will never happen again' and all this bullshit. But
10 she kept on doing it. First chance she got, she
11 battered us.

12 Q. You describe her, 'Bill', and you've said this already,
13 as being 'a nasty piece of work'?

14 A. Oh aye.

15 Q. But you also give us a description of her. You say that
16 she was a tall woman, she was over 6 foot tall?

17 A. Yeah, she was 6 foot 4 and she had hands like fucking
18 shovels. She was a nasty piece of work.

19 Q. I think you also say, 'Bill' --

20 A. She was a right fat cow an all.

21 Q. 'She was built like a wrestler', is the way you have
22 described her?

23 A. Aye, built like a fucking brick shithouse. That's what
24 we used to call her.

25 Q. So, 'Bill', we're going to come to some specific things

1 you tell us in a minute, but just so that we can capture
2 some more things you tell us about Coblehaugh and your
3 life there.

4 A. Aye.

5 Q. I think you say you would be up about 6.30 am, obviously
6 not as early as you would be up on the farm, but you
7 would then go downstairs and have breakfast, which you
8 say was always good. I don't think you've got any
9 complaints about the food there, is that right, 'Bill'?

10 A. Yeah, we never got fed that well at Coblehaugh, no. If
11 you were a good boy, you got fed -- you got good food.
12 If you were a nasty bugger like we were, or a bad boy,
13 like we got called, we didn't get a lot. Put it that
14 way.

15 Q. And when you say --

16 A. We used to go shoplifting to get food. We would pinch
17 things oot -- oot of the -- oot of the Mitchell's shop.
18 Mitchell's is a dairy shop in Inverurie. We used to
19 pinch stuff oot of there. So we'd go in and (inaudible)
20 and sit and feed ourselves. 'Cause we'd pinch a vodka
21 and a lemonade off out on the (inaudible) factory, and
22 we sat behind the railway siding and drunk the bloody
23 lot. We were sick to fucking death, like, three or four
24 days after that, like. We'd go at night and things.

25 Q. So, 'Bill', whilst you say the food was good, are you

1 telling us that sometimes you and some of your friends
2 wouldn't get it if they thought you were bad?

3 A. Aye, yeah, oh aye, HAF used to -- HAF used to smack
4 our wrists, like. That was as far as it would go with
5 her. But he used to come through and he used to hae
6 like a wooden cane thing. He used to fucking whack us
7 with that, you know, he'd smack us over the back of the
8 hands. He broke my fingers once.

9 Q. Just to make sure, 'Bill', I've got what you've said
10 there on the record. So I think you mentioned HAF is
11 that right? And you say that she wasn't somebody who --

12 A. HAF was his wife, aye.

13 Q. Yes. She wasn't somebody --

14 A. She run the home along wi him. He worked all day for
15 the -- he was a councillor for Aberdeenshire Council.

16 Q. So from what you've just told us --

17 A. Because I went and asked him, I went and asked him why
18 the fucking hell did he have a child molester and child
19 beaters for councillors. And, yeah, I'm still waiting
20 for the answer.

21 Q. So, 'Bill', I just want to make sure we get down what
22 you've just told us, because it might be quite
23 important. You said about HAF, and
24 I don't think you say that she was involved in hitting
25 you, but you mentioned somebody else who was

1 a councillor, and I think that's her husband, HAK, is
2 that right?

3 A. Aye. The husband and the housekeeper. They were the
4 worst two.

5 Q. The husband and the housekeeper. And the housekeeper is
6 RDX, is that right?

7 A. HAF -- HAF was all right. She used to gi' you
8 a slap on the wrist if we were naughty, like. That was
9 the extent of it, like. But she never, she never went
10 further than that, and we used to laugh efter it, like.
11 But, I mean, he was a nasty piece of work. He was
12 a right nasty bastard.

13 Q. 'Bill', let's talk about HAK then, because you
14 mentioned there, and I want to make sure that we get it
15 on the record, something about HAK using something to
16 hit you, so I want to make sure we've got that --

17 A. Aye, he used his belt.

18 Q. Sorry, what was it that --

19 A. Took his belt off his trousers and fucking walloped you.
20 It was not -- buckle end and all he used.

21 Q. So it was a belt?

22 A. I had buckle marks on me bloody back.

23 Q. So this was a belt from his own trousers he would take
24 off?

25 A. Aye, yeah, took it off and fucking whacked you with it.

1 Q. You're saying that he would use the buckle end of that?

2 A. Yeah, oh aye, the buckle end, aye. 'Cause when I went
3 to -- when I went to the doctor in Inverurie to get
4 examined, he asked me, he says, 'What happened to your
5 back?' I says, 'Oh', I says, 'The boy in the home hit
6 us'. 'Oh', he said, 'I can't put that doon in me
7 report,' he says, 'that wouldnae look right'. That was
8 the doctor in Inverurie. He was a silly bastard and
9 all, like. He was a right mean git, mm.

10 Q. And as you've told us, 'Bill', HAK, even though he had
11 a job during the day, during the week, he would be at
12 the home at nights and at weekends. So were these the
13 times that he would be hitting you with the belt?

14 A. Yeah. Oh, aye. Well, he was seen doing it. He was
15 seen doing it.

16 Q. What type of things --

17 A. I mean, the other kids saw him. The [REDACTED] family was
18 there. [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]. Er, there were
19 some other kids there and all. There was nine or ten
20 kids there. There was a full family there from Northern
21 Ireland, the [REDACTED] family. [REDACTED] -- [REDACTED], [REDACTED],
22 [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. It was the full family from
23 Northern Ireland, they lived in the home with us. They
24 were in the home with us.

