ABUSE IN CARE ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY
MĀORI HEARING

Under	The Inquiries Act 2013
In the matter of	The Royal Commission of Inquiry into Historical Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-based Institutions
Royal Commission:	Ms Julia Steenson Dr Anaru Erueti Mr Paul Gibson Judge Coral Shaw Ali'imuamua Sandra Alofivae
Counsel:	Ms Julia Spelman, Mr Kingi Snelgar, Mr Wiremu Rikihana, Mr Luke Claasen, Ms Maia Wikaira, Ms Alisha Castle, Ms Tracey Norton, Ms Season-Mary Downs, Ms Alana Thomas, Mr Winston McCarthy, Mr Simon Mount QC, Ms Kerryn Beaton QC for the Royal Commission Ms Melanie Baker, Ms Julia White and Mr Max Clarke-Parker for the Crown Mr James Meagher for the Catholic Church Ms Fiona Guy Kidd for the Anglican Church Ms Sonya Cooper, Ms Amanda Hill as other counsel attending
Venue:	Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei Tumutumuwhenua Marae 59b Kitemoana Road Ōrākei AUCKLAND
Date:	11 March 2022

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

COMMISSIONER STEENSON: Tēnā koutou katoa, welcome back from kai break. We have Mr Rikihana from our Māori investigation team to lead the evidence of whānau for Kuini Karanui and I will pass it over to you now. Thank you Mr, Rikihana.

MR RIKIHANA: Tēnā koe i te tūru, ā, ki a koutou katoa ngā Kaikōmihana. Ko te kaiwhakaatu o te ahiahi nei, ko te whānau o Kuini Karanui. Ko te tuatahi, kei te tika ka tuku mihi ki a Whaea Kuini, te māreikura o te whānau Karanui. Ko tona hiahia ki a tuku i ēnei kōrero a kanohi, engari i mate i tera tau. Kei konei a wairua. Kei konei hoki te whānau Karanui. Ko Tracy Karanui hei whakmana i ngā kōrero. Nō reira, okioki atu rā e te māreikura. Hoki atu koe ki te waimārie o te Atua. Ki te poho o tōu tīpuna. Haere atu rā, haere atu rā, e moe. Kia koutou mā ngā kanohi ora me ngā mōrehu o te māreikura kua whetūrangitia, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa.

[English: Unfortunately, she passed away last year but is here in spirit. The whānau Karanui are here, Tracy Karanui, to empower the evidence. Therefore farewell, oh the great heroine, farewell to the great mighty God above, farewell, farewell, sleep on. To everyone in attendance, and to the whānau of our heroine who has passed on, greetings and salutations.]

Madam Chair, Commissioners, this afternoon we will be hearing the kōrero of Kuini Karanui. Whaea Kuini had wished to share her kōrero in person with the assistance of her mokopuna, Tracy Karanui. However, Whaea Kuini passed away at the end of last year surrounded by her whānau and the people who loved her. Her passing is still very raw for her whānau. However, her kōrero is something that the whānau are all familiar with and something which they know she wanted to be shared. I would like to acknowledge the whānau for their bravery in sharing their story, and I hope you can find some healing today.

Whaea Kuini's kōrero is one of resilience, faith and whānau. As a young child she grew up in a loving whānau and was grounded in Te Ao Māori. However, she eventually found herself in three foster placements where she experienced abuse, neglect, and disconnection from her whānau. The impacts of that abuse continued throughout whaea Kuini's life and into the lives of her tamariki and mokopuna. As an adult, Whaea Kuini dedicated her life to helping tamariki to ensure they did not experience what she had, to make sure they would never be abused in care.

Today Whaea Kuini's kōrero will be shared by her whānau Ko ngā māngai o te whānau Karanui, ko Tracy Karanui te mokopuna o whaea Kuini, kōrua ko Susie Falwasser, te tamāhine o te whaea.

[English: The spokespeople of the whānau is Tracy, and Susie Falwasser, the daughter of whaea.]

Tracy Karanui will be joining us by AVL from her whare here in Tāmaki and the main kōrero will be provided by way of a prerecorded statement from Tracy and Aunty Susie. Whaea Kuini's kōrero will be presented in the following manner: Tracy, who is the mangai for the whānau will first introduce herself. We will then watch the prerecorded statement which will be presented in two parts. Following the statement, Tracy will share a kōrero whakakapi or closing statement written by Whaea Kuini.

Madam Chair, the whānau would like to begin their kōrero with a karakia but before we do, perhaps this is a good point for Tracy to take the affirmation.

COMMISSIONER STEENSON: Absolutely. Tēnā koe, Mr Rikihana. Tēnā koe, Tracy and to the Karanui whānau who are watching the livestream.

MS KARANUIGOLF: Tēnā koe whaea (thank you).

COMMISSIONER STEENSON: Before we start, I just want to introduce you to who are here in the wharenui today, just so you know who's here with us. Obviously myself, Commissioner Steenson, we've got haukainga, our tech team, we've got our Māori investigation team, and our sign language interpreters, and we've also got remotely, but at the marae, our te reo Māori interpreters. And joining us live online listening are our other Commissioners, our panel who will be speaking on the last day, members of Sage, and our Te Taumata and core participant, the Crown, is also listening and of course the rest of Aotearoa.

