

Wednesday, 22 April 2026

1

2 (10.00 am)

3 LADY SMITH: Good morning and welcome back to our case study
4 hearings in relation to Phase 10 of our investigations
5 in which we're looking in particular into the provision
6 of residential accommodation for children in local
7 authority places, institutions either run by them or
8 used by them to fulfil their responsibilities.

9 Now, this morning we return to some evidence in
10 person and I'm going to go to Ms MacLeod to invite her
11 to introduce the witness, who's here with us.

12 Ms MacLeod.

13 MS MACLEOD: Good morning, my Lady. The first witness this
14 morning will use the name of 'Michael'. 'Michael's'
15 statement, or parts of 'Michael's' statement, have
16 previously been read in to the Inquiry, that was on
17 Day 94, during the Quarriers, Aberlour and Barnardo's
18 case study, and that's at TRN.001.004.3325. That was on
19 28 November 2018.

20 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

21 MS MACLEOD: 'Michael' has also given oral evidence
22 previously to the Inquiry during Phase 8, Chapter 6, in
23 relation in particular to his time at Dr Guthrie's.
24 That was on 30 May 2024, Day 447 of evidence at
25 TRN-12-000000080.

1 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

2 'Michael', welcome back, it's good to see you here
3 again. I'm very grateful to you for being prepared to
4 go to the trouble and inconvenience of coming here to
5 help us.

6 'Michael' (sworn)

7 LADY SMITH: Now, as I say, I know you've been here before
8 so you do understand how we work, but let me just go
9 through one or two things again with you.

10 The red folder's got your written statement in it
11 and, as we've already mentioned, it covers more than the
12 place we're interested in talking about today and is
13 already evidence before me. But of course it's been
14 very helpful to be able to remind myself of that written
15 evidence in advance and, of course, the transcripts we
16 have of your other evidence.

17 I'll start your evidence in a moment and we'll run
18 through until 11.30 for the normal morning break, but if
19 you want a break before then, you must please let me
20 know. It's not a problem. What is a problem is if
21 you're sitting there uncomfortable just needing
22 a breather and I don't know that. So you just tell me.

23 If you've got any questions at any time, just ask
24 us. And do remember that I fully understand how
25 difficult it is for somebody in your position, as

1 an adult, to be dragged back into your childhood days
2 for the purposes of this Inquiry and, in particular, go
3 back to times that weren't exactly easy for you. You
4 may get upset. That's not a problem. You may not, you
5 may cope. That's not a problem either. I just want you
6 to know that I do realise it's not easy and I can
7 accommodate that if you can help me help you to do so.

8 If you're ready, I'll hand over to Ms MacLeod and
9 she'll take it from there. Thank you.

10 Ms MacLeod.

11 Questions from Ms MacLeod

12 MS MACLEOD: My Lady.

13 Good morning, 'Michael'.

14 A. Morning.

15 Q. Could I ask you to begin by looking at your statement.
16 I'll give the reference for the transcript,
17 WIT.001.001.6058.

18 Now, 'Michael', your statement will come up on the
19 screen in front of you but you also have a copy in the
20 red folder. If I could ask you first of all to turn to
21 the very last page of the statement.

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. Have you signed the statement, 'Michael'?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. And in the very last paragraph, do you say:

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

5 A. That's correct.

6 Q. Thank you. Now, I will take you back to the beginning
7 of the statement and ask you first of all a little bit
8 about your life before you went into care. And I think
9 you tell us, 'Michael', that you were born into a family
10 in Edinburgh, is that right?

11 A. That's right.

12 Q. And I think you tell us that your understanding is that
13 your father walked out on the family?

14 A. I believe so, yes.

15 Q. And indeed, you tell the Inquiry that you've got this
16 information from records you've read as an adult?

17 A. I believe so, yes, yes.

18 Q. You tell the Inquiry that you had two brothers and
19 a sister who were around at the time you were born?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. You were the youngest in the family?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Now, you go on to tell the Inquiry that you were very
24 young, I think, when you were taken into care; is that
25 right?

1 A. That's correct.

2 Q. You say that you were in and out of care for the first
3 18 months or so of your life?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. And you were then taken to St Helen's in Corstorphine?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. In Edinburgh. And that was a place for very young
8 children, is that right?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. And was it from there that you then went to Clerwood
11 Children's Home --

12 A. That's correct.

13 Q. -- in Corstorphine?

14 A. That's correct.

15 Q. Do you remember what age you were when you went to
16 Clerwood?

17 A. I think I must have been about 3, 3-ish.

18 Q. Okay. And that would accord, 'Michael', with records
19 the Inquiry has been able to recover, which suggest that
20 you were admitted to Clerwood in 1973, when you would
21 have been around 3.

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And we'll come on to this, but did you remain in
24 Clerwood until you were around aged 6 or so?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. And I think we'll hear in due course that the records
2 indicate that you left Clerwood in [REDACTED] 1976.

3 A. That seems about right, yeah.

4 Q. Now, can I first ask you, first of all, to tell me
5 a little bit about the appearance of Clerwood, the
6 building?

7 A. Er, it was a large sort of Victorian building, er, from
8 what I can remember, sort of double-fronted. There was
9 a sort of wooden, er, sort of summer house on the left
10 as you looked at the house. On the right, there was
11 a paddock which housed a donkey and an old railway
12 carriage. If you doubled back on yourself and went
13 further up the drive, there was some sort of cottage,
14 and then just a little bit further on there was
15 a courtyard, er, with a coal bunker, boiler house and
16 sort of sewing rooms and all that.

17 Q. Would you be willing to look at a photograph of the
18 building if I put that on the screen?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. That's at INQ-0000001229.

21 A. Yeah; that's Clerwood.

22 Q. And is that the building as you remember it, or is that
23 maybe taken at a different time? Can you assist with
24 that?

25 A. They didn't have the extension bit at the back on the

1 side.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. That wasn't there.

4 LADY SMITH: Yes, that looks rather newer than the main
5 building.

6 A. Yeah. But on the same side, sort of further down the
7 grass bank, is where the sort of summer house/shed thing
8 was that they kept bikes and that, outside toys and
9 stuff in, and then obviously to the right was the field
10 with the donkey and the railway carriage.

11 LADY SMITH: 'Michael', it looks as though the house is
12 quite well up Corstorphine Hill, is it?

13 A. Yes. If you went up Corstorphine Hill, and then there
14 was a long driveway.

15 LADY SMITH: Yes.

16 A. Which sort of bent off to the left, I believe it was,
17 then the main house was at the top of that drive.

18 LADY SMITH: Yes.

19 A. Then, like I said, if you doubled back on yourself and
20 went further up the drive, there was the sort of little
21 cottage, and then just a bit further round, to the left
22 I think it was, was the sort of coal shed, boiler house,
23 sewing room and that sort of thing.

24 LADY SMITH: So it sounds as though the grounds were quite
25 extensive, were they?

1 A. Yes.

2 LADY SMITH: Ms MacLeod.

3 MS MACLEOD: My Lady.

4 Now, you tell us, 'Michael', that your two brothers
5 and sister were in there with you at various times?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. You're not sure if you went in together, but there were
8 times when you were in there at the same time?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. In terms of the total number of children in Clerwood,
11 can you help with that?

12 A. 20, maybe slightly more, slightly less, I'm not
13 100 per cent sure.

14 Q. And was it a mixture of girls and boys?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. In terms of the age range, what's your recollection
17 there?

18 A. Er, probably -- well, I was 3 when I went in there, so
19 from about 3, 8, 9, 10, something like that. I'm not
20 really sure on the top age range.

21 Q. Okay. So when you went into Clerwood, were you one of
22 the younger children in the home?

23 A. I believe so.

24 Q. And indeed I think you tell the Inquiry at paragraph 11
25 of your statement, 'Michael', that you remember being

1 taken to a nursery?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. From Clerwood?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. So was that a nursery that you would go out to for the

6 daytime or part of --

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. -- the daytime and you were returned to Clerwood at

9 night?

10 A. I think it was most of the -- most of the school day

11 we'd be there.

12 Q. Now, who was in charge of Clerwood when you were there?

13 A. Er, I seem to recall either Brian or Gordon, but I'm not

14 100 per cent sure. I could be wrong on that.

15 Q. And when you refer to Brian or Gordon, is that

16 Gordon Knott and Brian MacLennan?

17 A. Yes, yes.

18 Q. So you say you think one of them may have been in charge

19 of the home. If we just look at them individually in

20 terms of their jobs, what was Gordon Knott's job at

21 Clerwood?

22 A. Er, well, to look after us. His job title exactly,

23 I couldn't tell you off the top of my head.

24 Q. And was he at Clerwood for all the time you were there?

25 A. Yes, yes, he was, as far as I'm aware.

1 Q. And what about Brian MacLennan, what was his job?
2 A. Again, to look after us. Again, what his actual job
3 title was, I wouldn't know.
4 Q. And again from your recollection, was he at Clerwood for
5 all the time you were there?
6 A. Yes, yes.
7 Q. Do you recall the names of any other members of staff?
8 A. BFW. And I don't recall her name, but there
9 was a woman there as well. I just -- I can't recall her
10 name now.
11 Q. Okay. So BFW, what's your recollection of what
12 his job was?
13 A. Again, to look after us. What job title he had,
14 I wouldn't know.
15 Q. And was he there for all the time you were at Clerwood?
16 A. As far as I'm aware, yes.
17 Q. And you mentioned a woman there, you also refer to
18 a woman in your statement. I appreciate you don't
19 remember her name and that's fine, but are you able to
20 assist me with what her role was in the home?
21 A. Er, again, to look after us.
22 Q. You talk about the routine at Clerwood in your statement
23 and I just want to look at that with you, that's at
24 paragraph 15 onwards. I think you tell us that you woke
25 in the morning and got dressed and went downstairs for

1 breakfast?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. Were staff members involved in this process of getting
4 you up and dressed?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Do you know who that would be?

7 A. Whoever was there at the time.

8 Q. Did you share a room or a dormitory with other children?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Do you recall if you remained in the same dormitory or
11 did you move?

12 A. When I was younger I was on the middle floor. As I got
13 older, I was moved up to the top floor.

14 Q. So once you were up and dressed, did you then go down to
15 have breakfast?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. And I think you tell us that when you were of nursery
18 age, you were taken out to nursery?

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. When you were of school age, you went out to school?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. And returned to the home?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Did you go to a local school?

25 A. To begin with I went to Fox Covert, which was just, if

1 you walked down the drive over the road, it was just on
2 your right-hand side.

3 LADY SMITH: So that was Fox Covert Primary School, was it?

4 A. Yes, that's correct, yeah.

5 MS MACLEOD: Did there come a time when you moved to
6 a different school?

7 A. Yeah, I was moved to a school called [REDACTED], which
8 was a special education school.

9 Q. And in terms of the routine at the home, you tell us
10 that after school you had some time before teatime?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. And then you were provided with your tea, and did you
13 maybe have some recreation time in the evening?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. And then bed?

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. Now, in terms of what there was to do for children in
18 the home, you mention that you would play in the woods
19 at times?

20 A. Mm-hmm.

21 Q. What other things were there for children to do?

22 A. There were bicycles and other sort of outside toys.
23 I can't remember what toys or games that we had inside.

24 Q. And you mention in your statement that the zoo was
25 nearby?

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. And did you sometimes go to the zoo?

3 A. Yeah, we tried to sneak in over the wall.

4 Q. So you've mentioned Gordon Knott, Brian MacLennan,

5 BFW and a woman who was there.

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. In your memory, were they the main members of staff who

8 were there or were there others whose names you can't

9 recall?

10 A. There was other members of staff there, but those are

11 the ones who stick out.

12 Q. Now, at weekends, when you weren't at school, were you

13 mainly in the home --

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. -- during the weekends?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Did some children go home to their families for weekends

18 or is your recollection that children remained at

19 Clerwood?

20 A. I don't recall.

21 Q. And during the weekends then in Clerwood, was it the

22 same staff who were around?

23 A. Again, I'd imagine it would be different staff on

24 different weekends, but I couldn't swear.

25 Q. And the people you've mentioned; Gordon Knott,

1 Brian MacLennan and BFW, were they around at
2 weekends?

3 A. Some weekends, yeah.

4 Q. Now, we'll go on to talk about this a little later,
5 'Michael', but something you mention in your statement
6 is that I think you say there used to be a lot of
7 horsing around with Gordon and Brian?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. At the weekend. And I think, are you referring there
10 to -- you go on to say 'they would wrestle us'?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. Is that something that tended to happen at the weekends?