25 Q. So what type of things, 'Bill', would HAK hit you for?

1 What would you have had to have done for that to happen?

2 A. We just -- we just back-chatted him, that was all.

3 Q. Back-chatted?

4 A. He wanted us to do something, we said, 'No, we're not

5 doing it', and he took his fucking temper oot on us.

6 Q. So that would happen to you, and would that happen

7 often?

8 A. Aye, every fucking day nearly. Nearly every day.

9 Q. Did you see him do that to other children in the home as

10 well?

11 A. Oh aye. ██████████ we called him ██████████, because he

12 used to -- he could speak with a budgie. He used to get

13 all the kids together and he used to speak with a budgie

14 and the kids enjoyed it. Younger kids enjoyed it.

15 And then there was ██████████ fae -- he come fae Dornoch,

16 Embo, his family, 'cause we went up there, we went up

17 there one night and his gran -- and his grandma fed us

18 and then phoned the Dornoch bobby, told him to pick us

19 up, and took us back to Inverness. Then he

20 (inaudible) --

21 Q. That was after --

22 A. -- said, 'You shouldn't be here'. I says, 'No, I know'.

23 Q. That was after you ran away one night with the boys,

24 I think you say that was the first night you were there?

25 A. Yeah. I mean, I went to Edinburgh, I went to Glasgow,

1 I was in Preston, I went to Newcastle, went all over the
2 fucking place. We ran away every night. And going to
3 school during the day. I used -- we used to go up the
4 back road and as soon as you were outside the houses and
5 all that like, and you used to go up, and I used to keep
6 on walking till the top of the high street. Sometimes
7 left and gone to see me mum in Huntly. I used to go up
8 and spend time -- and I was always back afore the school
9 closed. It was nae bother getting a lift back. I used
10 to do that every day.

11 Q. Apart from this running away at night, you'd also run
12 away or not go to school, and I think you've told us you
13 would go and visit --

14 A. Aye, never went to school.

15 Q. -- and see your mum?

16 A. I didn't like going to school. The rector used to knock
17 seven bells of shit oot of us, because we might -- used
18 to hae prayers in the morning, and we never went to
19 prayers, we always dawdled behind. So we'd turn up like
20 after 9 o'clock. And the prayers started at 9 o'clock.
21 We always turned up after 9.00 am. And he says, 'I'm
22 sick of seeing the same four faces'. He used to belt
23 us. We had three of the belt each and he sent us to
24 class. He was all right. He was a hard boy but he was
25 all right.

1 Q. So this was --

2 A. He wisnae a bad teacher.

3 Q. So this was a teacher at school when you were late?

4 A. Aye, he was a good teacher. I mean, he was nothing like

5 [REDACTED] and Mrs [REDACTED], Mrs [REDACTED] and

6 Mrs [REDACTED] at [REDACTED]. He was the exact opposite of

7 them.

8 I mean, Dr [REDACTED], she was a dirty old cow. If you

9 went into an examination wi' her and you had a hard-on,

10 she used to hit with you a fucking ruler. And we used

11 to hear -- we used to sit outside. You'd sit outside

12 and you'd hae a good laugh when you heard somebody

13 yelping in her surgery. She used to take out a big

14 ruler and whack your -- whack your -- whack your dick

15 with it, and make the bugger go back down, if you had

16 a hard-on when you went into there. She was a nasty

17 cow.

18 Q. So this was --

19 A. Oh, it was Dr [REDACTED] --

20 Q. Was this a doctor, 'Bill'?

21 A. -- and she was with the NHS.

22 Q. Was this a doctor at, like, a GP surgery?

23 A. Aye, a doctor, she was a doctor with the NHS and she

24 worked for the education authority. Dr [REDACTED].

25 Q. So when -- just to make sure we get this correct,

1 'Bill', when you would go to see her, when you and other
2 boys would go to see her as the doctor, I think you're
3 telling us that she would whack you on your penis? Is
4 that what you're telling us?

5 A. What?

6 Q. With a stick?

7 A. Whack you on your dick. Gi' you a whack on your dick if
8 you had a hard-on, aye. Oh aye.

9 Q. What type of things would you be going to see her for
10 then? Was it just a routine --

11 A. I mean, everybody got -- a lot of lads that were in
12 class with me, we all got it, every one of us. I say
13 for fucks sake -- one day you get a hard-on when you go
14 in there, she would whack you with a ruler. And she was
15 nasty. She used to stick her -- stick her fingers up
16 your arse and everything. She was a right dirty cow,
17 she was.

18 I mean, she's dead and gone an aw, like, I mean,
19 there's nothing I can do against her, she's dead and
20 gone noo. But I mean, that's the sort of thing that
21 used to go on.

22 [REDACTED] was the gym teacher, and if you forgot
23 your gym shoes, he used to hit you with a cricket bat,
24 across your arse with a cricket bat. And I says to him,
25 I says on one day, I says, 'You won't fucking hit me

1 with that', and I took the cricket bat out and I whacked
2 him doon the side of the fucking head and knocked him
3 oot. For about a week and a half, he was in the
4 hospital.