So, I'd now like to ask you, Tracy, to take the affirmation if that's all right. Would you like it in te reo Māori or do you want it in English?

MS KARANUI GOLF: Te reo Pākehā, please.

COMMISSIONER STEENSON: Kapai.

TRACY KARANUI GOLF (Affirmed)

COMMISSIONER STEENSON: Ngā mihi. I'm going to now pass to pass back to Mr Rikihana.

MR RIKIHANA: Tēnā koe te Heamana (thank you, Madam Chair). I will now hand over to my colleague Ms Kahu Piripi to offer our karakia whakatuwhera o te kōrero nei (an opening prayer for this presentation).

MS PIRIPI: Tēnā rā tātou kua huihui mai nei i raro i tēnei kaupapa i te whenua taurikura o Ngāti Whātua ki Ōrākei. Kia whaea Kuini Karanui, kua whetūrangitia ki te uma o Ranginui, nāu tēnei rā. Ki te whānau Karanui, te whānau pani, Tracy rāua ko whaea Susie, e rere ana ngā mihi aroha ki a koutou. Kāti rā, ka tika me whakatuwhera i ēnei kōrero me tētahi karakia.

[English: Greetings everyone that have gathered to this hearing of Ngāti Whātua ki Ōrākei. Whaea Kuini, this is your day. To the whānau Karanui, to the bereaved family, to Tracy and Whaea Susie, I extend my warm love to you both. It is only right to begin with a karakia.]

Takiuru, takiuru, hahau te toki, māre ana te nuku, māre ko te rei, tawhito ana te uru rei, mako ai te tūnga a te hautere, pipiwai ana ko te mōrehu. He koro whiti, he koro whatā. Ka tū ki runga ko te manu rei e. Kia ora mai tātou.

(Mōteatea: an ancient incantation. Kia ora mai tātou (thank you).

MR RIKIHANA: Tēnā koe, Ms Piripi. (Thank you, Ms Piripi). I will now give Tracy an opportunity to introduce herself and to share any opening comments for today. Following her comments, we will watch the first half of Whaea Kuini's kōrero.

MS KARANUIGOLF: Kia ora koutou. Ngā mihi ki a koutou katoa ki te rōpū o tēnei kaupapa, ngā mihi ki a koe, whaea (Greetings, everyone. Thank you for having me to the Commission and to Dame Chair). Ngā mihi. My name is Tracy KaranuiGolf. I am the eldest daughter of Alfred and Wendy Karanui. Alfred is the eldest child of Kuini and Alfred Karanui. I have Covid at the moment so aroha mai for my voice. Yes.

Today you will only see me on the screen, but I am part of a strong collective. I am one of 90 grandchildren spread over five generations. I speak today on behalf of my whānau to share my nanny's purakau with you and for the Crown to listen. My nanny wanted to share her purakau (story) in the hope that the Crown would learn from her, that they would learn that aroha, whānau, whenua must come before all else.

You will see me today and not my nanny because on 8 November 2021 her earthly journey ended and she returned to the Atua, her tīpuna, her husband and her three adult children. Moe mai rā i nanny, arohanui aroha atu mo ake tonu. (Rest on nanny, love you forever). Kia ora koutou.

MR RIKIHANA: Tēnā koe, Tracy. We will now watch the first part of Whaea Kuini's kōrero.

(Video played)

(Waiata: Whakaaria mai tō rīpeka ki au, tīaho mai rā roto i te pō? Hei kona au, titiro atu ai. Ora, mate, Hei au koe noho ai, āmine.).

[English: Show your cross to me. Let it shine there in the darkness. To there I will be looking. In life, in death, let me rest in thee.

MR RIKIHANA: Kia ora kōrua. Ko te tuatahi, ka tuku mihi maioha ki a kōrua. Kei te tika, ka tuku mihi anō hoki ki tō kōrua whaea, tō kōrua kuia kua wehe atu ki te pō. Kua

whetūrangitia, moe mai, moe mai, haere atu rā. Kia kōrua, te whānau pani nei te mihi nei te aroha nunui ki a kōrua.

[English: Thank you both – Firstly, acknowledgments to both of you. It is only right to acknowledge your whaea, your grandmother who has passed on. Sleep on, sleep on, rest on, to you and the whānau, the grieving whānau, I extend my heartfelt thanks to you all.]

I think it's important at the outset to acknowledge Whaea Kuini whose kōrero it is that we'll be sharing today, and also to acknowledge you, her whānau, who will be her mangai for this kōrero, and so – yeah, I wanted to acknowledge her first right at the outset. I also want to give you both the opportunity to introduce yourselves. I'll pass over to you, Tracy.

MS KARANUIGOLF: Kia ora, ngā mihi ki a koutou mō tō wā, mō tēnei kaupapa. Te kaupapa o taku Nanny pūrākau, me whakapapa. Tēnei te pepeha o tōku nanny. Ko Whangatauatia te maunga, ko Ngahare te awa, ko Mamari te waka, ko Ahipara te whenua, ko Te Rarawa tōku iwi. Ngāti Moetonga tōku hapū, ko Ōhaki te marae, ko Ahipara te whenua, KO Tracy Karanui tōku ingoa.