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. And where in the home did that tend to take place?

15 A. From my recollection, it was up in the boiler house.

16 Q. Did you have visits from anybody when you were at
17 Clerwood?

18 A. I can't recall.

19 Q. Did --

20 A. Oh, sorry, sorry, yes, I did. I had one from my mum and
21 she brought some other man with her, but that's the only
22 one I can remember. Sorry.

23 Q. That's fine. And I think you mention that in your
24 statement, you say that's your one recollection of
25 a visit from a family member.

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. Your mum coming to see you.

3 What about social workers or anyone in that sort of
4 position, did you have anybody like that coming to visit
5 you?

6 A. I must have done but I can't recall.

7 Q. Now, I think you were asked at the time your statement
8 was taken whether you recalled Christmases in the home
9 and whether Christmas was celebrated.

10 A. Mm-hmm.

11 Q. And I think you said that Christmas was celebrated with
12 somebody dressing up as Father Christmas --

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. -- for example. And you say in your statement that you
15 have a memory of a staff member possibly taking you out
16 for Christmas?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. Can you just tell me about that; is that something you
19 remember?

20 A. I'm not -- I'm not sure whether that's a memory
21 I've sort of planted myself or whether it's a memory
22 that happened, so I couldn't really swear on it.

23 Q. And what makes you say that, that you're not sure of
24 that?

25 A. 'Cos I'm sort of doubting myself, if you know what

1 I mean.

2 LADY SMITH: Yes, you said [REDACTED] in your statement,
3 rather, in paragraph 23, that you didn't know whether it
4 was a made-up memory.

5 A. Yeah.

6 LADY SMITH: And that can happen. You've got a memory of
7 a member of staff. You've got a memory of going
8 somewhere with somebody to a house.

9 A. Yeah.

10 LADY SMITH: It could or could not have happened.

11 But let me ask you this: do you remember anybody at
12 the home going to houses of staff members?

13 A. I -- apart from that one I've mentioned, again,
14 I can't -- I'd be lying if I swore 100 per cent it
15 happened at Clerwood and not another children's home.

16 LADY SMITH: Ah. I know, because you've been in a number.

17 A. Yeah.

18 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

19 MS MACLEOD: You mention an incident, 'Michael', where there
20 were workmen working outside --

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. -- in the home and there was an incident?

23 A. Mm-hmm.

24 Q. Can you tell me about that?

25 A. Yeah, as far as I'm aware, the scaffolding collapsed or

1 fell over and killed one of the painters. Er, we were
2 on our way back from school at the time. We were all
3 ushered in very quickly and were told to stay away from
4 the windows and what have you.

5 Q. And is that something that was quite a major incident,
6 if I can put it that way, at the home at the time?

7 A. I suppose it must have been, yeah.

8 Q. And what -- can you recall how you felt about that or
9 what your feelings were around that at the time?

10 A. No. Apart from being curious.

11 Q. I now want to move on to ask you about discipline in
12 Clerwood and I think you mention in your statement that
13 there was a particular occasion when you and a friend
14 ran away from the home and spent your dinner money?

15 A. Yeah, we didn't actually run away from the home. We ran
16 away from school.

17 Q. I see.

18 A. Well, it was myself and [REDACTED] who basically ran away
19 from school, spent our dinner money and when we got
20 back, got the belt for it.

21 Q. You got the belt for it?

22 A. Yeah, at the school.

23 Q. At school?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. What are your recollections of the food at Clerwood?

1 A. Rank.

2 Q. Do you remember if there was a particular staff
3 member --

4 A. Oh, yes.

5 Q. -- involved with the eating and the food side of things?

6 A. He -- my major recollection of meal times was
7 **BFW** and mixing our food all together if we
8 didn't finish it, and then he'd stand over us, make us
9 eat it out of a sort of metal, er -- I don't know, sort
10 of pie dish type thing.

11 Q. Okay. So, if you didn't eat your food, is this what
12 happened?

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. Okay. So I think you mentioned there that he would mix
15 the food?

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. Can you just develop that for me, what would he mix?

18 A. Ketchup, brown sauce, your puddings, your main course;
19 if there was soup, he'd just bung it in all together.

20 Q. And did you then have to eat that?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. And how did he tell you that you had to eat that?

23 A. On all fours, like an animal.

24 Q. So did he ask you to go on all fours like an animal?

25 A. Basically, yeah.

1 Q. And did you have to eat the food off the dish on the
2 floor?
3 A. Yeah.
4 LADY SMITH: What was the dish like, 'Michael'?
5 A. It was the -- one of those sort of white -- I don't know
6 what you call them, but it was a white dish with
7 the blue edging.
8 LADY SMITH: Oh, white metal, enamel?
9 A. Yeah, that's it, enamel, yeah.
10 LADY SMITH: And the main part of the dish is white?
11 A. Yeah.
12 LADY SMITH: And round the edge --
13 A. And a blue edge.
14 LADY SMITH: -- there's a blue rim.
15 A. Yeah.
16 LADY SMITH: And they come in round dishes.
17 A. Round dishes.
18 LADY SMITH: Oblong dishes.
19 A. Yeah.
20 LADY SMITH: Square dishes. Yes. Often used for baking
21 pies in, that sort of thing.
22 A. Yeah, that's the ones.
23 MS MACLEOD: Do you remember if BFW said anything
24 to you while he was going through this --
25 A. Yeah, he'd go on about like, 'Your parents didn't want

1 you', and just sort of a lot of stuff like that.

2 Q. While he was making you eat in this way?

3 A. Yeah, yeah.

4 Q. So you've mentioned there things like, 'Your parents

5 didn't want you'. Can you remember anything else that

6 he said?

7 A. Er ... No, a lot of it was just like, 'Your parents

8 didn't want you, nobody wants you', just a lot of stuff

9 like that.

10 LADY SMITH: How did he say this, 'Michael'?

11 A. I can't remember how he said it exactly.

12 LADY SMITH: Can you remember whether he was trying to make

13 a joke of it?

14 A. No.

15 LADY SMITH: Make fun of you?

16 A. No, he was deadly serious. It's -- yeah.

17 LADY SMITH: It would be a pretty sick joke anyway.

18 A. Yeah.

19 LADY SMITH: Yes. Thank you.

20 MS MACLEOD: Did **BFW** make you do this, what you're

21 describing, did he mix your food and make you eat it off

22 a bowl on the floor?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. How often did this happen to you?

25 A. My recollection would be quite often.

1 Q. I appreciate it's difficult looking back now to know the
2 frequency, but even roughly, was it every week, more
3 often than that?

4 A. A couple of times of week if he was on. I couldn't
5 swear, but it was quite regular. He just seemed to get
6 a kick out of it.

7 Q. How did you respond to this at the time, 'Michael'?

8 A. The only way you could do it. You just had to do it.

9 Q. And how did you feel?

10 A. Er, I can't remember how I felt at the time, but
11 I'm pretty disgusted looking back.

12 Q. Did this happen to other children?

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. Did you see other children --

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. -- having to do this?

17 LADY SMITH: When some children were being subjected to this
18 feeding on the floor by BFW ██████████, did the other
19 children react in any way?

20 A. Er, I think we just stared.

21 LADY SMITH: So they didn't make fun of the ones who were
22 getting the BFW ██████████ treatment?

23 A. I don't think so, but we'd sort of obviously stare over
24 and see what was going on. I don't know.

25 LADY SMITH: I suppose you wouldn't want to draw his

1 attention to you, would you?

2 A. No.

3 LADY SMITH: No.

4 MS MACLEOD: You mentioned there, 'Michael', that this
5 happened when BFW was on duty --

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. -- at mealtimes. Did that mean that this practice
8 happened when he was on duty but not when he wasn't on
9 duty?

10 A. I can't 100 per cent say whether it happened when he was
11 off duty as well, but it definitely happened when he was
12 on duty.

13 Q. Okay. On the occasions when he was on duty and this
14 happened, do you know if other staff members, for
15 example Gordon Knott or Brian MacLennan, saw this
16 happening?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. They did?

19 A. They'd see it happen.

20 Q. Both of them?

21 A. Well, if they were on at the time, yeah.

22 Q. So did there tend to be more than one staff member on
23 duty?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Yes. And whoever the other staff member was, would see

1 what was going on?

2 A. Yeah, they'd be in the dining room as well. You

3 couldn't really miss it.

4 Q. You speak in your statement, 'Michael', about

5 bed-wetting.

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. And you say that most of the children at some stage or

8 other wet the bed.

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. How -- what was the response from staff when a child wet

11 the bed at Clerwood?

12 A. Sometimes it wasn't too bad, other times they'd sort of

13 try and humiliate you.

14 Q. Who would do that?

15 A. Brian and Gordon.

16 Q. So if we look at Gordon Knott first of all. What would

17 he do to try and humiliate you if you'd wet the bed?

18 A. Er, he'd basically make you wear a nappy and parade you

19 round.

20 Q. So he'd basically make you wear a nappy and parade

21 around?

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. So do I take it then that you were of an age where you

24 were too old to be wearing a nappy?

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. But you were made to put a nappy on?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. And in terms of parading around, what was involved in
4 that?

5 A. Basically that's all you'd be able to wear.

6 Q. Is that for the rest of the day or --

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. For the rest of the day. So would other children then
9 know that you were wearing a nappy?

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. And what's your recollection of how you felt about that
12 at the time?

13 A. Er, pissed off, angry.

14 Q. Did Gordon Knott say anything to you when you'd wet the
15 bed?

16 A. I can't recall.

17 Q. What about Brian MacLennan, how did he deal with this?

18 A. I think he done the same, but again I can't swear.

19 Q. And you're describing there what happened to you?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. What about other children, can you recall if they had to
22 wear a nappy in such circumstances?

23 A. I can't recall.

24 LADY SMITH: Were you allowed to put clothes over the nappy?

25 A. No.

1 LADY SMITH: Was the nappy made of towelling?
2 A. Yeah.
3 LADY SMITH: Plastic pants?
4 A. Sometimes.
5 MS MACLEOD: Do you remember if anybody ever came to inspect
6 Clerwood while you were there?
7 A. I can't recall.
8 Q. Do you recall anybody ever asking you how you were
9 getting on or how your life was in that home?
10 A. No.
11 Q. Now, you described a few moments ago the process
12 BFW went through with you, if you didn't eat
13 your food and what he made you do.
14 A. Mm-hmm.
15 Q. In your statement you describe BFW as
16 'sadistic'?
17 A. Yeah.
18 Q. I just wondered if you could tell me what it is you mean
19 by that?
20 A. Just the things that he done or would say. Yeah, just
21 the fact that he'd mix all your food together. The fact
22 that he'd say things about yourself or your parents.
23 His attitude towards you.
24 Q. And leaving aside the dinner hall and what he did there,
25 his attitude towards you that you're describing there,

1 did that prevail outside the dinner hall as well?

2 A. Oh, yeah.

3 Q. So what sort of things would he say to you?

4 A. Again, it's like, 'Your parents didn't want you, nobody

5 wants you, that's why you're here'.

6 Q. So these are things he would say to you more generally

7 in the home?

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. Did he say those sorts of things to other children?

10 A. I wouldn't know.

11 Q. Now, in the next part of your statement, 'Michael', you

12 tell the Inquiry about sexual abuse that you suffered at

13 Clerwood. And I now want to go on to ask you about

14 that.

15 In paragraph 33, you say that you remember being

16 sexually abused and you tell the Inquiry first of all

17 the locations where you recall --

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. -- that happened. And could you just tell me now what

20 locations these were, first of all?

21 A. I remember it happening up in the boiler room.

22 I remember it happening in an old air raid shelter. And

23 I remember it happening in a bathroom on the top floor.

24 Q. Okay. Do you remember when the sexual abuse started?

25 A. Not precisely, no.

1 Q. Okay. Now, we'll go on to look at this, 'Michael', but
2 who sexually abused you at Clerwood?

3 A. It was Brian and Gordon.

4 Q. So that's Brian MacLennan and Gordon Knott.

5 A. Yeah, Brian MacLennan and Gordon Knott.

6 Q. Now, we mentioned earlier on, near the beginning of your
7 evidence, that wrestling, or practice known as
8 wrestling --

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. -- could sometimes take place? Can you just tell me
11 a little bit about that, 'Michael', and first of all
12 which staff members were involved in the wrestling?