5 Q. So this is all at --

6 A. Mind you, he never hit any other kids after that.

7 Q. 'Bill', this is all at the high school?

8 A. That was [REDACTED] the gym teacher. Hm?

9 Q. Is this all at Inverurie Academy?

10 A. No. Fucking [REDACTED].

11 Q. Right. Okay.

12 A. [REDACTED].

13 Q. The junior school? This is at the junior school before
14 you went -- when you were there?

15 A. Aye. It was the junior secondary school in my time.

16 It's a primary school now. (Inaudible). [REDACTED] was
17 a junior secondary school, up to the age of 15, when you
18 left school and went off to do your work or whatever
19 else. Then, if you're still at school and you started
20 working and (inaudible), started working on Monday.

21 That's the way the school was.

22 Now it's a primary school, age of 8 or 9 year old,
23 and then they sent them up to go to school in

24 Hortmouth(?). It's a different school altogether noo.

25 Nae the same school I went to.

1 Q. Okay. Those are the type of things that would be
2 happening at the school, and was this doctor that you
3 talked about, what was her name, Dr?

4 A. Dr [REDACTED].

5 Q. [REDACTED]. How do you spell that?

6 A. [REDACTED].

7 Q. [REDACTED].

8 A. [REDACTED].

9 Q. Okay, [REDACTED], brilliant.

10 A. Are you understanding the phonetic language?

11 LADY SMITH: That's fine.

12 MS FORBES: Thanks, 'Bill'. Thanks for telling --

13 A. Oh, nae bother.

14 Q. But, just to understand, was she somebody who would come
15 to the school or would you go to see her at the GP
16 surgery?

17 A. No, she used to come out once every two or three weeks.

18 Q. Okay, so she would be at the school?

19 A. Oh aye. She was the school doctor. She never -- and
20 she only saw the boys, she never saw the girls. They
21 had different nurses deal with the girls. She was also
22 going for the boys, never looked at girls. 'Cause me
23 and my sister were at the same school, together.

24 [REDACTED].

25 Q. I understand. And so that's where you would see her and

1 that's where she would hit you with this stick?

2 A. Aye. Oh aye, whack you, whack you in your -- whack your
3 dick with a fucking ruler. I tell you what, it don't
4 half fucking sting when she whacked you with it, like.
5 You know?

6 Q. And I think, 'Bill', you go on to tell us a bit more
7 about your life at Coblehaugh and I'm keen to get more
8 of an understanding about that, because I think you
9 say --

10 A. Well, I was sent doon to Coblehaugh when the doctor in
11 Inverurie said I was a fucking headcase and mental
12 asylum and fucking whatever you -- I don't know what
13 else he put in his report. But I was taken to
14 Ladysbridge Hospital, to a mental institution. Oh, it's
15 shut now, like, it's covered in -- it's flats and houses
16 up there now. But the Ladysbridge Hospital was a mental
17 asylum.

18 Now, you're not allowed to go in there unless you
19 got a court order on you, or you're 18 years old.
20 18 years. I was 14 when I fucking went in there.

21 Q. Well, let's just go through --

22 A. It's illegal for a kid of --

23 Q. 'Bill' --

24 A. I saw the doctor, Dr Clark was the head psychiatrist.

25 And he -- I had to go in and do all me tests to see how

1 bad I was. And he put six papers in front of us, filled
2 them all in, and you come back in, he gave me a bottle
3 of Irn Bru and he says, 'Here, sit in here and drink',
4 (inaudible). he said, 'There's nothing wrong with your
5 brain'. He says, 'You fucking, you shouldn't even be in
6 here'. And he took me doon to Dr Ronhouse(?) or --
7 I can't remember the doctor he took me. And he says,
8 'You have nothing wrong with your mental case'. He
9 says -- he pointed to your stomach. He says, 'There's
10 something wrong with your stomach and I'm going to get
11 to the bottom of it'.

12 Q. And I think --

13 A. I said, 'How the hell are you gonna do that?' He
14 said --

15 Q. 'Bill', I think --

16 A. And he took me to Woodend Hospital at 6 o'clock in the
17 morning. And I underwent a barium x-ray --

18 Q. And I think you tell us, 'Bill', I think --

19 A. -- x-ray.

20 Q. Were you transferred there and seen by someone --

21 A. No, the doctor took me oot of Ladysbridge. I was on
22 a locked-up ward. I mean, there were fucking violence
23 and everything in there. There was a bloke in there who
24 was 6 foot 7 and it was -- took six nurses just to
25 fucking hold him doon and gi' him a dose of paraldehyde

1 to fucking calm him doon. That's how bad the fucking
2 place was.

3 Q. 'Bill', you are giving us a lot of information so
4 I don't want to miss it from the transcript. So let's
5 just take it one step at a time.

6 I think you mentioned first there that you went to
7 Ladysbridge, is that right? Is that Ladysbridge
8 Hospital?

9 A. Aye, Ladysbridge Hospital, aye.

10 Q. This --

11 A. It's shut down now.

12 Q. This is a mental hospital, I think you describe it as
13 that?

14 A. Aye, it's a mental institution.

15 Q. And when you were there, I think you tell us about this
16 at paragraph 32, I'm just going to say a couple of
17 things --

18 A. Aye, it was a locked ward.

19 Q. -- Things you tell us about that.

20 A. I was on a locked ward with a lot of mental cases.

21 Q. You went from Coblehaugh to Ladysbridge?

22 A. Aye. Yes.

23 Q. And you say the first night you were there, a doctor
24 tied your wrists and took you to a padded room and then
25 you --

1 A. Yep.

2 Q. -- were kept there for between 12 and 14 hours?

3 A. Took all me clothes off and left me with a pair of pants
4 on, that was it.

5 Q. And the next day, though, you say in the morning --

6 A. Was in a padded room for three or four days.

7 Q. 'Bill', I think you tell us that another doctor --

8 A. I was in there for three or four days.

9 Q. Okay. Another doctor you say then came and saw you and
10 arranged for you to get some food and I think you just
11 mentioned that, that he put something down in front of
12 you?