[English: Hello and greetings. Thank you for opening up the time for this kaupapa subject which pertains to my grandmother's story. Here is my nanny's genealogy. Whangatauatia is the mountain, Ngahare is the river, Māmari is the waka, Ahipara is the ancestral land, Te Rarawa is the tribe, Ngāti Moetonga is the hapū, Ōhaki is the marae, Ahipara is the ancestral land, Tracy Karanui is my name.]

I am the eldest daughter of the eldest son of Kuini Karanui. He is one of eight children and one adopted child of Kuini. And this is my aunty, Aunty Susie Falwasser and Aunty Susie is the eldest daughter of my nanny Kuini. Do you want to do it, Aunty? Or do you want me to leave it like that.

MS FALWASSER: Leave it like that.

MR RIKIHANA: Kapai. Tēnā kōrua. (Very good, thank you). So Whaea Kuini had planned to be able to deliver this kōrero herself. But now you, her whānau are here to deliver it on her behalf, and so we acknowledge you and the courage it takes to come forward and share this kōrero on behalf of your whaea, your nan. What we will do is, we will work our way through the kōrero that she had prepared. There are different parts in the kōrero where I know she would have shared with you some of her whakaaro, and so I'll be asking some questions just to get your thoughts and whakaaro on the things that you knew about Kuini and also on the thoughts that the she shared. We'll start as it was as she, started with her whakapapa and with her pepeha. You've already shared with us her pepeha. Tracy, if you'd like to talk through the kōrero that Kuini has prepared.

MS KARANUI GOLF: When my nanny did the interview, she was 86 years old and a strong, fit and healthy 86-year-old at that. She had all her wits about her, and she carried that wit and character with her right into her last days here in this world. The days leading – the day before she passed, she woke up only speaking te reo Māori, which she'd never done before, so she spent the whole day speaking te reo Māori and teaching pūkana and just having everybody wrapped around her bed thinking, "Are you getting better?" And I think that was the start of her transition into her new realm. She was born in – redacted – where she was actually born, Aunty? – redacted – was it a hospital? Yeah, in like a clinic or – nothing like that at that time, eh, yeah? And that's how it continued. She was born in a little shack that she grew up in. It was her grandmother's shack and my nanny looked after her nanny until she was in her final days too.

Her father was Tamati Tahitahi and her mother was Erena Maihi and there were 10 children in that whānau. And I think one of those children passed away as a baby but the other nine grew into adults. Nanny had eight of her own children and adopted one more when her children were having their own children, she was still – at that time she was taking people into her house, to awhi and she took in people that needed it and my aunty needed her then.

When she did this interview, she had 89 grandchildren, but did more sneak in after then?

MS FALWASSER: Yes.

MS KARANUI GOLF: So, there was more than 90, she has more than 90 moko, and that's over five generations, those are Aunty Susie's generations. So, she has great grandchildren – how many great grandchildren? Three great grandchildren, those are Aunty Susie's –

MS FALWASSER: Great, great.

MS KARANUI GOLF: Great greats, look I'm even behind. Heaps, just heaps. Heaps of moko. In 1946 my nana was seven years old, and she was taken by the State. She was fostered until 1952. She left her – the State got involved in her life in 1946 because she was truant from school and – she went to native school, so she didn't like native school anyway because they spoke te reo Māori at home and she wasn't allowed to speak Māori at school, so she would get beat when she went to school and kōrero Māori.

Other stuff about school, like she said that they would have steel, you know, like Steelos that you wash the pans with, and they would Steelo their hands and feet and nails because they would tell them that they were dirty. But Nanny said they didn't have shoes and that, so yeah, they had that. So, she didn't love going to school. So, the State became

involved in 1946 and they offered her – they offered her a different life and nana has said that she felt like they said to her she would get to go to Auckland and go to these schools and there would be all of these opportunities for her.

MR RIKIHANA: Yeah.

MS KARANUI -GOLF: There was some abuse going on in my nana's life and she looked at the opportunity to leave that as a way to start afresh. But unfortunately, my nanny spent many years in two foster placements where she was sexually abused many times over a long period. She didn't tell people about that abuse, because she didn't want to disturb that whanau's life, so she didn't want the wife to feel sad and she didn't want to upset the children, so she said it was better for everybody if she just wore what was happening.

That happened to her in two of the three houses that she went to, and even more sadly, two of those houses had Māori people in them and I think that's a significant kind of sign of how impacted our people were in that place at that time. She did have one opportunity to have a healthy place to live, and she spoke about that place often. They taught her many life skills that she didn't know before and so she did have real aroha for those people.

MR RIKIHANA: I want to touch on all of these different parts of Kuini's life in more detail. Perhaps if we look back first to the life that she experienced as a young child and with her whānau growing up, what were some of the experiences that she shared with you about her growing up life, some of the values that she learned from her whānau as she grew up?

MS KARANUI GOLF: So, they lived in a shack, she described it as being tin, and they would collect old newspapers and potato sacks from the shop, or the delivery people and they used those for – to insulate the walls and that. There was no, like, power or running water, so they used the Aiwa to keep all of their kai cold, and they dug kumara pits as, I don't know, long-term storage or something, I guess. And she talked lots about having just acres and acres of mara kai. So, they spent – like most of their life was about growing kai, this kind of kai sovereignty, I guess is what we'd call it now, but then it was not going hungry. And that's what they spent most of their lives doing, was doing this gardening. They lived in a really collective way, so everybody had different roles and responsibilities. And she mostly looked after her grandmother and in her statement here she describes her as a faithful old lady, and that's exactly what she was actually. She was a Seventh Day Adventist and they – eventually they all lived together, but he was a minister, eh, the grandfather was a minister, so they were really Christian. But she got sick, my nana's grandmother, she got TB, eh?