13 A. My recollection, it would be Gordon and Brian, or Gordon
14 or Brian, or Brian and Gordon, whatever.

15 Q. So just -- can I just ask you, do I take it from that
16 that sometimes it was Gordon, sometimes it was Brian?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. And sometimes it was both Gordon and Brian --

19 A. As far as I can recall.

20 Q. -- together?

21 A. Yeah. As far as I can recall. So they'd take you up to
22 the boiler room. You'd be stripped -- asked to strip
23 off naked, and then they sort of start wrestling,
24 touching you in places where they shouldn't be touching
25 you.

1 Q. So if I can ask you about the times that you were taken
2 there, that you were in the room with Gordon first of
3 all.

4 A. Mm-hmm.

5 Q. Were you there on your own or were there other children
6 with you?

7 A. Other children.

8 Q. Roughly speaking, how many other children would be
9 there?

10 A. I can't recall.

11 Q. So you mentioned being naked. Were you asked -- were
12 you told to remove your clothes?

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. You and the other children?

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. And what about Gordon's clothes? Did he have his
17 clothes on or off?

18 A. I think he'd have his clothes on. I'm not 100 per cent
19 sure.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. But I think he'd be clothed.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. It's like you were sometimes asked to strip down to your
24 underwear and not fully naked, but other times fully
25 naked.

1 Q. And what were you then asked to do or instructed to do?

2 A. Er, basically we were just wrestling and then he'd be
3 touching you in places that you shouldn't be touched,
4 really.

5 Q. So who was wrestling, the children or Gordon as well?

6 A. Children wrestling with Gordon or Brian, and he'd sort
7 of wrestle you but sort of the way he'd wrestle you,
8 he'd be touching you in places that he shouldn't be
9 touching you, if you know what I mean.

10 Q. So when you say wrestling, can you just help me with
11 what exactly was happening: were you on the floor, or
12 what was -- what did the wrestling involve?

13 A. Some horsing around basically.

14 Q. And you say, if we stick with Gordon first of all, that
15 Gordon would touch you in places that he shouldn't be
16 touching you?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. So was he touching your private parts?

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. Was he touching your penis?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. Was he doing that to other children?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. Was he saying anything to you while he was doing this?

25 A. I can't recall.

1 Q. Were you asked to do anything in terms of touching
2 anybody?

3 A. I can't say 'yes', I can't recall.

4 Q. And what you say in your statement is, it had nothing to
5 do with wrestling?

6 A. No. Nah.

7 Q. So was the wrestling really a pretence for what was
8 going on?

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. And indeed you tell us in your statement, 'Michael',
11 that the pretence of wrestling scenario happened too
12 many times to count?

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. So this was a regular thing?

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. Are you able to assist me with how often this happened?
17 Was it every week? More than that?

18 A. It certainly feels more than that, or felt more than
19 that, sorry.

20 LADY SMITH: 'Michael', don't worry, I'm not looking for
21 exact dates and times, it's just to get an impression.

22 A. Yeah. I really --

23 LADY SMITH: It's okay.

24 A. Maybe once a week, usually weekends, stuff like that,
25 I couldn't --

1 LADY SMITH: Not something that happened just once or twice?
2 A. No.
3 LADY SMITH: No. Thank you.
4 When -- and we're still talking about Gordon I think
5 now. When he was doing this, what was his attitude to
6 it? Did he seem to be thinking it was fun? Was he
7 brutal? What was it?
8 A. I suppose he was thinking it was fun, but I really don't
9 know.
10 LADY SMITH: And I mean, that might have been it.
11 A. Yeah.
12 LADY SMITH: I've heard countless descriptions of men doing
13 what he was doing and, as you say, presenting it as
14 a tickling game or just a fun game with a child --
15 between a child and an adult, 'This is all a bit of
16 a laugh, isn't it', sort of thing?
17 Does that fit what recollection you've got of it?
18 A. I suppose he may have thought it was fun, but, again,
19 I really don't know.
20 LADY SMITH: I'm sure you didn't.
21 A. No.
22 LADY SMITH: No. Thank you.
23 MS MACLEOD: Now, on the times that it was Brian who was
24 involved in the wrestling, I'm looking here when it was
25 Brian on his own --

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. -- as the staff member, was it -- were you the only
3 child with Brian or, again, were there other children --

4 A. No, there were other children.

5 Q. Other children, and when it was Brian involved, what
6 would happen with the wrestling process?

7 A. Same sort of thing.

8 Q. Okay. So again were you asked to take your clothes off?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. And was that down to your underwear or fully naked?

11 A. Sometimes underwear, sometimes naked.

12 Q. And Brian, was he clothed or not?

13 A. I believe so, yeah.

14 Q. And what then happened when the children were undressed?

15 A. Again, it's the same sort of thing, he'd be touching
16 you, your privates, he would just -- yeah.

17 Q. So am I understanding that it was a very similar
18 procedure, the wrestling?

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. Whether it was Brian or whether it was Gordon?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. And in terms of the children who were involved,
23 I appreciate you can't recall numbers, and that's fine,
24 do you have any memory of whether it was boys and girls
25 or boys or girls?

1 A. I remember boys. I don't remember girls being involved.
2 It's not to say there wasn't.
3 Q. And if I understood what you said earlier correctly,
4 were there times when both Gordon and Brian were
5 involved in this together?
6 A. There was a couple of times, I seem to recall.
7 Q. So this was Gordon and Brian?
8 A. Yeah.
9 Q. And a number of children?
10 A. Yeah.
11 Q. Involved in this wrestling?
12 A. Yeah.
13 Q. And on those occasions, again, were the children asked
14 to remove their clothes?
15 A. Yeah.
16 Q. And were Gordon and Brian, did they remain clothed?
17 A. I believe so, yeah.
18 Q. And on those occasions what happened?
19 A. Again, same sort of thing.
20 Q. So the children were wrestling and on those occasions
21 were Gordon and Brian --
22 A. Yeah.
23 Q. -- touching the children?
24 A. Yeah.
25 Q. In their private parts?

1 A. I believe so and just sort of brushing it off as, 'Oh,
2 sorry, I didn't mean it' type thing, if you know what
3 I mean.

4 Q. Do you remember how it would be decided that it was the
5 time to go wrestling or that that was the activity --

6 A. I think that was just decided. I don't know.

7 Q. Okay. And did somebody say: 'Let's all go up and do
8 wrestling now', or do you recall --

9 A. I can't recall how it would kick off.

10 Q. You mention in your statement that you recall your
11 brother being with you?

12 A. Yeah, I recall [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].

13 Q. So were they involved in wrestling at the same time as
14 you?

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. Is that what you're recalling there, your brothers?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. Did you and your brothers ever speak about what was
19 happening?

20 A. No, not until, like, way after the trial.

21 Q. So, as far as the wrestling is concerned, you've spoken
22 about children having to undress and children being,
23 including yourself, being touched in your private parts?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. Your penis -- touched on your penis by both Gordon and

1 Brian?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. Do you recall anything else happening as part of the
4 wrestling practice?

5 A. I can't remember.

6 Q. I think you told the Inquiry about an air raid shelter?

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. And that you were abused in an air raid shelter?

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. Who abused you in the air raid shelter?

11 A. I can't recall now whether it was Brian or Gordon, it's
12 so long ago since I gave my statement. All I remember
13 is one of them abused me in there, er ...

14 Q. Okay. And at the time you gave your statement,
15 'Michael', your position was the same, that it was one
16 of them but you couldn't recall.

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. Okay. So is this something that happened once or more
19 than once?

20 A. Again, I can't recall how often. It's -- all I know is
21 it was a horrible experience and I just -- I don't know
22 whether I blanked it out or not, because it was so
23 horrible. But all I remember is it took place in there.
24 I don't remember what exactly happened. I just remember
25 it happened.

1 LADY SMITH: Was the air raid shelter somewhere you went at
2 any other times?

3 A. No, we weren't allowed. It's like if you look at the
4 house --

5 LADY SMITH: Yes.

6 A. -- on the right-hand side, just up the side towards the
7 back was the air raid shelter.

8 LADY SMITH: Oh, right.

9 A. And we were told we weren't allowed to go in there under
10 any circumstances, but I think kids being kids, we sort
11 of maybe went in there once or twice. I don't know.
12 I can't remember exactly.

13 LADY SMITH: What was it constructed of?

14 A. Brick, I believe, with sort of dirt mounded over.
15 You'd, sort of, go in and there'd be like the door
16 entrance type thing, but it was sloped up a bit. You'd
17 go in and then you go to your left and from there on it
18 gets really dark.

19 LADY SMITH: How did it smell?

20 A. Really damp.

21 LADY SMITH: Was there anything in it?

22 A. Er, I seem to recall the floor was sort of rubbly, but
23 whether there was anything else sort of stacked up or
24 anything like that in there, I can't recall.

25 LADY SMITH: No furniture?

1 A. I can't recall.

2 LADY SMITH: Thank you. Ms MacLeod.

3 MS MACLEOD: My Lady.

4 You said a few moments ago that you recall being in
5 there with either Brian or Gordon?

6 A. Mm-hmm.

7 Q. Can you tell me what it is you remember about that?

8 A. I just remember being in there and that I didn't like
9 what was happening and, like I said, whether I blocked
10 it out 'cos what was happening was horrific and I just
11 didn't want to remember it or not, I don't know, but
12 I just can't remember it.

13 Q. And I think you've said already, 'Michael', but just so
14 I'm clear, I think you said you don't remember whether
15 that happened once or more than once?

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. You've told the Inquiry about being abused in the
18 bathroom.

19 A. Sorry, can I take a break to sort my insulin out?

20 LADY SMITH: Yes.

21 MS MACLEOD: Of course.

22 LADY SMITH: Let's do that. Take a break just now and just
23 let me know when you're ready. I'll go off the bench,
24 you don't need to rush.

25 (10.53 am)

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

(A short break)

(11.02 am)

LADY SMITH: Welcome back, 'Michael'. Are you okay for us to carry on?

A. Yeah.

LADY SMITH: Thank you. Ms MacLeod.

MS MACLEOD: My Lady.

You've told the Inquiry, 'Michael', that you were sexually abused in a bathroom at Clerwood. Where in the house was the bathroom?

A. From my recollection, it was on the top floor.

Q. And indeed you tell us that in your statement, and you say that you had to double-back on the landing?

A. I believe so, yes.

Q. To get into the bathroom?

A. Yes.

Q. Was that a bathroom that children regularly used, as a bathroom, I mean?

A. Er, I'm not sure. I can't really recall whether it was regularly used by the children or not, but it was regularly used for 'bath times'.

Q. So that bathroom then, it may be obvious, being a bathroom, but what was in the -- you mentioned 'bath times' there. There was a bath in it?

A. I believe -- I seem to recall there being a bath in

1 there and the toilet.

2 Q. And were there occasions, 'Michael', when you were taken
3 into that bathroom?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Who took you into the bathroom?

6 A. Brian. Or -- Brian or Gordon. I can't remember exactly
7 whom it was, but it was either one of them.

8 Q. So when you say Brian or Gordon, it was either one of
9 them, are you saying it was one of them?

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. Or it could have been both at different times?

12 A. No, it was one of them. I can't recall 100 per cent
13 whom.

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. I know I've said Brian in the statement, but looking
16 back, I just -- I couldn't.

17 Q. That's okay, 'Michael'. It's your memory today that
18 I'm really interested in.

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. And if you think today, looking back, what's your
21 recollection of who took you into the bathroom?

22 A. I couldn't swear whether it was Brian or Gordon.

23 Q. And were you taken into the bathroom by that person,
24 either Brian or Gordon, once or more than once?

25 A. More than once.

1 Q. Can you recall the first time you were taken into the
2 bathroom?

3 A. Not the first time, off the top of my head.

4 Q. So, once you were in the bathroom then, you were taken
5 into the bathroom by either Gordon or Brian, what
6 happened once you were in the room?

7 A. Er, they'd make the pretence of bathing you, even though
8 the memory I've got is I would have been old enough to
9 bath myself or -- yeah, I would have been old enough to
10 bath myself, I believe. And then they'd just make the
11 pretence of trying to bath you and abuse you, basically.

12 Q. Okay. So there'd be a pretence of trying to bath you.
13 Were you then naked and in the bath?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. With water in the bath?

16 A. You'd -- sometimes you'd be naked in the bath with water
17 in the bath and they'd sort of pretend to wash you.
18 Other times you'd be naked standing next to the bath and
19 they'd be sort of standing next to you.

20 Q. Okay. So on the occasions first of all when you were
21 naked and standing -- and you were in the bath, naked
22 and in the bath with water in the bath, were you in the
23 bath on your own or were they also in the bath?