13 A. Yeah, yeah, doctor got us the food, aye. One of the
14 doctors was all right there. The boy who was in charge,
15 he was a nasty piece of shit, him. If he didn't like
16 you, he used to hit you with his walking stick, and --
17 if he didn't like you, he used to whack you with his
18 walking stick. That was the doctor that was in charge
19 at Ladysbridge.

20 But the other doctor that I saw, him that took me to
21 Woodend(?) Hospital, he was all right, he was a smashing
22 bloke. Along with Mr Clark, like. Aye, he was all
23 right.

24 Q. Is that Dr Clark you mentioned?

25 A. Aye, Dr Clark, he was the head psychiatrist. He said

1 I shouldn't have even been in there at that age.

2 Q. 'Bill', you say --

3 A. He was wondering why the hell I was there.

4 Q. You then went to -- I think it was realised that you
5 needed to see someone else, so you went to Woodend
6 Hospital --

7 A. Well, they took me fae Ladysbridge to -- the doctor who
8 took me to Ladysbridge at 6 o'clock in the morning, took
9 me to ward 7 at Woodend Hospital. I underwent a barium
10 X-ray, on the Monday I think it was. I spent me 15th
11 birthday on the operating table. I spent me 15th
12 birthday on the operating table and when I came round --
13 er, oh, aye, I opened my eyes -- I seen the doctor was
14 still there and I says, 'Are you taking me back?' He
15 says, 'No, I don't want you to see you anymore', he
16 says, 'You're nothing to do with me now. You're not
17 mental, you aren't a headcase, there's nothing wrong
18 with you now. Your bowel, you had a paralysed bowel,
19 that's why you are messing yourself'.

20 I've got a steel plate in me stomach now. I mean,
21 I've got to wear it. When I go into airports, I've got
22 to use this letter, otherwise I set off all the alarms
23 in the airports. 'Cause the alarms goes off because of
24 the metal plate in me stomach.

25 Q. So it sets off -- this metal plate, 'Bill', that you've

1 got now in your bowel, sets off the scanner at the
2 airport. But I think just so we understand what
3 happened, you've already told us about this issue that
4 you had, which led to you being put in care in the first
5 place, which was you soiling yourself, and I think what
6 happened when you ended up in Woodend Hospital is
7 that --

8 A. Aye, well, the reason -- the reason I got put into
9 Ladysbridge was I tried to commit suicide. [REDACTED]

10 [REDACTED]
11 [REDACTED]. And I gone to the police and they took
12 me in there and then and sorted me oot. I took a heart
13 attack -- at 15 -- 14.

14 Q. 'Bill', just so we go to this and make sure we get this
15 on the record. You tell us, 'Bill', at paragraph 31
16 that you had -- sorry, at paragraph 30, that first of
17 all, things got so bad in Coblehaugh that you tried to
18 commit suicide, and I think that's what you've just
19 explained?

20 A. Yeah. Well, I asked after the heart attack... I said --
21 The doctor told me when I come to in the hospital, I got
22 a police escort in the ambulance, and they said
23 everything that happened to me.

24 Q. You explain you were only about 14 or 15 when you had
25 your first heart attack and I think you say --

1 A. Yes, I was 14.

2 Q. -- 'Bill', you think that it was really because of what
3 was going on in Coblehaugh that that happened?

4 A. Yeah, yeah. Yeah.

5 Q. That's how you feel, that's what you think. And you
6 tell us that you were taken by ambulance then to
7 Foresthill Hospital and you were there for a few months?

8 A. I was 16 when I was in.

9 Q. And we do have a very small amount of records, 'Bill',
10 only a couple of pages, but they do show that you were
11 at Foresthill Hospital for a few months. So this is why
12 it was, it's because this is your first heart attack at
13 14?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. And you go on later to tell us 'Bill', I think, that
16 subsequently you've had more heart attacks; is that
17 right, later on in life?

18 A. Yeah, I've had five altogether. I've got a heart -- a
19 big valve in me heart and it is supposed to be changed
20 every 10 years but this one's been in since I was 14,
21 and I'm now 74, so it's been in 60 year and it's still
22 never been changed and it's still doing the work.

23 Q. And it was after this heart attack, I think, that you
24 ended up, as you've told us, because you tried to commit
25 suicide, you went to Ladysbridge and then that led to

1 you getting this operation, is that right, where the --

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. -- they discovered that you had a paralysed bowel or

4 part of your bowel was paralysed?

5 A. Yeah -- part of the bowel. Your bowels work with it.

6 The bottom end was working out of your stomach still.

7 Your colon was working, that was the way it was.

8 Q. But you got the operation --

9 A. That's what the doctor told me (several inaudible

10 words).

11 Q. -- and they put this metal plate in and that sorted the

12 problem out; is that right?

13 A. Yeah, aye, a steel plate in me. Aye, a steel plate in

14 me stomach, like.

15 Q. I think you say you do have to still take some

16 medication just to make sure that you don't get bunged

17 up with blockages?

18 A. Aye, I have medication, aye. I got to take shite

19 tablets and all the rest of it. I don't bother -- I'm

20 sorta -- well, I'm nae too bad. Well, I'm nae as common

21 as you, like. You go to toilet maybe two or three times

22 a week; I go once a week. I hae a shit once a week and

23 that's it, that's as far as I'm concerned. You probably

24 go toilet two or three times in a week, I don't know.