MS FALWASSER: Her mother got TB.

MS KARANUI GOLF: Oh, her – yeah. I think they all got it, it went all through, and she was looking after her grandmother and that's why she wasn't going to school, because she was looking after the sick people in her house.

MR RIKIHANA: Yeah.

MS FALWASSER: Her older siblings had already moved on to the city and just left the young ones at home, and she was the oldest of the youngest that were at home, there was four of them that were left there with the nanny because her mum had passed away earlier with TB, so the nanny was looking after them, the father was in the gum field. That's their job in those days.

And so, yeah, she, from the time she was small, you know, maybe five, six, she was looking after her nanny who was 91 years old, and she was also looking after her younger siblings who were younger than her. So, she had a hard life from the start, looking after people and she did that right through until she died.

MR RIKIHANA: Did she view it as a hard life though when she was that young age?

MS FALWASSER: No, she didn't, it was just normal to her. To her, she said, you know, she just – and she grew up and took that with her, came to the city with her siblings later on. But yeah, she'd always cared for people. All walks of life doesn't matter if you're black, blue, or white or, they would just come through our home like kin, young kids would just follow us home, you know, and no matter a two Storey – not two Storey, a double shed, a little bunk in there, you know, kids going in and out all the time. But she always cared, didn't matter who it was, old people, young people, yeah. So, she was taught that when she was, as I say, young, and she carried stuff with her all through her life.

MS KARANUI GOLF: She talked lovingly about her childhood.

MS FALWASSER: She did.

MS KARANUI GOLF: And she talked about like travel by horse and, you know, that that's how they got around and that she'd tell stories, she told stories about how they used to rark up the goats and like tie bits of wood to the goats and then rark the goats up and jump on the sleds and get the goats to take them for a pull around. But then they – and yeah, then they ran out of kai one winter and she came home and there was a hot soup, and she was like, man, mean kai, and they were eating the food and then she says, "Dad's, where's Billy goat?" And he goes, "Yeah, in the kai." And they'd eaten the goat, and she tells that story heaps, she told that story so much. Then she said she's not been able to eat goat ever again after that. But it was definitely a hard life, I think. She had so much responsibility from a really early age, and there was some abuse happening from her externally from her whare,

from people coming into her whare was the abuse, but within our home she was loved and she had real connections to the whenua and to te reo Māori and to her whānau.

MR RIKIHANA: You've touched on the abuse that she was experiencing that also eventually led her into being a ward of the State. Perhaps we could look a bit more at that experience and how she eventually ended up in care. So you've mentioned that one of the things, or something that kept her away from school was the need to care for her nanny and other whānau members, but also there was abuse occurring as well.

MS KARANUI GOLF: Yes.

MR RIKIHANA: That impacted on her.

MS KARANUIGOLF: Yes, yeah. I can – I will read you something that she has written in her statement that I think – this will tell you what she was – what it was like. She says: "I was the oldest of the five of us who were still living at home, so I had to stay home from school to help care for my nana. She was 91 at the time. She was an active lady who would cart water back and forth to our house and she'd go to the river to wash her clothes, but she still needed someone to care for her. And when I was at home caring for my nana a person would come around and sexually abuse me." She talked about, kind of telling people about that, but that it was hard to talk about and she didn't keep explaining it. People told her, you know, oh don't talk like that.

MR RIKIHANA: And she was very young when this was occurring as well?

MS KARANUI GOLF: Yeah, she was very young. She talked about like not knowing if it was right that she hated that it was happening to her, but she wasn't too sure, you know, what it was even all about. Yeah. And that she had a, you know, she felt a ugly kind of resentment growing. And so eventually she wasn't going to school and her truancy led to the State becoming involved and once they became involved I think she had this growing resentment and kind of fear of this person, so the State almost looked like an opportunity for something better or an escape, and she talks about feeling tricked by that, like she said that they made it out like it would be like amazing, and she said to me once, it would be like when you thought you were going to go to Disneyland or something, but she said it was never like that.

MR RIKIHANA: Kapai.

MS KARANUI GOLF: She also said that they – here too, her uncle and her father did try and fight for custody, but she says here: "The court asked me what I wanted and when the judge told me I could have a different life, I thought that that would be a good option for me." Yeah.

MR RIKIHANA: Which – it's clear to see when you're a young child like that, that does – that could sound like a good option for her. But her experiences were something quite different from what she expected?

MS KARANUI GOLF: They were.

MR RIKIHANA: We'll talk now a bit about the experiences that Kuini had when she was in foster care. I understand that there were three different placements, one in Mahinepua, one in Otiria and one in Whangārei. Perhaps we'll begin with her experience when she was in Mahinepua.