24 A. I don't recall them being in the bath.

25 Q. Okay. So you were in the bath naked with water in the

1 bath?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. They were outside the bath?

4 A. I believe so, yeah.

5 Q. And what did they do? What happened?

6 A. Again, they'd wash you down below but sort of, they'd

7 sort -- rub you in sort of ways that wasn't right, if

8 you know what I mean?

9 Q. So are you saying they'd rub you on your private parts?

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. On your penis?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. And what else happened?

14 A. They sort of start rubbing your sort of backside area

15 and then sort of fingering you type thing.

16 Q. So were they putting their finger inside you?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. And did anything else happen in those situations when

19 you were in the bath?

20 A. I can't recall, sorry.

21 Q. And you spoke about other times when you were standing

22 naked beside the bath. What happened at those times?

23 A. Again, they'd rub you in places you shouldn't be rubbed

24 and sort -- try and finger you, they'd get -- they'd ask

25 you to rub them, stuff like that.

1 Q. Ask you to rub them on their private parts?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. Okay. And were they clothed or not?

4 A. Er, er ... I can't recall whether they just dropped

5 their trousers or whether they were clothed, I can't

6 remember.

7 Q. So did they ask you to touch them on their naked private

8 parts?

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. On their penis?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. What else happened?

13 A. Er ... (Pause)

14 They'd ask you to suck them.

15 Q. They asked you to suck their penis?

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. And you had to do that? And what else happened,

18 'Michael'?

19 A. (Pause)

20 They'd just abuse you, basically.

21 Q. So what else do you recall happening?

22 A. (Pause)

23 I'm just finding it difficult.

24 Q. Just take your time, 'Michael'.

25 A. (Pause)

1 LADY SMITH: 'Michael', I know you gave your detailed
2 statement to us years ago now, I know it was in 2017,
3 and you've got in front of you on the screen --
4 A. Yeah.
5 LADY SMITH: -- the statement, it's possibly more helpful
6 than having the hard copy in paper. Would you like to
7 just take a few minutes to read to yourself again
8 paragraphs 38 and 39. Don't feel under any pressure to
9 be rushed. And then you tell me whether what's there is
10 correct or not or whether there's anything missing?
11 Would you find that a helpful way to deal with this,
12 because I know it's difficult?
13 A. Yeah.
14 LADY SMITH: Okay. You just take your time. You let me
15 know when you've done that.
16 (Pause)
17 A. Sorry, can you move it up a bit, please? Thank you.
18 (Pause)
19 Yeah, like I said, he'd sort of rub me, he'd get me
20 to masturbate him, suck him off, as I've said in the
21 statement.
22 LADY SMITH: Yes. So that's all correct in those two
23 paragraphs?
24 A. Yeah.
25 LADY SMITH: Thank you. Ms MacLeod.

1 MS MACLEOD: My Lady.

2 Thank you for confirming that, 'Michael'. Did
3 anything else happen?

4 A. I can't recall anything, but, yeah, no, I don't recall.

5 Q. Okay.

6 LADY SMITH: And just going back to those bathroom events
7 for a moment, 'Michael', you explain it was just you of
8 the children that was there, there were no other
9 children?

10 A. No.

11 LADY SMITH: And did you ever see any other children being
12 taken by either Gordon or Brian along to the bathroom?

13 A. I really don't recall it.

14 LADY SMITH: That's fine. I was just checking what your
15 memory was. And I know that when you gave your
16 statement you couldn't remember seeing other boys --

17 A. No.

18 LADY SMITH: -- being taken along there, or indeed girls,
19 I suppose?

20 A. No.

21 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

22 MS MACLEOD: 'Michael', you said a little earlier that this
23 happened more than once. Are you able to assist me with
24 how many times this happened or how regularly it was
25 happening to you?

1 A. It felt like every time they were on. I'm not saying it
2 was, but it certainly felt a lot.

3 Q. So every time that that person was on duty?

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. So was that more than once a week?

6 A. Er, it certainly felt like it.

7 Q. Do you recall -- you went into Clerwood when you were 3,
8 you left when you were 6. Do you recall roughly the
9 period over which this was happening to you?

10 A. I thought you might ask that. Er, I don't really know
11 when -- I wouldn't be able to put a date on when it
12 started and finished, no.

13 Q. Okay. Now, you've described there in your statement and
14 in evidence today the things that happened to you in the
15 bathroom. You've said:

16 'All of these things didn't happen on every
17 occasion.'

18 A. No.

19 Q. So, slightly different things happened on different
20 occasions?

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. Did anything else happen to you, 'Michael', in the
23 bathroom, that isn't covered in that part of your
24 statement or what you've said today?

25 A. I can't recall now.

1 Q. You tell us in your statement, 'Michael', about
2 Gordon Knott having a motorbike?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Is that something, the motorbike, something you were
5 interested in?

6 A. Yeah, still am interested in bikes.

7 Q. And I think you tell us that at the time you were
8 fascinated by the motorbike?

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. And you recall an incident where you burnt your fingers
11 by accident?

12 A. Yeah, touching the exhaust.

13 Q. Now, did you sometimes go on the motorbike?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. With Gordon Knott?

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. And what's your recollection of that?

18 A. I remember he'd sit you in front of him and he'd push
19 himself right up against you, so basically you were
20 squashed between the tank and him behind, and you'd hold
21 onto the handlebars while he held onto them. It just,
22 looking back, it just didn't feel right.

23 Q. Now, while you were at Clerwood, 'Michael', did you tell
24 anybody about the abuse that you've told the Inquiry
25 about?

1 A. No. Who would I tell?

2 Q. Was there anybody there you could have told?

3 A. Nah. I didn't realise it was abuse.

4 Q. You were very young.

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. And you go on to tell us, 'Michael', that you were 6 or
7 7 when you left Clerwood and that you remember it being
8 winter?

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. And indeed we can see from the records that it was
11 winter, [REDACTED] 1976, and that you were 6 years old at
12 the time.

13 A. Yeah. Yeah, I would have turned 6 the month before.

14 Q. Do you remember why you left Clerwood or was anything
15 explained to you around that?

16 A. No, it was just: oh, a van turned up and I believe they
17 must have arranged for it to go to Barnardo's and that
18 was it.

19 Q. And indeed you tell the Inquiry that you were taken to
20 Barnardo's on South Oswald Road in Edinburgh?

21 A. That's correct.

22 Q. And thereafter you also spent time in Barnardo's in
23 Peebles?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Is that right?

1 A. Craigerne.

2 Q. Craigerne. And those parts of your statement have,
3 'Michael', already been read into the Inquiry as part of
4 the case study which looked at Barnardo's.

5 But overall, I think you tell us that you were very
6 comfortable in those environments?

7 A. Yeah. It wasn't brilliant, but it wasn't a nightmare.

8 Q. And I think you tell the Inquiry, 'Michael', that there
9 came a time when you spent a period in an assessment
10 centre?

11 A. Yeah.

12 Q. Is that right? You say you were still under the
13 overarching care of Barnardo's at the time?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. And did you also go on to Dr Guthrie's School?

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. And I think you provided evidence in relation to that --

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. -- previously to the Inquiry and we've referred to that.

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. Did you spend a period of time with foster carers?

22 A. Yeah. I spent -- I think it was about four different
23 foster carers.

24 Q. And did you spend some time in a residential home in
25 Wester Hailes?

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. In Edinburgh?

3 A. Yeah.

4 Q. And did you also spend time in Dean House Children's
5 Home in Edinburgh?

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. And was that from around 1985 or so, when you were aged
8 15?

9 A. 15 or 16, I think, yeah.

10 Q. And I think you tell the Inquiry that you spent around
11 two years there?

12 A. Give or take, yeah.

13 Q. You then go on to tell the Inquiry a bit about your life
14 after care, 'Michael'. And you've provided some
15 evidence in relation to this before, but you say that
16 you joined the army when you were 18, is that right?

17 A. Mm-hmm, yeah.

18 Q. And that you spent around four years there?

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. You tell us that after a while you then got married and
21 you settled and had your children?

22 A. Yeah, yeah.

23 Q. Now, you then tell the Inquiry, 'Michael', that the
24 police contacted you --

25 A. Yeah.

1 Q. -- in the mid-1990s, is that right? Is that about 1996
2 or 1997, thereabouts?

3 A. Er, if you say so. Actually, I really couldn't tell you
4 how long ago it was now.

5 Q. But you were in contact with the police over a number of
6 months?

7 A. It felt like longer, yeah.

8 Q. Okay. And did the police ask you some questions about
9 Clerwood?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. And did you tell the police what you remembered?

12 A. They -- I remember them phoning up and I remember them
13 saying: 'We believe you were in Clerwood'. And I asked
14 them was it about Brian or Gordon? And they said yes.

15 Q. And did you provide a statement to the police?

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. And I think you tell us that, 'Michael', this came out
18 of the blue for you; you hadn't told anybody about your
19 abuse until the police contacted you?

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. And did you give evidence at the High Court --

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. -- 'Michael'? Was that in the trial of Brian MacLennan
24 and Gordon Knott?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. And another person?

2 A. Yeah, Michael Cull, I believe.

3 Q. And you tell the Inquiry that this was a difficult
4 process for you?

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. And Gordon Knott and Brian MacLennan were found guilty
7 of various charges after trial?

8 A. Yeah, yeah.

9 Q. Now, you mention that, your understanding, that
10 BFW was reported to the police?

11 A. I don't know if he was or not.

12 Q. Okay. Now, I think you're aware, 'Michael', that the
13 Inquiry has spoken to Gordon Knott.

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. And to BFW. Now, Gordon Knott, the allegations
16 that you've made in your statement have been put to
17 Gordon Knott and he denies them. What's your response
18 to that?

19 A. How can he deny it when he'd been found guilty of it?

20 Q. And the allegations you've made in your statement
21 against BFW have been put to BFW and
22 I think you're aware, 'Michael', that his response is
23 a little bit more nuanced, in that he says that your
24 truth is different to his truth, and I'm paraphrasing
25 there, but ultimately he does not accept the allegations

1 you've made against him; you're aware --

2 A. He's a liar.

3 Q. -- of that? Sorry?

4 A. He's a liar.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. It's -- I don't think I'll have been the only one who's

7 either given a statement to the Inquiry, or had

8 a statement read in, who has mentioned **BFW**. I'm sure

9 not.

10 Q. Now, in your statement, 'Michael', you then go on to

11 tell the Inquiry about the impact that the abuse you

12 suffered in Clerwood has had on your life.

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. One thing you mention is, you mention a number of

15 things, but one of the things you mention is that it

16 affected your education?

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. Can you just tell me about that?

19 A. I started off in mainstream school at Fox Covert Primary

20 and halfway through that, because my behaviour, which,

21 looking back, I put down to the abuse, my behaviour got

22 a bit out of control, I was moved to special ed, and

23 basically from there it's just been special education

24 right through until I went to Boroughmuir.

25 Q. So I think, and indeed you say that in your statement,

1 you say that looking back, the abuse that you were
2 suffering was the reason that you were acting out at
3 school?

4 A. I believe it's the reason.

5 Q. Now, you tell the Inquiry that you've had a number of
6 health problems over the years?

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. Is that right? I think you tell us that you're
9 a diabetic and that you had a stroke --

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. -- a number of years ago, and that you've been diagnosed
12 with depression?

13 A. I was diagnosed with depression and PTSD.

14 Q. And you've told the Inquiry as well that there have been
15 times when you have self-harmed?

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. And was that an issue for you particularly following the
18 trial?

19 A. Yeah.

20 Q. I think, 'Michael', you have in the past sought to see
21 your records, is that correct?

22 A. Yeah.

23 Q. And I think you say you've seen some of your records?

24 A. I've got my -- or I did have my Barnardo's records,
25 which I can't remember what I've done with, but I've got

1 my Lothian Region records.

2 Q. You provide, towards the end of your statement, some
3 thoughts that you have in terms of looking to your own
4 experience and how things could be different, and what
5 you say at paragraph 124 is:

6 'When children are in the care of a local authority,
7 they are acting as your parents.'

8 A. Yeah.

9 Q. You say:

10 'The staff need to be vetted with criminal
11 background checks done.'

12 And I think the point you're making as well is that
13 there needs to be continuous and rigorous checks?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. Ongoing, over time?

16 A. Yeah. Well, I say that because I believe it was Brian
17 who I don't think was checked properly, I was told. He
18 came from Australia and wasn't checked properly and sort
19 of got the job. And I don't know if that still goes on
20 or not, you know what I mean.