25 I go for a shit once a week.

1 Q. Okay.

2 But after you had that operation, 'Bill', I think

3 that really meant that you didn't have this problem

4 soiling yourself anymore, that was it fixed?

5 A. No. No.

6 Q. But then, after you had the operation, you went back to

7 Coblehaugh; is that right?

8 A. No.

9 Q. No?

10 A. No, I went back -- I went to a halfway house in Cults.

11 I went to a halfway house in Cults.

12 Q. So was this -- after your operation, you went to the

13 halfway house, and I think this was --

14 A. Right. After me bowel operation, I went to the halfway

15 house in Cults, and then I was in there three, four

16 weeks, and then me mum and dad come and picked me up and

17 took me home.

18 Q. So that was Wellwood Cults? Is that what it was called,

19 Wellwood Cults?

20 A. Yeah, the halfway -- I can't remember the blessed name.

21 It was -- what the hell was, no, I can't remember his

22 name. Him and his wife ran the place and they also run

23 Woodlands Hospital, which was for disabled kids, or

24 babies who were disabled and that, and we used to take

25 the kids out and that in Mitchells -- ETX [REDACTED] ETX

1 [REDACTED], that's it. [REDACTED] was the boy who
2 [REDACTED] Coblehaugh -- [REDACTED] the halfway house. [REDACTED]
3 and his wife.

4 Q. So if we're looking at --

5 A. His daughter was a nurse at Woodlands Hospital.

6 Q. If we're looking, 'Bill', at the order of events, once
7 you have your operation, after that you don't go back to
8 Coblehaugh, you go to this halfway house, okay.

9 A. No, went to a halfway house at Cults, and I were three
10 weeks and then I went back home.

11 Q. Well, if the reason for you to be in Coblehaugh was
12 because of you soiling yourself, that problem had been
13 fixed, hadn't it?

14 A. Yeah. Yeah.

15 Q. Okay.

16 A. I want that fucking home pulled down, raised to the
17 ground. I want it fucking pulled doon completely. It's
18 a lot of bad memories. I mean, me -- [REDACTED]'s gone,
19 [REDACTED]'s gone, and the other [REDACTED]'s has gone. The whole
20 bloody three of us, there's only me left.

21 Q. Well, I'm glad, 'Bill', you're able to come and tell us
22 your story and theirs as much as you can.

23 I just want to go to a few particular things that
24 you tell us about, before we leave Coblehaugh, and it's
25 where you talk really about particular incidents that

1 happened of abuse, and this is about paragraph 39 of
2 your statement. You've told us about --

3 A. Paragraph what?

4 Q. You told us about HAK and RDX. They would both be
5 involved in hitting you, and the way you've put it is
6 HAK would 'batter you' and you would land 'across the
7 other side of the room'; whereas RDX --

8 A. Yeah, aye, that's true.

9 Q. And RDX would hit you if you -- if she got any
10 backchat.

11 A. She'd smack you round the side of your head and your
12 fucking head would bounce off the walls.

13 Q. But Marjorie Urquhart, the senior social worker who we
14 have talked about before --

15 A. She'd stand there and fucking laugh. She used to -- she
16 used to stand there and laugh, and see you get fucking
17 knocked about and 'It'll make you a man', she said.

18 Q. 'Bill', I think you say she was the one, whenever you
19 came back after running away, who would batter you and
20 you've told us about that.

21 A. Aye.

22 Q. And you've told us about the police officer seeing the
23 injuries and you going to the hospital with your
24 friends.

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. And him refusing to --

2 A. That was Inverness, aye.

3 Q. -- hand you over. But I think --

4 A. There's a letter -- you got a letter fae him. You got

5 a letter on his behalf, I didn't even know until it

6 turned up, I didn't ken -- didn't know about it. You

7 got a copy of his letter, fae Sergeant Nicholson.

8 I didn't know it existed.

9 Q. 'Bill', there is one other thing you mention, that after

10 you got back -- this must be after you got back from the

11 hospital when the police took you there, because of your

12 injuries -- I think you say, this is at paragraph 43,

13 you say:

14 'She turned up at the home a few days later and told

15 us to go to the room. When she got us in there alone,

16 she battered each of us and **HAK** just stood at the door

17 and watched.'

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. Is this Marjorie Urquhart you are talking about here?

20 A. Aye, yeah. Yeah.

21 Q. And you say, 'Bill':

22 'I shouted at him to stop her but he just stood

23 there and said he never saw anything.'

24 A. Aye. Yeah.

25 Q. And then you say:

1 'I tried to go for him but [REDACTED] [I think that's your
2 friend [REDACTED] dragged me back.' So --

3 A. Yeah, [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], held me back or I'd have
4 killed the bastard if I'd got me hands on 'im.

5 Q. So this is what happened, 'Bill', after you got back
6 from the police officer taking you to the hospital to be
7 seen for your bruises?

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. So --

10 A. I mean that home should be closed down permanently
11 because it's not a home for kids -- well, nae in our day
12 it wasn't, put it that way.

13 You were bad used. You weren't fed properly. You
14 were telt to go to bed at a certain time, get up in the
15 morning time at a certain time, and all this shite like,
16 and I mean, I've never -- I'm nae used to all that crap.

17 At hame, I used to get up at 3.00 in the morning,
18 get the cows in, milk them and that, and then go back to
19 bed for an hour or so, and then fucking get up and hae
20 me breakfast and take the cows back up to the field
21 again before I went to school. That's the way things
22 used to be at hame. That's how -- what I was mair used
23 to.