MS KARANUI GOLF: So, she was with a Māori whānau unrelated to her, and they had three adult children. So, she loved these people, they were kind to her, and they taught her lots of things. She did – like she talked about learning how to catch crayfish and go fishing. The house was warm and dry, and she had her own bed for the first time which she really loved. But the son of that whānau who lived away, when he came back, he would sexually abuse her, and the abuse and the visits got really quite frequent. And she never told them, the parents, that it was happening because she didn't want to be a hoha. She said she didn't want to make a fuss. And she was worried that if she told them she might not have anywhere to live. She didn't understand that she could – she could talk to the State about that and that was mostly because she never saw them again. So, she was put in the home and then she didn't see social workers anymore. She doesn't remember anybody checking on her or asking if she was okay. She doesn't remember any of that and, you know, I think if that did happen, she would have remembered because it would have been an opportunity for her to tell someone, but she didn't know how she'd tell them that that was happening and she wasn't sure if it would keep happening, so she kind of just told herself to – that she should just handle it.

MR RIKIHANA: Do you know how long she was at that placement for?

MS KARANUI GOLF: Yeah, two years, I think. Yeah, she was there for two years. Yeah.

MR RIKIHANA: During those two years she doesn't recall any social workers coming or any other type of support being offered to her?

MS FALWASSER: No.

MS KARANUI GOLF: No, not at all. So she was completely reliant on that whānau for – she told me too that she – what she really didn't like about it was that she described it as feeling like a scab, she said that she needed to ask them for things, like clothing and – so she had no autonomy, you know, she had no – she was completely interdependent on them, not even interdependent, 'dependent on them for all of her needs, so she was always trying not

to cause a fuss to make sure that, you know, she got all of the clothing and things that she needed.

MR RIKIHANA: So that was her first experience in State care.

MS KARANUI GOLF: Yeah.

MR RIKIHANA: Then from there she was eventually moved to another foster home –

MS KARANUI GOLF: Yeah.

MR RIKIHANA: – in Otiria?

MS KARANUI GOLF: Yeah, so she was offered a move for school, to move to go to college, so she thought, "Yeah, I can get away from the son and I can get to school." So, she said yeah, she'd happily go on to the next placement. So, she was 13 when she went to the new placement.

MR RIKIHANA: And the school that she was offered to go to was Kawakawa College?

MS FALWASSER: Yeah.

MR RIKIHANA: I imagine she would have been quite excited about that as another good opportunity.

MS KARANUI GOLF: Yeah, yeah. So that was the only time that she saw the social workers, so they came back and again, she had this kōrero about all of the opportunities that were available at this kura and that she was lucky that there was a whānau that were willing to let her stay there, because the visits had become so frequent with the son, so at the beginning she said he'd only come every now and then, which, I don't know, maybe was school holidays or work breaks or something like that. But she said in the end he was there every weekend and most of the weekend, so she said it just happened more and more and more. So yeah, she thought this would be a good exit for her. Sadly, that wasn't the case.

MR RIKIHANA: So, she wanted the opportunity to go into Kawakawa College and there was a home available in Otiria?

MS KARANUI GOLF: Yes.

MR RIKIHANA: What was the family life like there in that home?

MS KARANUI GOLF: Very sad for her. She describes herself as being the slave in that house.

MR RIKIHANA: Do you recall how many other children or other people were there in the house with her?

MS KARANUI GOLF: They had 10 children of their own. So, she feels like they took her in because they wanted somebody to look after the children. And actually, it's deeper than that. My nanny told me that she thinks that actually the wife took her in because she knew what the husband was doing to her own children, so she wanted that to stop, so she brought

in another child so that the abuse wouldn't happen to her own children but would happen instead to somebody else. So, my nanny spent all of her time looking after the 10 children from that house, so she said from morning until night, cooking and cleaning, and they weren't nice, kind, loving children, they weren't like siblings to her. She talked about it being like Cinderella, a brown Cinderella, maybe without the gown and handsome prince. But yeah, the mother was sick, and she often had to go to the hospital, and I think there were sick children, some of the children were sick too. And so, the father sexually abused my nana. So again, she didn't tell anybody, she didn't say anything to the wife although she thinks the wife knew. I don't know if she knew that at the time, but – and maybe her reflection or whakaaro later in her life she thought that maybe that's why the wife got her. But she felt like they knew what was happening to her. But again, she didn't see any social workers. She doesn't remember anybody visiting her. She doesn't remember school being a safe enough place to tell anybody kind of what was happening. Yeah. Here it says: "My foster parents always made sure that I went to school though, so maybe Social Welfare didn't know that there were any issues." So, there's her, again, protecting people. She said: "I never told the social workers about the sexual abuse because I never wanted to hurt anybody. But I think that if they had have asked me, I would have told them about it."

MR RIKIHANA: Yeah. Her experience while she was there also impacted on how she viewed school; is that correct.

MS KARANUI GOLF: Yeah. So, she had to go to school, but she said that she didn't do any learning in school. Most – she said that she had to get up early and clean and stuff and then when she got home she had to cook and clean, and then at night her sleep was disturbed from the father in the house and that she just remembers going to school and being tired and exhausted and sad, and the school told the social workers that she wasn't engaged and she wasn't kind of wanting to learn, so they – the social workers came back, offered her a new school, she said that she didn't want to go to school anymore, that she wanted a job.

MR RIKIHANA: Which is quite a stark contrast to the reason why she went there in the first place?