21 Q. At paragraph 126 you suggest some of the resources or
22 things that could be made available for children in
23 those settings and you say:

24 'There should be a child advocate, separate from the
25 social work department, who children can trust ...'

1 A. Yeah.

2 Q. Well, why is that important?

3 A. Well, anyone that's in care, they've sort of lost trust
4 in the system straight off. To have someone that is
5 with -- not within the system itself, who they can talk
6 to, even at the end of a phone, I believe would be
7 important, so they could say if anything was happening
8 or even how they felt.

9 Q. And on that point, Brian (sic), you develop that to say
10 that a phone and a number and that information should be
11 given to children?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. To be able to make contact?

14 A. I believe every residential home should have a free
15 phone that's either directly through to that sort of
16 advice sort of thing, or at least a freephone number
17 that they can call in private.

18 Q. And there was nothing like that when you were in care?

19 A. Oh, no. I don't even think Childline was a thing.

20 Q. And finally, towards the end of your statement, Brian
21 (sic), you say --

22 A. Er, I'm not Brian.

23 Q. Sorry, 'Michael'. My apologies. 'Michael'.

24 A. It's all right.

25 Q. You say:

1 'I hope the Inquiry leads to changes being made.'

2 A. Yeah. I really hope it does lead to changes, but
3 it's -- and no offence to the Inquiry itself --
4 I've seen umpteen inquiries on child exploitation and
5 child abuse throughout Britain and I don't see many
6 changes, but I really hope this is different.

7 Q. That completes, 'Michael', all the questions that I have
8 for you, but I just want to check with you, I know
9 you've given evidence before, but is there anything else
10 that you would like to add before we finish?

11 A. Er, not except to reiterate that I think BFW's
12 statement is -- yeah, well, lies, basically. It's --
13 I know he did what he did, and he knows he did what he
14 did.

15 MS MACLEOD: Thank you for that, Brian (sic).

16 A. Yeah.

17 MS MACLEOD: My Lady, there have been no applications for
18 questions.

19 LADY SMITH: 'Michael', thank you so much for being here
20 today. I've got no other questions but, as I said at
21 the outset, I'm really grateful to you going to the time
22 and trouble of coming here in person again to assist us
23 with this part of our work. It's really valuable to
24 have heard from you.

25 Now, you are free to go and I hope you're able to

1 relax a bit during the rest of today.

2 A. Thank you.

3 LADY SMITH: I'm going to leave the bench and you take your
4 time. All right.

5 A. Yeah.

6 (11.31 am)

7 (A short break)

8 (11.51 am)

9 LADY SMITH: Now, before I ask Ms MacLeod to take us to the
10 next stage of our work this morning, there are some
11 names I want to mention that we used in 'Michael's'
12 evidence and these are of people whose identities are
13 protected by my General Restriction Order and they
14 mustn't be referred to for identification as those who
15 have been mentioned in our evidence outside this room.

16 BFW [REDACTED] again, I mentioned him yesterday, but
17 also a boy called [REDACTED], another one called [REDACTED] or
18 [REDACTED], and another one called [REDACTED]. They mustn't be
19 referred to outside this room.

20 Now, when you're ready, Ms MacLeod.

21 'Peter' (read in)

22 MS MACLEOD: My Lady, I will now read in the statement of
23 a witness who wishes to use the pseudonym 'Peter'.

24 The statement can be found at WIT.003.001.8162.

25 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

1 MS MACLEOD: 'My name is "Peter". I was born in 1953. My
2 contact details are known to the Inquiry.

3 'I was taken into the care of the Corporation of
4 Edinburgh at the age of 3 months. I lived at Aberlour
5 Orphanage before the Corporation moved me to a foster
6 home in Loanhead. Thereafter, I arrived at university
7 in 1972 [when] I was 19. I was studying for
8 a collective social sciences degree. There were
9 sections on social anthropology, social history,
10 criminology and administration on nursing. I did very
11 well at criminology but I was doing equally well in
12 social anthropology. I was being invited to seriously
13 consider doing social anthropology. I stayed in halls
14 of residence year round throughout my time at
15 university.

16 'When I was a student I received a grant to help me
17 with my fees at the halls of residence. I was living
18 there all year round. I also received subvention from
19 the Corporation of Edinburgh who retained some financial
20 responsibility for me after I left care, but it was very
21 little. It was still hard to make ends meet. Students
22 at that time needed some sort of vacation employment.
23 The jobs that I had were rosehip picking, potato
24 picking, working in a bar, and a spell working at
25 Rosslynlee Mental Hospital.

1 'There was also the possibility of canvassing major
2 institutions around, such as the Edinburgh Royal
3 Infirmary, where I got a job as an orderly for a while,
4 and the local authority social work department. I wrote
5 to the local authority and advised that I was on
6 vacation between certain dates and asked if I could help
7 out. That was how I got my first job at Clerwood, which
8 was a children's home run by the local authority. I was
9 about to start my third year at university. I was
10 basically an extra pair of hands. I have no idea what
11 my job title was. I think I had to provide references,
12 but I don't know whether there was any vetting process.

13 'There was a vacation period from university in 1974
14 when I worked at Clerwood. That finished and I returned
15 again for the summer and autumn of 1975 before leaving
16 in April 1976. During that period, I was working there
17 in a full-time capacity. I would work shifts during the
18 day. I can't remember working overnight. There were
19 other staff on duty at nighttime. From memory, I worked
20 during the working day, starting at breakfast. I can't
21 recall exactly the time of my shifts, but it was light
22 and I was actively involved with the children. I can't
23 remember whether it was weekends as well as weekdays.
24 I didn't have a contract or any formal letter of
25 appointment.

1 'Clerwood Children's Home was a big building. There
2 were alleyways within the building. Although I walked
3 around the grounds, I largely walked around at the
4 front. At the back, the children's home backed on to
5 trees. It was still part of the grounds, but I didn't
6 think there was anything there. If there was an air
7 raid shelter there, it's not something I can recall.

8 'There were times when I prepared tables for meals.
9 Basically, I was a pair of hands helping out. I would
10 be with the kids and interact with them. I can't
11 remember doing anything individually with the children,
12 such as reading a story. It was all very practical
13 stuff, cleaning up, making sure the floor was swept and
14 tidy, a bit of dusting.

15 'I think there were about 12 to 15 children at
16 Clerwood, boys and girls. There may have been slightly
17 more. There was a range of ages, but most of them were
18 7, 8 or 9. There were a couple of older ones, maybe
19 round about 12. There was one very young child who was
20 about 18 months to 3 years old. The toddler stood out
21 for me because I remember having a birthday celebration
22 for her.

23 'It was a very large house. The largeness struck
24 me. I was brought up in Aberlour Orphanage so
25 I automatically compared it to what I knew. It was very

1 small compared to Aberlour Orphanage, as it was one big
2 house. The building wasn't novel or architecturally
3 beautiful, but the reason that stuck in my mind was
4 because they were doing scaffolding on one occasion
5 fairly early on in my time there.

6 'When I was on duty, one of the workers fell from
7 the scaffolding and I was first on the scene. I was
8 administering first aid. There was blood everywhere.
9 I had to take his teeth out and try to get him to
10 breathe. The other staff called an ambulance and he was
11 taken to hospital. Unfortunately, he subsequently died.
12 I was called in as a witness to the Fatal Accident
13 Inquiry.

14 'It prompted me to look up. I realised that it was
15 quite a tall building and that the scaffolding went up
16 quite a distance. That was my first impression, that it
17 wasn't structurally like Aberlour, and that it was
18 a tall building.

19 'The second thing that struck me was that there were
20 two older members of staff. The rest of us were very
21 young. My entire period working at Clerwood was between
22 the ages of 21 and 22. The other members of staff were
23 slightly older, but not vastly older. Towards the end
24 of my time, there was somebody who was possibly even
25 younger. I was never close to the other members of

1 staff. I was social, but I didn't spend a great deal of
2 time interacting with them. I was there to do
3 a particular job and then get myself back to university.

4 'The two older members of staff were at least twice
5 our age. They appeared to spend most of their lives at
6 work in the office, which was like a staffroom, drinking
7 tea or coffee. That was the matron and the deputy
8 matron, who were both female and the most senior members
9 of staff. They were in charge.

10 'Most of the staff there were permanent. I can only
11 vaguely remember a couple of individuals who were like
12 me and who were temping for a short period of time. One
13 was a very young lady, but I don't know what she was
14 doing. I can't really recall the names of staff members
15 at that time. I think there were about nine members of
16 staff in total.

17 'Nobody told us what to do when we arrived in the
18 morning. I'd never worked in such a situation before.
19 I'd had experience work in Rosslynlee Hospital and the
20 Royal Infirmary. It was all very direct in those places
21 and you did things with other staff members. In the
22 Royal Infirmary, the sister in charge of the ward would
23 tell you what to do. It was completely in contrast to
24 Clerwood. At Clerwood nobody really told you what to
25 do. There was no direction or instruction.

1 'That wasn't a fault that I recognised at the time.
2 It was just how Clerwood operated. It seemed to operate
3 spontaneously. The staff just sort of reacted to things
4 as the day progressed. We were containing the children,
5 making sure they were clean, fed and watered, if they
6 weren't at school. We might be seeing their visitors.
7 On rare occasions there would be a visit from
8 a relative. More often, it would be a social worker.
9 Periodically, I'd open the door, invite them in and
10 they'd go straight to the matron or the deputy matron.
11 That's what we did, along with cleaning.

12 'The second vacation that I worked at Clerwood was
13 similar. The only difference was the arrival of
14 somebody from abroad, a rather large lady who seemed to
15 have been given a position. I think she may have come
16 to work there with her husband. They were the same age
17 as the matron and the deputy matron. They just suddenly
18 appeared. They just appeared to have some sort of
19 assigned position within Clerwood. They had
20 an authoritative manner. I vaguely remember a slight
21 change in that way, although I can't remember being
22 directed to do anything by them.

23 'My third period working at Clerwood was from about
24 autumn 1975 until spring 1976 whilst --'

25 LADY SMITH: So, given the dates that he's indicated

1 earlier, that's probably just after he'd finished
2 university, assuming he did a three-year degree.

3 MS MACLEOD: Assuming he did a three-year degree, yes. Yes,
4 my Lady.

5 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

6 MS MACLEOD: '... whilst I finished off my degree. I was
7 offered a room right at the top of the building. I was
8 attending university classes and doing my assignments
9 but also living and working at Clerwood. I can't
10 remember what it cost or whether I had to pay for the
11 room.'

12 LADY SMITH: I was just slightly puzzled by an earlier
13 reference in his statement to him doing full-time work
14 at Clerwood. Maybe he meant just the vacation period.

15 MS MACLEOD: I think it was during vacations; that's how
16 I understood it.

17 LADY SMITH: So that 1975 to 1976 actually would have been
18 while he was finishing his degree.

19 MS MACLEOD: Yeah, the end of his degree, yes, I think so,
20 my Lady.

21 LADY SMITH: So that wasn't a full-time period, but
22 obviously doing quite a lot of work there nonetheless.

23 MS MACLEOD: Yes, he was living there and doing some work,
24 I think, at the same time:

25 'The nature of my job didn't change. I can remember

1 the room, which was quite large and very nice. It was
2 very quiet because I was cut off from the rest of the
3 building. It was a good room for studying.

4 'There wasn't a long-term investment in Clerwood on
5 my part. It was a vacation post and I was doing my
6 degree. I was concentrating on my studies and handing
7 in assignments. I needed [that] income and I enjoyed
8 the job, but it was a vacation job so I didn't invest
9 a huge amount of my life in the day-to-day stuff.
10 I liked what I was doing. I thought the kids were fine,
11 although sometimes their behaviour was really grim.
12 I did what I needed to do and when my shift was up,
13 I was off, either back to my room or to the university.

14 'I can't recall being involved with getting the
15 children up in the morning, nor putting them to bed at
16 night. There were male and female members of staff.
17 I think the job of getting the children up, putting them
18 to bed and bathing them was generally done by the female
19 staff.

20 'I never worked nights. I don't know why that was.
21 I think there may have been permanent members of staff
22 who wanted specific shifts. I know there were some
23 staff who worked nights because they disappeared early
24 in the morning. I don't know how staff responded if
25 a child wet the bed.

1 'There was a laundry room that we used to put the
2 clothes in. I can remember looking at the washing
3 machine and having to stir the water. The young staff
4 were involved in the washing of clothes. I think that
5 was one of our duties, together with washing the
6 bedsheets.

7 'I remember times when I played with the children or
8 interacted with them on the grounds at the front of
9 Clerwood. We had to be reasonably vigilant because
10 I don't think there was a gate. We had to make sure the
11 kids weren't in the way of any traffic coming in.