24 It was like a fucking -- it was like one of these
25 bloody -- one of these homes that you go in to and

1 people get put in to if they break awa. It's like
2 a bloody home like that and you had to -- everything had
3 to be done in a certain time, a certain way, and all
4 this fucking shite, like, and that pissed me off. Mm.

5 I told her once and she give me a bad backhander
6 across the fucking face, the housekeeper --

7 Q. The housekeeper? Is this **RDX**?

8 A. -- and I said 'I'll fucking, I'll fucking get you back
9 one day ya bastard because of what you've done,' but she
10 died. She's dead now, I think, as far as I'm led to
11 believe.

12 Q. 'Bill', you told us about telling the police about what
13 happened, and this is at paragraph 47, and you say:

14 'I reported the abuse to the police and most of them
15 never believed a word that I said. It was reported to
16 the social work ...'

17 A. No, I didn't.

18 Q. Sorry:

19 'It was reported to the social work but, as that was
20 Marjorie, it was pointless.'

21 A. Aye.

22 Q. And I think you go on to tell us that you actually went
23 to your aunt's house one day and showed her the
24 bruising. You tried to make a lie about how you'd got
25 the bruising but you told her that it was Marjorie that

1 had done it, and she took you to the social work office.
2 I think that was, sorry, your mum took you to the social
3 work office, and you mentioned that I think at the
4 beginning of your evidence, one occasion --

5 A. Aye, she took me dad's shotgun to blast her fucking head
6 off.

7 Q. -- she had gone there.

8 A. Didn't mince her words, apparently.

9 Q. I think you say, 'Bill', that your mum smacked Urquhart,
10 so she hit her for what she'd done to you. And the
11 police were called and they --

12 A. Well, she got hold of her, Marjorie, and pulled her out
13 of the office window -- in fact she come through the
14 office window and the window was open two or three
15 inches and she grabbed her hair and pulled her straight
16 through the window. The window just shattered and my
17 mum battered fucking Urquhart, and the police and
18 everything were sent for but they never -- the police
19 said, 'Well, she's battered this lad, so she's some
20 mother looking after her son', and they didn't press any
21 charges. They just took my mum oot and took her hame,
22 and that was the end of it.

23 But Marjorie Urquhart wanted to press charges, and
24 all this fucking shite, but the police advised her not
25 to under her -- she was told, by the way she treats

1 people, er, it's retaliation. So she was to blame for
2 that. So at the end of the day, they just shut it off
3 and that was it. She didnae get any charges, so nae
4 charges on her. My mum got away with it and all.

5 Then my mum would've blown her fucking heid off,
6 I'll tell you. My mum wouldn't mince words. I mean, we
7 -- all right, my mum used to smack our arse if we
8 stepped oot of line but, at the end of the day, there
9 was naebody else going to bad use her laddie, like
10 I was, and that's what I'm saying she wouldn't stand
11 for.

12 Q. So your mum wouldn't stand for it, and I think you have
13 said that, 'Bill' -- this is paragraph 48 -- you say the
14 police called at the house about a week later and they
15 told you that Marjorie Urquhart had been suspended for
16 a couple of days but was now back at work.

17 Do you remember her being suspended?

18 A. I think she was suspended a couple of days, aye, she was
19 given I think absent leave, or something fucking like
20 that, like, and she was back -- she got suspended on the
21 Monday, I think it was, and she was back to work on the
22 Wednesday. She was back at the home on Wednesday 'cause
23 she got tore into me, saying 'You got me fucking
24 suspended', and all this, like. She had a right go at
25 me, and [REDACTED] [REDACTED], and all. She had a go at

1 ██████ -- ██████, ██████ and me, saying 'You got me fucking
2 suspended', like and --

3 Q. So you got punished by her after that --

4 A. She wasn't happy.

5 Q. -- for her being suspended?

6 A. Oh aye, yeah. She battered fucking seven bells of shit
7 oot of us after that (inaudible).

8 Q. I think you say, 'Bill', at paragraph 49, you say --

9 A. The only time I was safe was when I went into that
10 hospital in Ladysbridge, and then when I was taken doon
11 to Woodend Hospital and then three weeks at the halfway
12 house and then back hame with my parents. I was happy
13 enough then. I was ready to see the fucking back of
14 her. She never came near my hoose again, 'cause my mum
15 would have fucking killed her if she had. Make nae
16 mistake about that.

17 Q. 'Bill', you make the point, you say:

18 'It didn't matter who you reported this abuse to,
19 nothing stopped her.'

20 Her being Marjorie.

21 A. No, nothing would, they just turn a fucking -- swept
22 under the carpet and that was it. There was fuck all
23 done about it. Just typical. I mean, telling the
24 fucking police force, it was on their fucking side and
25 all the rest of it. It was a load of bullshit but at

1 the end of the day, what the hell can I do? There's
2 nothing I can fucking do about it. I'd argued and
3 argued and argued with the police about it. The police
4 says, 'Well, ken, it's your word against theirs and
5 they're saying this and they say that', and they says
6 'Your word disnae really count', and I say I fucking
7 know that, like.

8 But I mean I want the social worker department to
9 stand up and fucking stand up and say, right, we admit
10 to what's happened. I mean, all right, the people
11 that's in Inverurie nowadays, now, wasn't even born when
12 we were getting knocked about, and that's the
13 difference -- but I want them fucking charged. I want
14 something done. I want the social worker -- I mean,
15 like the social worker, they retire and they want to
16 become fucking MPs. Where the hell -- how the hell do
17 they get away with that? They batter fucking kids and
18 knock them about and that, and when they retire they go
19 and get fucking MPs or Labour or Conservative. What's
20 the crap there then? You tell me.