MS KARANUI GOLF: Yes.

MR RIKIHANA: Being so excited about going to Kawakawa College to having such a flip in what it was that she wanted.

MS KARANUI GOLF: Yeah, yeah.

MR RIKIHANA: Do you know how long she was there, at the foster home in Otiria?

MS KARANUI GOLF: Three years? So, I think she moved to the next placement when she was 16, or just turning 16. Yeah, so she didn't have to go to school at that point.

MR RIKIHANA: So, at 16, then, she moves on to a different placement in Whangārei with a focus on, rather than schooling, on finding a pathway into work, into some kind of employment.

MS KARANUI GOLF: Āe.

MR RIKIHANA: Do you want to talk a bit about her experience while she was there at that foster home in Whangārei?

MS KARANUI GOLF: Yeah. So, from the time that she was taken from the first home, just before she left the second placement, so while she was in Kawakawa College, she hadn't seen her brothers or sisters or had any contact with them at all for all of that time. So that was, what, five years, six years, six or seven years, she didn't know where they lived, if they were well, if they were alive, if they were okay. When she asked – talked to the social workers about it they just said that they didn't know where they were. And so just before she left that placement, she was in a basketball tournament and they had travelled to Whangārei for this, her school, for this basketball tournament and she said over the court – she first got to the basketball tournament and over the court she saw her sister Sarah that she hadn't seen since they had been uplifted, that's the first time that she saw her. And she said that they just saw each other and ran through the courts and held on to each other and they didn't play basketball, they just talked the whole time. And at that kōrero my nanny learned that her sister had had the same life that she was having, and I think that was – had part to do of what – my nana didn't want to go to school anymore because she wanted to get out, like to just actually be able to have something different and see her brothers and find her brothers and sisters again. So yeah, then she went to Whangārei and so this whānau was a Pākehā whānau.

MS FALWASSER: Yeah.

MR RIKIHANA: That's a long time for her to be disconnected from her siblings.

MS KARANUI GOLF: Āe.

MR RIKIHANA: And it would have been a really impacting moment for her, a terribly impactful moment, to realise that the pathway she was on was one that some of her whānau were also walking at the same time. So, she found herself in Whangārei with a different whānau, a Pākehā whānau. What was her experience like, you know, in Whangārei?

MS KARANUI GOLF: Beautiful. She loved them and she genuinely believed that they loved her too. And as an adult she would go back there. So, she talked like, with such love about

this whānau. When I would listen to her talk about it, she was just talking about the basics of life, you know, she was like, oh, they were so lovely, they – I always had a warm jacket and I always had shoes and I'm thinking, you know, like all of these things that we just take for granted, but she said, best of all, no one would touch me. So that was the first placement that she'd been on where there was no sexual abuse. And she talked about how they taught her life skills. So, they would give her pocket money and they taught her how to save, and at that placement was the first time that she really understood that the people that she was living with got paid to have her with them. So each week – they took my nanny to town and they opened up a bank account, and that whole experience she was telling me was so buzzy for her too, like, to have people actually ask – like the flash people in the bank to actually ask her what her name was and to have, you know, something of her own, her own bank thing, and every week they would put money into her – give her money and put money into her savings account so she would learn – so she learned how to save. And she couldn't believe that they would give her money. And that they wouldn't take it off her or – yeah. So, it was a farm. So, she did lots of farming stuff, ae, she learned to milk cows and – but most of all I think what she learned from that whānau was what it felt like to be safe, and she said that that's what she knew she wanted for her children and for whatever whānau she was going to have is she just wanted to feel safe from then on. And that that was the first time in her life that she'd like been able to sleep and just exist without the fear of like what the men around her might do.

MR RIKIHANA: So how long was she there in the placement in Whangārei?

MS KARANUI GOLF: I think she left when she was 17.

MR RIKIHANA: And in that time that she was there, did she have contact with her social workers?

MS KARANUI GOLF: No, I don't think so. I think – no, I think she – she wanted to work and – oh no, I'm reading her statement here and then she says no, that she "can remember Social Welfare checking in on her to see how things were going, and I told them I loved it there because they were kind and I felt like I was part of the family." She said: "I formed a strong connection with the whānau and one day I went back to visit them in a caravan."

So yeah, I mean, you wonder, that makes you wonder, doesn't it, what stopped Social Welfare from visiting those first two times, was it actually – yeah, didn't have access to her maybe.

MR RIKIHANA: And at the end of this part of her kōrero she does again mention that in those years that she was in care, she had no contact or visits with her whānau, not just her siblings but her entire –

MS KARANUI GOLF: Her entire whānau, yeah. She didn't see her dad again, her brothers, her sisters, anybody from the north, anybody from home. She left and she didn't see them again. She didn't see – she only saw Sarah on the basketball court that day. She just said, yeah, she constantly wondered what they thought and where they were and – but she was never helped to stay in touch with them.

MR RIKIHANA: Yeah.

MS KARANUIGOLF: Yeah, she said – she's talking about leaving that placement. That wasn't a planned leave, but (inaudible).

MR RIKIHANA: So, we've been talking about her having no opportunity really to contact her whānau. However, she did manage to find out that she had some whānau here in Auckland while she was at that placement in Whangārei. And so, what happened when she found out about the whānau here in Auckland?