12 'Whether the kids were outside or not often depended
13 upon the weather. If the weather was good, they'd be
14 outside for most of the day. It also depended which
15 staff were on. It's harder work looking after children
16 in an open setting. It's much easier to look after them
17 in a room. If the kids were out when I was on duty,
18 they'd be at the front. There'd be no anticipation or
19 expectation that they'd be at the back of the house.
20 Part of the ground at the front was grassy. Sometimes
21 you'd be at the front door, looking through the glass to
22 keep an eye out for any cars coming up the drive.

23 'Sometimes we had little breaks where we went on
24 trips. I remember quite a lot of the kids being taken
25 near the sea. I remember playing in the sand. I think

1 there was a couple of trips to the seaside.

2 'There was a toddler at ['Clermont', I think that
3 must be meant to say] who sticks in my mind, because
4 I remember her birthday celebration. I bought her
5 an elephant soft toy. I remember giving it to her in
6 a group at the birthday tea. The staff were all around.

7 'Discipline was made up as we went along. It never
8 struck me as exceptional in any way. If a child was
9 playing up or being rude, he or she could be told --
10 would be told off by staff members, both male and
11 female. There was nothing standard or written down.
12 I wasn't given any guidance about discipline or
13 permitted punishments before working there. There was
14 no discussion with staff about what you would do if
15 certain situations arose.

16 'I do remember that if a child was badmouthing or
17 cursing, he or she would be told that that was not on,
18 or unacceptable. Such behaviour was not ignored by any
19 staff members.

20 'I do remember an older male child being held by
21 a staff member outside and appearing to be a bit out of
22 control. The staff member was not holding the child
23 tightly, just trying to hold him to try and get
24 a conversation going. That didn't strike me as unusual
25 or a cause for concern.

1 'I think the staff were tactile towards the
2 children. Comparing it to Aberlour, my housemother,
3 Aunty **AJF**, would give us a hug. She would give us
4 a kiss as we went to school and once we'd brushed our
5 teeth. That sort of thing didn't happen at Clerwood as
6 far as I saw. There wasn't that element of tactile
7 interaction.

8 'There would be putting your arm around a child or
9 bending down to get closer to a child if you were
10 talking to them. That would be what I would consider
11 then and still consider now to be normal stuff. I would
12 do that with my own children and I do it now with my
13 grandchildren. In terms of having children sit on
14 knees, I didn't see that either. It wasn't that the
15 children were at arm's length, but it wasn't that sort
16 of place.

17 'In terms of staff members being alone with
18 children, I can't recall coming across a member of staff
19 and a child together. That's not to say that individual
20 staff members were not on their own with individual
21 children. There were times, for example, when you might
22 be going down the hill from Clerwood and a member of
23 staff would be taking a child out on foot. I can't
24 remember any other mode of transport. Even when social
25 workers visited, I can't remember where they parked,

1 whether it was in the grounds of Clerwood or out on the
2 street.

3 'I don't remember seeing a member of staff taking
4 a child out somewhere. I was a member of staff who
5 floated around a lot. I was very active and I cleaned
6 things up. Certainly during my time I can't recall
7 that. If I was on a shift and a staff member said they
8 were taking a child somewhere, I would presumably be
9 told, because otherwise I would notice [the] child was
10 missing. Nothing like that sticks in my mind.

11 'I can't remember the staff being together at the
12 one time to talk about anything relating to the
13 children. I remember on one occasion when we went out
14 somewhere, maybe it was a meal or a show or something.
15 Although the staff seemed to get on well, it was very
16 rare for the staff to do something like that. [We]
17 weren't a collective, interactive team that went out
18 every week. They may have done it individually with one
19 other staff member, but I wasn't part of that. I wasn't
20 really around. I was doing work in my room or at
21 university.

22 'During the periods I worked at Clerwood, I didn't
23 see anything that caused me concern. I was too busy
24 doing the day-to-day practical bits. There were quite
25 a lot of them, so I really was occupied. I was never

1 sitting around in the staffroom with the two older
2 members of staff chatting. I tended to be out and about
3 interacting with the children. I didn't spend much time
4 with the staff during my shift. I wasn't aware of
5 anything untoward happening. I wasn't excluded, but the
6 staff didn't talk to me about things that happened.
7 There was no handover between night staff and day staff.
8 The night staff just had their jackets on and then they
9 went off.

10 'I didn't have the training at the time to observe
11 things that might have caused me concern as a trained
12 person. I didn't notice anything that concerned me, so
13 when the police spoke to me about allegations in [REDACTED],
14 it came as a bit of a shock. Looking back, the only
15 thing that struck me about the regime at Clerwood was
16 that there was no regime. Basically, we made things up
17 as we went along. That's how it appeared to operate, in
18 very stark contrast to Aberlour. At Aberlour, virtually
19 every minute was accounted for. From the minute you
20 woke up until you went to bed, your day was very
21 structured. There was nothing like that at Clerwood.

22 'I can honestly say that I cannot recall any
23 incident during my time at Clerwood when a staff member
24 behaved inappropriately with a child or indeed with
25 another staff member. I never heard about any such

1 incidents either. The staff who frequented the
2 staffroom more often than me may well have discussed
3 things but they never involved me. The staff did
4 involve me and invited me to at least one social
5 occasion, but it was a staff that interacted whilst
6 working and some individuals paired off to do things.

7 '[An applicant using the name "Michael"] has given
8 evidence to the Inquiry. His real name doesn't mean
9 anything to me. I never saw any witness statements in
10 [REDACTED]. I was just told the nature of the allegations.
11 I have been advised that 'Michael' left Clerwood in 1976
12 or 1977. He describes me as "sadistic". He goes on to
13 say:

14 "He didn't physically abuse you, but if you didn't
15 eat your dinner you'd be forced to eat it. He would say
16 horrible things about your family and how you didn't
17 have one."

18 'He has alleged that I mixed food together in a big
19 white enamel dish with a blue rim. He stated:

20 "He would force you to eat it. He would do this if
21 you didn't finish your food. He would mix your food
22 with your dessert and add other condiments and tell you
23 to eat it. This could be a mixture of your main meal,
24 your dessert, soup, ketchup, brown sauce, salt, sugar or
25 whatever. He would stand over you and intimidate you.

1 You would not be allowed to leave until you'd finished
2 it. This happened to someone at least twice a week."

3 'The first thing I want to say in response to those
4 allegations is about individuals' life story statements.
5 Each statement, whether it's a witness statement or
6 somebody talking about incidents in their lives, has to
7 be treated with the maximum of respect, irrespective of
8 what the reader thinks of the statement. I would like
9 to say that I respect and acknowledge the statement that
10 has been sent to me. Essentially, it is the witness's
11 truth as he sees it. There's no question of me
12 disputing or rubbishing someone's interpretation of
13 their life story.

14 'The second thing I'd like to say is that this
15 individual's truth and interpretation does not coincide
16 with mine. I don't recognise it. It's not a question
17 of not acknowledging and respecting his version of the
18 truth. It's that I don't recognise myself or the
19 actions attributed to me in this statement. There are
20 variations in interpretations of truth.

21 'I don't recognise myself in this statement that
22 says "'Peter' was quite sadistic" at any time in my
23 life. In terms of the allegations that 'Peter' "was
24 sadistic, he didn't physically abuse you", and, "He
25 would say horrible things about your family and how you

1 didn't have one", that is not my truth. I dispute that.
2 How could I be criticising a child's circumstances of
3 origin, development and life story, when in fact the
4 life story is reflective of my own? I think
5 I'm an expert in not having a family and being disowned,
6 abandoned and neglected. Even at the age of 21 and 22,
7 there's absolutely no way that I'd be coming out with
8 such statements against a child or anybody.

9 'If those things were said in the way 'Michael'
10 described, I do not dispute that that would be a form of
11 abuse, at that time or any other time. I did not say
12 horrible things about his family or that he didn't have
13 one. The reason I am categoric about that is because of
14 how I know myself. I have been through huge amounts of
15 pain, distress, abandonment and neglect. If anybody
16 knows about pain in terms of the family, I'm frankly in
17 the award stands on that.

18 'I have a deep knowledge of myself and there is
19 absolutely no way I would say such a thing. It's not
20 a question of remembering a particular conversation with
21 a witness during a particular meal or whatever. What
22 I am saying is knowing myself at the time and knowing
23 deeply about my history and how I felt about various
24 events in my life, there's absolutely no way I could say
25 these things.

1 'I'm unaware of any of the staff or children knowing
2 of my background in care. There is absolutely no way
3 I would have raised it with the children. I was still
4 working through a number of personal issues in relation
5 to the care system. They all contributed to me not
6 being willing to talk to anybody, let alone the kids,
7 about my own personal circumstances.

8 'I was a spare pair of hands in the establishment
9 and I was enjoying being there. I had an income, which
10 was helping me with my studies. I was doing my studies
11 and I was shortly going to graduate, provided that I got
12 through the exams. My mindset was focused on other
13 things. My task was not to make the lives of
14 individuals any more difficult than they already were.
15 I can say very confidently, without knowing or
16 remembering the detail of any of the conversations with
17 the kids, that those comments are most definitely not my
18 truth.

19 'I respect anybody's interpretation of his or her
20 life story and events in his or her life. I don't know
21 motivations and I'm not going to be critical of what he
22 has said. This is his truth and I respect that it's his
23 truth. I'm saying categorically that it is not my truth
24 and I contest what he has said.

25 'I have a deep knowledge of where I've come from and

1 how I've handled it over the years. Also, there's no
2 reflection whatsoever of any such similar commentary in
3 any of my interaction with my clients and so forth over
4 a 40-year plus period. I am consistent.

5 'People's life stories change from time to time and
6 they mould. They're influenced by circumstances.
7 That's why we've got to be very careful about those
8 statements. I'm not criticising 'Michael'. He's made
9 a statement and I'm not happy about it, but it is his
10 statement. Nobody likes to be called sadistic, but that
11 is his interpretation.

12 'In relation to the accusations that I frequently
13 engaged in a practice of mixing food together in
14 an enamel dish, standing over children, intimidating
15 them until they ate up and until that happened, I didn't
16 let them leave the table, I would again say that
17 I respect and acknowledge what 'Michael' has said. It
18 is not a reflection of how I conduct myself.

19 'I don't remember Brian MacLennan. The only person
20 that the police named of whom I had any knowledge of was
21 Gordon Knott. The reason I remembered him was because
22 he had long hair. The staff loved him. He appeared to
23 be fun. I am aware that he and Brian MacLennan were
24 convicted of sexual offences at Clerwood and other
25 places in Edinburgh in 1997 and received lengthy prison

1 sentences. I have been advised that Gordon Knott was
2 convicted of further offences early this year and
3 received a further sentence of four years. I had not
4 been aware of that and I am very shocked.

5 'I had no indication that this was going on when
6 I was at Clerwood. I remember Gordon Knott being fun.
7 He was the sort of person that staff loved interacting
8 with. He was fun, he was social and he often went out
9 with them. I didn't go out. I was rather dull compared
10 to Gordon.

11 'I have been advised that an inquiry was set up by
12 the City of Edinburgh Council following the convictions
13 of Gordon Knott and Brian MacLennan. I am told that
14 a report was prepared by Kathleen Marshall, Cathy
15 Jamieson and Alan Finlayson in 1999. I understand that
16 one former resident of Clerwood was interviewed for the
17 report and stated at paragraph 3.31 that other members
18 of staff "must have known what was going on at Clerwood
19 because they often came in and out of rooms and stayed
20 out of the road when things were happening" to her.
21 I have no knowledge of people reporting any abuse during
22 my time at Clerwood. I honestly had no concerns.

23 'There were indications given to the authors of the
24 report that MacLennan and Knott took children to the
25 bathroom, the air raid shelter and the boiler room. The

1 boiler room was the laundry where we washed the clothes.
2 All of this is news to me.

3 'I am told that paragraph 3.39 of the report refers
4 to some of the former residents talking about "being
5 forced to eat food out of a trough if they misbehaved.
6 The trough contained a mixture of all kinds of food and
7 ingredients. If they didn't eat it, their heads and
8 faces were pushed into the food on the trays". I don't
9 know anything about that.

10 ''Michael's' statement to the Inquiry refers to
11 wrestling and horsing around, which led to other
12 activity with MacLennan and Knott. I wasn't aware of
13 that sort of activity at the time. When children were
14 outside, they might be running and chased by staff.
15 I was certainly never witness to any wrestling activity.
16 I'm surprised that I wouldn't have been aware of that
17 kind of activity. If there was a situation of boys
18 wrestling with little or no clothes on, I wasn't aware
19 of it.