21 Q. Well, 'Bill', you tell us about another social worker.
22 I just wanted to talk you to about that, just for
23 a minute. There's a social worker called Mr White you
24 mention at paragraph 50, and he would be somebody that
25 came to the home regularly, and I think you tell us that

1 you told him that you were in agony and he took you and
2 the two other boys to see a doctor, a Dr Gill, and
3 Dr Gill's answer was that the injures could have been
4 caused from falling or playing in the trees and you
5 tried to tell him to get something done but he refused,
6 claiming it was not his jurisdiction. So is that
7 something you remember happening?

8 A. Dr Gill -- Dr Gill was a doctor in Inverurie. He's dead
9 and gone now but his son now runs the Inverurie --
10 Inverurie, er, surgery. His son now runs it.

11 He was a right nasty bastard.

12 Q. That's another time you told somebody about it and
13 nothing was done?

14 A. Nothing was done about it -- 'We'll look into it' and
15 that was the last I ever heard; never heard nothing
16 after that.

17 I mean my two -- my three mates are all dead. I'm
18 the only one left out of them.

19 LADY SMITH: 'Bill', I think there came a time that you were
20 transferred away from Dr Gill and put with another
21 doctor; have I got that right?

22 A. I was under Dr Gill in Inverurie.

23 LADY SMITH: You were with Dr Gill and then, after you
24 talked to him about him not realising what the problem
25 with your bowel was, you were put with another doctor,

1 rather than have Dr Gill as your doctor; have I got that
2 right?

3 A. I can't remember who the other doctor was or --

4 LADY SMITH: It doesn't matter, I don't need the name.

5 A. I can't remember who he was.

6 LADY SMITH: That's fine, I don't need the name, but there
7 was another doctor who became responsible for you?

8 A. Aye, there was another doctor, yeah.

9 LADY SMITH: That's all right.

10 Ms Forbes.

11 A. That was a quack. He wasn't ever a proper doctor. He
12 was a quack, him.

13 LADY SMITH: All right.

14 A. I mean, at the end of the day, I mean, what's you go
15 into this, what's going to happen at the end of the day
16 about this? You tell me.

17 LADY SMITH: Well, I told you about that earlier on 'Bill'.
18 Let's just keep to where we are with --

19 A. I want -- I want -- I want four bloody arrests sorted
20 oot, and I want people arrested for this. Why the hell
21 should they walking the fucking streets? They've nae
22 right walking the fucking streets.

23 LADY SMITH: 'Bill', I listened to what you said at the
24 beginning. I answered the questions you had then.
25 I answered exactly what you are asking.

1 A. Whose bloody side are you on?

2 LADY SMITH: There's no point going over all that again. We
3 really want to know --

4 A. Whose side are you on? Theirs or ours?

5 LADY SMITH: No, 'Bill', I really want to know the rest of
6 what happened in your own life when you were young, and
7 Ms Forbes is nearly at the end of that. So just bear
8 with us, please, and we'll get to the end of it. It
9 really matters to me to hear about your past and what
10 happened to you when you were young.

11 Ms Forbes.

12 MS FORBES: I'm grateful, my Lady.

13 'Bill', we'd just got to the point really when you
14 went to the halfway house at Wellwood, Cults, and then
15 after a few months there, you were allowed to go home
16 and go back to your parents.

17 A. I was there for three weeks.

18 Q. Yes. Just three weeks, okay.

19 A. Just three weeks, and my mum and dad come and pick me up
20 and took me back, 'cause I got a part-time job with
21 ██████████ in the timber sawmills in Aberdeen, out
22 in ████████ in Aberdeen. I got a part-time job with them,
23 two or three hours a day over a couple of weeks, and
24 that used to get me out if that was on but I went back
25 hame and then I went to (inaudible) and started working

1 life on the railway, 'cause me dad got me a job there.

2 Q. I think that's when your life on the railway starts,

3 'Bill', and you tell us about that.

4 A. Aye -- 15 year old I was.

5 Q. And I think you say that you worked your way up and

6 became a driver then?

7 A. 15 and a half when I started wi' that.

8 Q. 15 and a half when you started, and then became a driver

9 after that, and then you were on the railway for --

10 A. Aye, steam engine driver, diesel driver, overhead

11 electric driver, Delta driver, you name it, I did it.

12 Down by -- (several inaudible words) down the 125, you

13 got here. Down the 125 you got here, I used to drive

14 down to Paddington, Paddington to Penzance, 'cause

15 I come from Bristol Temple Meads to Penzance and

16 (inaudible) Plymouth, 125 you come fae if you're going

17 up here now.

18 LADY SMITH: Okay.

19 A. They're all Great Western.

20 LADY SMITH: 'Bill', when you are talking about the 125, is

21 that the 125 train?

22 A. Aye, they're 55 year old --

23 LADY SMITH: The fast InterCity train.

24 A. Aye, the InterCity 125, aye -- I think it used to be

25 called, like.

1 LADY SMITH: I know them well. Thank you.

2 A. Aye, you were one of the passengers, but you've no
3 driven them, have you?

4 MS FORBES: 'Bill', I think you describe yourself as
5 a railwayman through and through, and is that you?

6 A. Aye.

7 Q. Is that who you are?

8 A. Aye.

9 Q. So I sense from what you've said in your statement,
10 'Bill', that that's a sense of great pride to you, the
11 job that you had on the railway and the life that you
12 were able to enjoy as a railwayman; is that right?