MS KARANUI GOLF: So, there was a school, like a break coming up or something, and so Social Welfare helped her to get down to Auckland for a break. So, she came to Auckland, and she had a really big accident on a bike. And she – it was a really serious accident, she could have died, she was in the hospital for three months. And she broke her hips and her legs, and she had really deep serious scarring all over, and she was affected by that accident her whole life, wasn't she? There was no brakes on the bike and she went down this hill and a car just hit her at full force as she was going down a hill with no brakes on a bike.

MS FALWASSER: She'd gone to Auckland to see her sisters and brother, older ones that she hadn't seen since they left back up in Waihopo, so she was staying with her older sister, Aunty Owai(?) at the house, and her father was also living there, he was sick, and they were caring for him down there. So that was the first time she'd seen her father since she left when she was taken away when she was first up north at Waihopo. So, it was the first time she'd seen all of her older siblings, and even her younger ones weren't there yet, but, yeah, after her accident, as Tracy said, she was laid up for three months and then she still had healing to do at home. And she decided to stay in Auckland because she was old enough then, she was 17, and so she ended up staying in Auckland with her sister, her older sister Owai, and that's how she ended up living here from then on.

COMMISSIONER STEENSON: Mr Rikihana.

MR RIKIHANA: E te Heamana, (Madam Chair), that brings us to the end of the first part of Whaea Kuini's kōrero. Perhaps this will be an appropriate time to take a short break.

COMMISSIONER STEENSON: Thank you, counsel, we'll take a brief break. So, we'll pause the livestream and return shortly. Ka kite i a koutou akua nei.

Adjournment from 3.17 pm to 3.37 pm

COMMISSIONER STEENSON: Nau mai hoki mai tātou. Kei a koe, Mr Rikihana (Welcome back, everyone. It's over to you Mr Rikihana).

MR RIKIHANA: Tēnā koe, te Heamana. Shortly we'll recommence watching the prerecorded evidence for Whaea Kuini, but just to explain how this session will go following the prerecorded evidence. I'll pass over to Tracy to give any closing comments and also to share the kōrero whakakapi or closing statement that was written by Whaea Kuini. At that point I'll hand over to the Commissioners for any further comments and then the whānau have provided recordings of a haka and a waiata to close off the kōrero. And following that, we'll have a karakia to close out the session for the Karanui whānau.

And so, we will now recommence part 2 of the prerecorded evidence.

(Video played).

MR RIKIHANA: "This part is going to go, we're up to about paragraph 37. So, we've spoken about the circumstances that went to Whaea Kuini ending up here in Auckland, and that was how she exited care as well. She stayed here in Auckland after that?

MS KARANUI GOLF: Yes.

MR RIKIHANA: And here is where she established her life and where she set up her own whānau. Perhaps I'll let you share a bit about her whānau that she established here in Auckland.

MS KARANUI GOLF: So, she was 21 when she had my dad. She married my grandfather Alfred on Christmas Day in 19somethingsomething.

MS FALWASSER: It was actually a year before – oh not a year, Christmas Day before your father was born. So, he was born 50 – end of 56.

MS KARANUI GOLF: So, married in Christmas in 1956 there. She said she got married on Christmas Day because they were going to have a feed anyway, so she thought that would be the cheapest way to get it done, so she said she only had to get a cake and the dress. Yeah. She was pregnant with my dad then. I don't know much about how she met my grandfather.

MS FALWASSER: He actually did the chasing. She met him at a party, she was going with her sisters, her older sisters, she was out of State care, and she started going to parties and she

met him then, but he was much younger than my mother. He was like a little boy to her so she just kept brushing him off, but he wouldn't give in, and he kept pursuing her. Wherever she went to these parties, he was there, and he just wouldn't give up. So, in the end they ended up – she ended up going out on a date with him and, yeah, and then they only courted for a short while and then they got married in 1956, as Tracy said, and then she had my brother a few months later in 1957, in May he was born. And so, she was living over town with my dad and his grandparents came down – his grandmother, sorry, and she had married a second time to Walter Dawson, which was her second husband, and so they told my dad to come and live on the North Shore with them because they had brought a home. Both him and my mum moved over here in 1950 – yeah, just after my brother was born, and she's been here all her life on the Shore, and she ended up living in the house down in Rutland Road for all those years until we all grew up, and all her mokos grew up.

And we're probably sorry we sold the home now. At the time we all had our own lives, we were all going in different directions. Mum was starting a new chapter in her life too, so she was never home home, and all us kids had grown up, there was no little ones at home. So, we told her to sell the home and do what she wanted to do, you know, because she'd been looking after us all her life, then her Mokos, then all these Social Welfare kids that come through her home also, and relatives and my cousins, they come when their parents weren't able to look after them. So, we had hundreds of kids coming through and that's how she got to stay in Auckland and meet my dad, and yeah, so not long after she met my dad then she fell pregnant, so they got married, my dad is four, about four and a half years younger than my mother. So that's why he didn't attract her at the time but – because he was pessimistic, well she just, yeah, gave in in the end. But then he died when he was 34. By that time, from '56 – he died in 1976.

MS KARANUI GOLF: She was pregnant the whole time. So, from the time they were married until the time he passed away she was hapū. They had eight children and then adopted one more.