20 'Even although I wasn't exactly like a Gordon Knott
21 in terms of socialising with staff members, they would
22 still talk to me if there were areas of concern. There
23 were two male members of staff, maybe a third who
24 arrived later. I think if staff had known what was
25 going on, they would have let me know because I would be

1 fairly safe to talk to. I wasn't part of the gang as
2 such. If I'd been aware of such concerns, I would have
3 gone straight to the matron. I would have -- it would
4 have been automatic to report it. I think I would have
5 left because it would be too damaging.

6 'Because the place operated just step by step and
7 you made it up as you went along, you can see how things
8 could quite easily go astray. However, I never thought
9 that going astray could include some of the things that
10 I have now been alerted to. I respected the staff.
11 I think the female staff would, had they known, have
12 talked. They used to spend more time in the staffroom
13 than me. The matron and the deputy matron were in the
14 staffroom so I think they would have said something.
15 I may be wrong.

16 'I have been advised that there was a woman --'
17 I'll take that out.

18 'When I was interviewed by the police in [REDACTED], I did
19 recall one occasion when I was giving a punishment to
20 one child who had been repeatedly warned as to what
21 would happen if he continued with his behaviour. I made
22 the child eat from a dish on the floor. The incident
23 itself is no longer in my memory.

24 'It was treated as a disciplinary matter at the
25 time. It was the subject of formal proceedings and

1 resulted in me leaving Clerwood. I never discovered who
2 made the complaint. I never even asked at the time. It
3 didn't worry me because at the time I was responding in
4 writing to what had been said about why I'd given the
5 punishment in the first place. The local authority
6 required me to leave and that was the end of my time at
7 Clerwood. I was not given any findings in writing,
8 other than a letter terminating my employment and
9 stating the words to the effect that my conduct had not
10 been acceptable. There was no process in which they
11 told me what the allegations were. I didn't seek to
12 challenge my dismissal on any formal basis. I was
13 a student. I was 21 or 22. I didn't have any previous
14 experience of working. I didn't take any legal advice
15 at the time.

16 'With hindsight and even during my social work
17 training, I started to think differently. I was
18 learning new things and ways of disciplining that were
19 appropriate. There is absolutely no way I would even
20 contemplate doing anything remotely similar even at the
21 age of 23 or 24. But what I did with no training, no
22 education, no management, no supervision, was what
23 I thought was right at the time, using resources I had
24 to hand.

25 'That gets back to the importance of training,

1 education, supervision and so forth. This is an example
2 of what can go wrong in a situation where there's a lack
3 of preparedness, a lack of insight, into what you're
4 doing at the time, using your best knowledge, as it
5 were, as an innocent in many instances, doing what you
6 think will work with the children. Going back to
7 Aberlour and the mission statement, what I knew then was
8 that you really had to be in a position by the end of
9 your time in care of being tooled up to contribute
10 positively to society. If you're going to behave in
11 a way that is constantly inappropriate, you're not being
12 set up by the care system to actually play your part and
13 be an able member of your community.

14 'I didn't disclose this matter in any future job
15 applications. The way I saw it at the time was that it
16 was a vacation position. It was very temporary. It
17 ended and I then started my professional education in
18 social work and training at Moray House. It was
19 a two-year programme. Post-qualification, I moved on
20 from that.

21 'The accusation, that I had stood over children,
22 intimidating them and not allowing them to leave the
23 table until they had finished food I'd mixed together,
24 was part of the allegation that the Lord Advocate
25 referred to in [REDACTED]. It was raised with me at that

1 time, although I didn't know the identity of any person
2 making the allegation, nor did I ever see any witness
3 statements.

4 'On [REDACTED], the police interviewed me in the
5 police station. That was when it all started. I was
6 invited up to have a chat with them as a possible
7 witness. Then, when I got there, I was told I was
8 a possible suspect. There was no warning at all. I was
9 cautioned before spending some time in a police cell.
10 I was then interviewed by two police officers. The
11 interview was taped. After the interview ended, I was
12 charged with various offences.

13 'I am conscious about keeping some sort of record of
14 what I get up to. After the interview with the police,
15 I was on the train back to London King's Cross. I wrote
16 a contemporaneous record of the police interview, which
17 I have provided to the Inquiry.'

18 And this is the record:

19 "I am sitting on the 4.00 pm direct train in
20 Edinburgh Waverley Station en route to London
21 King's Cross, reflecting on what has been perhaps one of
22 the most painful few hours of my life. I came up to
23 Edinburgh last night on the sleeper and met
24 Brian Donald, solicitor, shortly after 9.00 am. We
25 travelled to Lothian and Borders Police Station and

1 arrived shortly after 10.00 am. I was initially seen by
2 Detective Sergeant Liddle and Detective Constable Wilson
3 in the company of my solicitor. During this initial
4 meeting, I was informed I was being cautioned in respect
5 of a number of matters which had arisen as a result of
6 a police investigation and was read my rights.

7 "I was then taken to a police cell with one window
8 with 24 round solid glass panels which let in some
9 light. The room consisted of a toilet which was
10 encrusted with excrement and other matter and contained
11 a giant piece of faeces. There was no toilet paper.
12 There was no way I could force myself to use such
13 a convenience. A block of concrete edged into the cell
14 from the wall opposite the door on which lay a blue
15 plastic mattress. I could not sit on that either.
16 I stood throughout my period in the cell before being
17 taken to an interview room. Before interview, pockets
18 emptied, searched, et cetera, catalogued, signed for and
19 placed in what appeared to be a strong plastic bag.

20 "In the interview, I was read my rights again and
21 the interview video- and tape-recorded. DS Liddle and
22 DC Watson (sic) were present. DC Wilson led the
23 questioning. I was taken through my professional and
24 educational career in terms of jobs and experience up
25 until [REDACTED]. I was asked about my own family background

1 as a child in care and young adult. I was asked about
2 my foster family experience and experience in
3 residential care at Aberlour Orphanage. I stated that
4 my experience at Aberlour Orphanage was a positive and
5 happy one overall, which contrasted with a less happy
6 and less positive experience in the foster home, where I
7 stated that I was seen as a guest in the house. I was
8 asked towards the end of the interview as to whether I
9 personally was sexually abused in either of the
10 residential [care] children's homes that I grew up in or
11 in the foster home, and stated that I was not.

12 "The bulk of the interview, perhaps a couple of
13 hours long, with a couple of brief breaks, one for some
14 refreshments and changeover of tapes, and one for
15 DS Liddle to go to the toilet and to change over the
16 tape, focused on my time at Clerwood Children's Home.
17 DC Wilson had access to a number of documents which he
18 regularly quoted from, including what appeared to me to
19 be a copy of my application to Lothian Social Work
20 Department in respect of Clerwood Children's Home around
21 1975.

22 "Questions were asked as to how I got the job in
23 the first place. I could not recall the detail but
24 I did state at the time that many students went around
25 organisations asking whether there were any temporary

1 jobs and I had a number, both during my school vacations
2 as a late teenager, and as a university student. The
3 jobs undertaken included potato picking, rosehip
4 picking, strawberry picking, acting as a ward orderly at
5 Rosslynlee Psychiatric Hospital, and as a ward orderly
6 in the Royal Infirmary in Edinburgh. I could not recall
7 precise details.

8 "Questions were asked about how I felt and related
9 to staff and children at Clerwood Children's Home and
10 I stated that I felt I related reasonably well. I felt
11 that I was regarded as a good member of staff and the
12 reference I received from the children's home in respect
13 of my application to undertake a professional social
14 work court (sic) at Moray House College was positive.
15 I stated that in all residential units there are
16 tensions from time to time and there would have been
17 tensions likewise in Clerwood Children's Home. On the
18 whole, however, I felt from what memory I had at the
19 time that the staff team got on reasonably well.

20 "Questions were asked as to how I got on with
21 children. As with staff, I felt from memory that I was
22 an effective member of staff, committed to the unit and
23 felt that I had related reasonably well to the children.
24 I stated that I could not recall at any time I was
25 there, any allegations either being made about me or

1 anybody else at the unit, except in respect of
2 a punishment I had given to what I thought was one
3 child, that transpired to be several children at the one
4 time.

5 "Questions were asked as to whether I could recall
6 the names of any members of staff at the time, to which
7 I replied I did not. Even when towards the end of the
8 interview, certain names were read out, they did not
9 register with me. The only name which vaguely came to
10 mind when stated by the police was Gordon Knott. In
11 what capacity the name registered, I do not know.
12 Whether a staff member, visitor or whatever, names of
13 residents at Clerwood's Children's Home were read out
14 but did not register either.

15 "So the only event that sticks out at the time, and
16 even then a lot of the detail I could not recall, was
17 a punishment I gave to what I thought was one child, the
18 police said it was four children, I think, at the time.
19 This related to repeated misbehaviour at the meal table.
20 I cannot recall which meal and I made the child
21 subsequently, according to the police, a group of
22 children at the one time, eat the meal from a dish on
23 the floor. The police quoted from what appeared to be
24 documentation prepared at the time of the incident,
25 stated that the meal consisted of the entire meal, tea

1 included, salt, and that I forced the children to eat it
2 and struck one of the children during this incident.
3 I cannot recall this in such a detail. What I do recall
4 is giving a punishment to what I thought from memory was
5 one child who I felt from memory knew what he was doing,
6 had been repeatedly warned on what would happen if it
7 continued and I gave the punishment.

8 "At the time, I would have been between 21 and
9 22 years and I had no previous experience whatsoever
10 working with children. I was subsequently disciplined
11 for this and eventually lost the job. I saw the job as
12 temporary, as I was due to start my social work
13 programme later in the year. There was a disciplinary
14 hearing of sorts, and the precise detail of which
15 I can't recall from memory. I believe at the time that
16 the punishment was taken out of context by those
17 responsible for investigating the incident and I do
18 recall entering into correspondence with the social work
19 management headquarters over the incident, but it got
20 nowhere.

21 "DC Wilson, quoting from a letter written by the
22 Head of Social Work at the time in Lothian Region,
23 outlined the reasons why I did not continue in the post,
24 stated that he, as in DC Wilson, could not understand
25 why I did not appeal, go to an industrial tribunal. I

1 stated that I had done all I felt I could do at the time
2 and there was nothing else I could do. I cannot even
3 recall at the time whether the possibility of
4 an industrial tribunal was even considered by me or
5 whether I knew what an industrial tribunal was.

6 "Questions were raised by the police of my views
7 regarding discipline at the time. I responded in the
8 sense that discipline was important, standards were
9 important, modelling was important, in the sense of
10 trying to demonstrate in your own behaviour the
11 expectations of the unit, that one is in terms of your
12 own behaviour, the expectations of the unit that one is,
13 in terms of conduct, going about one's business
14 generally. I could not recall in response to questions
15 as to what the procedure was for disciplining children
16 at the time in the unit, nor what the reporting
17 arrangements, if there were any, for punishments at that
18 time. I continued to answer the discipline questions by
19 stating that I had felt individuals had been told of the
20 standards and urged to meet them.

21 "DC Wilson and DS Liddle asked what I could have
22 done in spite of what individuals were told they
23 continued to misbehave, or words to that effect.
24 Basically my answer was more of what I have already
25 said. I did state at one stage that possibly a child

1 may have been smacked, but again I could not recall the
2 detail. The police stated that I had been in the unit
3 for at least a four-month period before that period and
4 that during that time, there had been a number of staff
5 meetings which included comments, guidance on
6 discipline. I responded by stating that I could not
7 recall such meetings on disciplining matters, but there
8 were team meetings in the children's home, but with what
9 frequency and duration I could not recall.

10 "The police stated towards the end of the interview
11 that I had been at the children's home for some nine
12 months, whether that included suspension time in respect
13 of the punishment I gave to the child I didn't know.
14 The period in question appeared to end in March 1976.
15 The police in question had jumped back and forward a few
16 times going over old ground, reporting why I remembered
17 some things and I couldn't recall the others and so
18 forth and so on and I basically repeated what I had
19 already said."

20 'I acknowledged in what I told the police that
21 something did happen on one occasion at a meal time,
22 involving one boy. What I recalled in my
23 contemporaneous notes in [REDACTED] is my best recollection of
24 what happened. It was suggested that contact was made
25 with more than one child. I didn't exclude the

1 possibility that I might have smacked a child. The
2 other matter that I set out to the police was my
3 recollection of one incident which involved me giving
4 a form of punishment, involving food being placed on the
5 floor in a bowl.