13 A. Aye. Me old man was killed over at Gallatown(?) Huntly.
14 He got off his engine, walked up beside the train and
15 another train coming fae Inverness, coming through
16 Huntly (inaudible), knocked him over and dragged him up
17 onto platform. They had to get the fire brigade to jack
18 the engine up and get his body oot from underneath. My
19 old man killed at Huntly.

20 My sister was area manager for [REDACTED], she looked after
21 Purley Oaks right doon as far as Southampton, I used to
22 ran that line myself. I used to work in London. I was
23 35 year in London, in the south-east. I retired at
24 Plymouth in 2017, nine year ago. I retired
25 in December 2017. That's when I finished.

1 Q. So that was a good part of your life, I think, from what
2 you've told us.

3 A. 48th year. 48th year. Count it oot.

4 Q. You tell us a little bit more, 'Bill', in your
5 statement, and we've got that there, so I'm not going to
6 go through it line by line but one of the things you
7 mention, 'Bill', at paragraph 60 is you said you had
8 a really good upbringing from your mum and dad.

9 A. Aye, brilliant.

10 Q. And, as we've discussed, 'Bill', the only reason that
11 you ended up in that care home was because of the issue
12 you had with your bowels and from your point of view --

13 A. Aye yeah -- it's the educating authority I complain
14 about. Not the kids that I went to school with. They
15 wouldnae bother their arse about. Even the headmaster
16 wisnae a bother, that old headmaster, he wisnae a
17 bother. (Inaudible) bit short with you once you get
18 a bit older, aye, nae bother, but I mean the social work
19 department, I tell you what, I never want to see another
20 social worker in my life.

21 I had two come into my flat in Aberdeen, er, last
22 year -- well, sorry, two year ago, 'cause I've been up
23 here a year now, and, erm, they come out two year ago
24 and I says to 'em, I says, 'Can you fly?'. 'Because I'm
25 on the 13th floor at [REDACTED]. I says, 'Can you

1 fly?' and they says 'Why?', and I says 'You're going
2 over that fucking bannister heid first', and I says
3 'You'll be on one of the cars doon below, 13 floor
4 below', and they ran oot me front door and never came
5 back. I just sat there and laughed.

6 Q. Well, 'Bill' --

7 A. I don't want social workers interfering with me at all.
8 I don't want anyone new.

9 Q. I completely understand, 'Bill', what you're saying
10 about that and --

11 A. They're nasty.

12 Q. -- we've got it on the record as well.

13 That's really, 'Bill', though, all the questions
14 I have for you. Thank you very much for answering the
15 questions I've had.

16 A. The social workers office was in Queen's Road in
17 Aberdeen, next door to Aberdeenshire Council, and then
18 when they split up, they split up, it was five, six year
19 ago, and Inverurie took over the Aberdeenshire side, and
20 Aberdeen City took over the city side.

21 I want something done about it. And I mean I want
22 something done about it. Seriously.

23 Q. Well, 'Bill', it just remains for me --

24 A. I want them served with warrants.

25 Q. I just want to say thank you, okay, for taking the time

1 to give evidence today. I know it's not been easy
2 sometimes --

3 A. No, it hasn't.

4 Q. -- but thank you for answering my questions 'Bill',
5 okay. I don't have anything more for you, all right?

6 A. All right.

7 LADY SMITH: 'Bill', thank you again from me. Thank you
8 very much for engaging with us as you have done.

9 A. Are you nae going to ask me things? Are you nae going
10 to ask me nothing, anything?

11 LADY SMITH: Thank you. We'll switch off the --

12 A. You sent me a note like -- are you going to answer me
13 some things?

14 LADY SMITH: We'll switch off the link now and you go and
15 put your feet up 'Bill'. You've worked hard. Thank
16 you.

17 A. All right. Well, I tell you what, I hope to see
18 something good come out of this.

19 LADY SMITH: I hear that.

20 A. I want to see something good. I want warrants issued.

21 LADY SMITH: I know.

22 A. If possible through your sidekick Judge Donaldson.
23 Judge Donaldson's your sidekick, isn't he?

24 LADY SMITH: I'm not sure who you are talking about, 'Bill'.
25 You may be mixing him up with somebody else.

1 A. Judge Donaldson (inaudible) they call him.

2 LADY SMITH: But, 'Bill', we have to switch off the link
3 now. And thank you again.

4 A. All right. Thank you very much. Thank you.

5 MS FORBES: My Lady, that is all the evidence for today.

6 LADY SMITH: Very well.

7 MS FORBES: Tomorrow we do have some read-ins and we have
8 the organisational witness.

9 LADY SMITH: Yes. Which way round are they coming?
10 Can you remind me when the witness is going to be
11 here?

12 MS FORBES: The witness is going to be here at 11.45 am. So
13 the hope is to do the read-ins from 10.00 am.

14 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much indeed.

15 Well, before I rise this afternoon. A few more
16 names of people whose identities are protected by my
17 General Restriction Order. We had RDX, possibly
18 somebody called RIF -- that wasn't entirely clear,
19 but be careful with the name RIF in any event, in
20 case it is somebody who is protected -- ETX,
21 HAK, HAF, and then
22 and
23 . None of those individuals are to be
24 identified as having been referred to in our evidence
25 outside this room.

1 So thank you very much and I'll rise now until
2 tomorrow morning.

3 (3.10 pm)

4 (The Inquiry adjourned until 10.00 am the following day)

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