6 'They closed the interview, went over some career
7 history and basically that was the end of that. After
8 the interview, everything stopped and then they said
9 they were charging me and I am told by the police that
10 I didn't do myself any favours in my response in not
11 recollecting, X, Y and Z. On the way back to the cell,
12 various derogatory remarks were made. These became the
13 subject to subsequent of formal complaints. In my
14 contemporaneous [notes], I noted:

15 "On the way out of the interview room en route back
16 to the cell, DC Wilson recalled some alleged comments
17 from individuals who were in police custody as I came in
18 to be interviewed. They were allegedly discussing why
19 I was there and said he is a beast, interfering or
20 hurting wee bairns. DC Wilson stated that they were
21 right. I did not rise to the comment. DS Liddle was
22 present in the room at the time. En route to the cell,
23 DC Wilson stated to DC Liddle, 'Did you hear that?' I
24 can't recall hearing what response DC Liddle made. DC
25 Wilson responded by saying, 'It's pigeons coming home to

1 roost'. [That] was an obvious dig but again I did not
2 respond to the comment, bearing in mind experiential age
3 of ['Peter']. I was then photographed, fingerprinted
4 and a swab was taken from the inside of my mouth.
5 I could not begin to describe how angry and dismayed
6 I was at this time, but I kept my composure and I was my
7 usual polite and responsive self.

8 "I was then given my belongings back and released
9 just before 3.00 pm. Brian Donald, solicitor, met me
10 shortly afterwards. DC Wilson during the interview
11 apparently recounted comments, allegations from a number
12 of adults who were children at the time at Clerwood, who
13 referred to me as the [REDACTED] man or [REDACTED] man did this
14 or that. I was asked if I was the only [REDACTED] person in
15 the unit at the time. I cannot recall any other [REDACTED]
16 person at the time in the unit, let alone in the
17 children's home. The police also referred to whether
18 I thought there was a conspiracy against me in
19 the children's home by the children getting together, as
20 they were allegedly all saying the same thing. I said
21 I was not a believer in conspiracies. To the question
22 put as to whether the children, now adults, were lying,
23 I responded by saying that my recollection was
24 different, or words to that effect.

25 "DC Wilson asked if I'd disclosed my job at

1 Clerwood and reasons for departure to my first employer
2 in London. I can't recall to be honest, but I said in
3 response that I may not have. I regarded the job as
4 temporary. It was pre my social work training which
5 lasted two years. However, I must have put Clerwood on
6 at least one application in 1975/1976 because DC Wilson
7 quoted a response from a Miss Hunter who allegedly
8 stated that she could not provide a reference for me as
9 she did not have the relevant information or words to
10 that effect.

11 "DC Wilson stated at the end of the interview as
12 the tape was being put away that the outlook for me
13 looked bleak with a fallout which would affect my whole
14 family, not to mention my professional life. I did not
15 know whether this was to be interpreted by me as
16 a threat or a dispassionate realistic assessment of how
17 he sees the future in respect of myself. DC Wilson also
18 stated whilst he was fingerprinting me that the police
19 had contact with my wife and that she was very upset by
20 the call."

21 'That was written contemporaneously on the same day
22 as I was interviewed by the police. The comments made
23 by DC Wilson were made after the formal interview. They
24 were not formally recorded by the police officers. Two
25 other individuals, possibly attending for interview, had

1 made comments about me. They were making comment about
2 my appearance. I was dressed very smartly and they
3 asked who I was and what I was in for. DS Liddle was
4 adding to that giving his take. More things were said
5 at that point.

6 'In a letter from the Lord Advocate's private
7 secretary, 25 Chambers Street, in Edinburgh, dated [REDACTED]
8 [REDACTED], it discusses the time I was at Clerwood.
9 It was addressed to my solicitors, McCourts Solicitors,
10 53 George IV Bridge, Edinburgh:

11 "I refer to your letter of [REDACTED]
12 addressed to the Lord Advocate. He has asked me to
13 reply on his behalf. The Lord Advocate has now
14 considered the circumstances of the case against your
15 client and has instructed that no criminal proceedings
16 are to be taken against him, arising out of allegations
17 that he assaulted and ill-treated children in Clerwood
18 Children's Home, Clermiston Road, Edinburgh, between
19 14 December 1974 and 5 April 1976."

20 'What subsequently happened was that three formal
21 complaints were lodged by my solicitor. I have provided
22 copies of all the relevant correspondence to the
23 Inquiry. Alistair Duff was acting for me by then. The
24 first complaint was to the Crown Agent, dated
25 10 February 1999:

1 '"We refer to our above-named client and enclose
2 herewith a copy of a letter which we have sent to the
3 Procurator Fiscal. We have intimated this to you since
4 it is a complaint directed at the Crown Service
5 generally. In addition, our client wishes to complain
6 that the Crown Office issued misleading, inaccurate and
7 profoundly damaging information about ['Peter'] to [REDACTED]
8 [REDACTED] which information was subsequently [REDACTED]
9 [REDACTED]
10 [REDACTED]. We have already taken this matter up
11 with [REDACTED], who has advised us
12 that the information [REDACTED] had been provided by your
13 office. We should be grateful if you would look into
14 this matter and advise us of your position."

15 'The second letter of the same date,
16 10 February 1999, as addressed to the Procurator Fiscal,
17 29 Chambers Street, Edinburgh. Referring to myself, it
18 stated:

19 '"We represent the above-named who wishes to
20 complain about the way in which his case was dealt with
21 by your office. ['Peter'] was charged by the police on
22 [REDACTED]. It took until [REDACTED] for
23 a decision to be made regarding the outcome of the
24 proceedings against our client. During the intervening
25 period, ['Peter'] has been effectively unemployable.

1 The longer it took for a decision to be made, the
2 greater the damage was caused to ['Peter's'] business,
3 family and reputation, not to mention his health and
4 that of his family. We should be grateful if you would
5 look into the circumstances surrounding the delay and
6 advise us as to why such delay occurred."

7 'There was a [REDACTED] period between the initial
8 allegations, police interview in [REDACTED] and the
9 Lord Advocate's letter.

10 'The last letter went to the Chief Constable of
11 Lothian and Borders Police, based at Fettes Avenue,
12 Edinburgh. Again it's dated 10 February and refers to
13 myself:

14 "We would refer you to our letter dated [REDACTED]
15 [REDACTED], which has not been acknowledged by you. Our
16 client wishes to complain about various matters
17 associated with this case.

18 1. When our client was interviewed by DC Wilson and
19 DC Liddle on [REDACTED], he was treated in what he
20 describes as a gratuitously offensive, unprofessional
21 and abusive way, particularly by DC Wilson.

22 2. It appears that police officers provided
23 information to [REDACTED] concerning the content of the
24 interview which took place on [REDACTED] and
25 included details of ['Peter's'] personal circumstances,

1 including his address. The leaking of this information
2 appeared to be designed to cause maximum damage to
3 ['Peter's'] personal and professional life, in which
4 respect it was entirely successful.

5 3. Finally, as already mentioned, ['Peter'] wishes
6 to complain that there has been no response to the
7 letter dated [REDACTED] sent to you by this office
8 regarding destruction of the various items mentioned.
9 We should be grateful if you would investigate this
10 whole matter."

11 'The Procurator Fiscal responded, the Chief
12 Constable responded and the Crown Agent responded.
13 I have provided copies of the responses to the Inquiry.
14 In a letter dated 28 April 1999, I received an apology
15 from the Crown Agent. They did provide misleading
16 information, it was a mistake, it was all our fault and
17 so forth and so on.

18 'The Chief Constable said that his officers had
19 behaved impeccably. He wasn't prepared to concede
20 anything at all. My solicitor told me that that was no
21 surprise. The Procurator Fiscal said it was
22 a complicated case because there were co-accused on
23 different charges.

24 'After graduating from my postgraduate social work
25 qualification in 1998 (sic), I worked as a social worker

1 for a number of years, reaching the top of my
2 profession. In 1993, I decided to work for myself. I
3 set up my own consultancy in social work, community
4 wellbeing and housing.

5 'After the police interview, my business collapsed
6 immediately. I was [REDACTED] the day after the
7 interview. My first cancellation was the day after the
8 interview as well. I was on various boards, which I had
9 to come off. I was a guardian ad litem before the
10 police investigation. I had to send letters to all my
11 clients' solicitors to tell them what had happened.
12 I have provided copies of those letters to the Inquiry.
13 I was very open. I received wonderful, positive letters
14 back in terms of my work with their clients.

15 'Even though it was very painful and disastrous in
16 terms of my business, because I had operated in
17 a particular way right up until the allegations arose,
18 there was a large body of very positive comment about
19 myself. These letters came from very senior people,
20 including directors of social work. They were aghast at
21 how I had been treated. The police thought they had
22 a big catch and they wanted to make a big deal of it.
23 Basically I was in this toxic swirl where I was fair
24 game. The police made the most of it and destroyed my
25 business. They said to me on the day of my interview

1 that they would do that and they did. I had to retrain.
2 I went to the London School of Economics to try to tool
3 myself up. I studied for a Masters in housing
4 management.

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 'Peter' signed this statement on 18 November 2018.

10 My Lady, there are two short supplementary
11 statements, which have been provided very recently by
12 'Peter' and I would now read these out.

13 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

14 MS MACLEOD: The first of these is at WIT-1-000001767. And
15 this is headed up 'Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry Response
16 to the Statement of Gordon Knott.'

17 Now, the reference that's given there in the
18 statement, there's a typo where it says 1767, it should
19 in fact be 1762, the reference of Gordon Knott's
20 statement.

21 LADY SMITH: Thank you. Yes.

22 MS MACLEOD: 'I have read the referenced comments in
23 paragraphs 63, 64, 65, 72, 75, 90, 91, 197, 198, 199 and
24 311 (sic) relating to myself in Gordon Knott's statement
25 and have the following comments to make.

1 'I was a temporary junior member of staff at
2 Clerwood whilst at university completing a social
3 sciences degree and essentially having brief periods
4 working at Clerwood during my final year prior to
5 undertaking a full-time, post-graduate qualifying
6 programme in social work at Moray House College of
7 Education, qualifying in 1978.

8 'I reported to the matron and deputy.

9 'Corporal punishment did take place at Clerwood and
10 I cannot recall instances, circumstances, due to passage
11 of time and some 50 years. I challenged the "abuse"
12 allegations at the time and was not represented by the
13 union or by a lawyer as I was unaware of what I needed
14 to do to enlist the support I needed at the time to
15 protect my position. When allegations resurfaced some
16 years later, I made sure I was adequately supported by
17 appropriate legal expertise.

18 'My response to any allegations cited to date are
19 contained in my previous statements and police
20 investigation.

21 'I have nothing further to add.'

22 The statement is signed by 'Peter' on 20 April 2026.

23 The second supplementary statement by 'Peter' is at
24 WIT-1-000001766. This is headed up:

25 'A Response to Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry

1 statement WIT.001.002.5254.'

2 And that is the statement of the applicant 'Paul',
3 which was read into the evidence yesterday:

4 'I found the redacted witness statement very painful
5 to read, covering lived experience profoundly negatively
6 impacted by the care system according to the statement.
7 It covers part of a period from distant memory around
8 1975/early 1976, where I was a temporary worker whilst
9 a full-time student at Edinburgh University, completing
10 a social science degree before entering a post-graduate
11 diploma in social work (CQSW) qualifying programme at
12 Moray House College of Education, Holyrood Road,
13 Edinburgh in 1976, graduating with distinction in 1978.

14 'I have nothing further to add regarding my time at
15 Clerwood Children's Home to what I have already said.'

16 And again the statement was signed by 'Peter' on 20
17 April 2026.

18 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

19 Well, I'll stop now, not just for the lunch break,
20 but until we move on to other evidence tomorrow morning.
21 And before I rise, one name to add to the ones
22 I've already mentioned today, as somebody who is not to
23 be identified as mentioned in our evidence outside this
24 room and that's Aunty AJF [REDACTED]. Otherwise that's it for
25 today. Thank you all very much.

1 (12.47 pm)

2 (The Inquiry adjourned until 10.00 am

3 on Thursday, 23 April 2026)

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

I N D E X

1		
2		PAGE
3	'Michael' (sworn)	2
4	Questions from Ms MacLeod	3
5	'Peter' (read in)	57
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		
11		
12		
13		
14		
15		
16		
17		
18		
19		
20		
21		
22		
23		
24		
25		