MS FALWASSER: That was after dad passed, yeah.

MS KARANUI GOLF: Yeah, she's got something in her statement here where she says: "My husband was the first person to show me what sex was all about as an adult, and I think it was only at that point that I really understood why those men were abusing me and what it was that they were doing." She talked about that heaps, eh, that –

MS FALWASSER: Yeah.

MS KARANUI GOLF: – like it was when she met him that she really understood what the intention of the people that had been abusing her was. But until then, she'd never really understood why they were doing it. And yeah, and then Alfred died in a car accident when he was 34, and so my dad was 16 when he passed away and Aunty was 15, so my dad – so everybody left school, my dad left school and he worked on the rubbish truck and she tells me that my dad would go to work all week and then come home, buy him some smokes, some beers, and give her his pay cheque and that's what he did all of his life, I think, until we were born and having his own children. And I'm sure he still was, you know, helping her then. But they just – I think that's when the collective really started kicking in, eh, Aunty Sue, it was like another mum, she's been like that all the way through, she's the boss.

MR RIKIHANA: When you say, "the collective kicked in", do you want to expand on that a little bit?

MS KARANUI GOLF: Yeah. So, we've got a big big whānau, but my whānau isn't just like my nana's children and children. Growing up in Rutland Road, in the house in Devonport, I'm a little bit older than some of my cousins, so I'm privileged to remember living in Rutland Road and being in Rutland Road and now people would call it overcrowding, and it might not be allowed, but it was like a magical place. I remember there was a big double garage and people always slept in there. So, my nana looked after lots of – like Aunty Sue said, lots of her cousins, lots of people, kids who didn't have homes, street kids, kids that were just struggling with their own parents and their own families and they all grew up together with my aunties and my dad in this house in Rutland Road that my nana lived in with her husband. And we've just done everything collectively as a family for all those generations since then.

So, it's probably not a real good thing – no, it's a good thing for us but it's a strange thing that – it might not be strange, I don't know. But lots of us don't really have friends and it's because we don't need anything outside of our collective. Like, there's so many of us that we've kind of just stayed almost inhouse, we just look after each other, we're friends that are related to our partners, but really, we just all kind of stick together.

MS FALWASSER: Yeah, the coming classed as a generation. So, you know, the first lot were Tracy and my daughter and the older kids, you know, and then their kids come along, you know, and then our cousin's kids, so there's like, at least seven or eight kids all born within a year that grow up together right through to adulthood, and that's the same with the first generation of my nieces and nephews, that's how they grew up. Not only because we lived at Rutland Road, but that's how mum kept us in a protected bubble. We didn't know it at

the time but that's what she was doing, because of the abuse she suffered when she was young, very young. And so that was her way of keeping everyone safe, just keep, you know, in our bubble and that's what we've done all our lives, the kids have grown up with their cousins and as she says, they have – they probably do have friends but, a lot of their friends are the other kids that my mum also brought through our home. So yeah, they're the friends but they're also family friends, you know, it's just, yeah, one big whānau, and extended whānau.

MS KARANUI GOLF: And she loved them, like she talks in her statement about – here she says: "Many of the kids were getting into trouble on the streets, things like tagging and graffiti, being picked up by Police, sent to the courts and their parents would never go and support them, so I went to court with them. I can remember showing up to court on one occasion and the judge said, "Kuini, you're back here again, what are you doing?" I was clear to the judge that I was there to try and take care of them and provide them with a safe place. I wanted to keep them out of trouble, but the judge never had anything nice to say to me about these kids and the trouble that they had."

MR RIKIHANA: That's touching on the reasons why she was doing this stuff, right?

MS FALWASSER: It is.

MS KARANUI GOLF: Yeah.

MR RIKIHANA: To make sure that the experiences that she had didn't occur to other people.

MS KARANUI GOLF: Yeah, yeah, and her love was not bound by just whānau, like she loved the people that were the hardest maybe to love, and her love was always unconditional. We talk about that a lot. That's the way we talk about her in our whānau, it doesn't matter how big of a mistake you made, she would – she always taught us, and she was just always forgiving. Yeah, so she would go to court with kids and just take care of them and give them whatever they needed and she's been like that even as a grandmother, like she loves us all but there are some of us that she's – some of my cousins that she's needed to love extra, because they've needed extra love, and they've just needed her extra and she knew that, and they knew that, and so there are some of our cousins that, you know, have extra special things with her because they needed her more for whatever reason. And that's what she could do, she could just love people however they needed it.

MR RIKIHANA: What she was doing, even though – and the experiences that she shares about the judge, the judge might have been a bit questioning of what she was doing.

MS KARANUI GOLF: Yeah.

MR RIKIHANA: Eventually the State would start sending people her way because they saw what it was that she was actually achieving.

MS KARANUI GOLF: Yeah.

MR RIKIHANA: Do you want to – do you have any thoughts or memories or stories about that?

MS FALWASSER: I do. We'd just take friends home that, you know, were – maybe had difficulty with their parents. They'd come stay the night, but they'd end up like living there. And we had lots of people like that that would just come and stay, and mum actually built that garage so we could house more people, or kids actually. And then she got involved with a few Pākehā groups that helped her and so they opened up, I don't know if you recall, there was a place in Devonport by the old dump and they used to call it The Clay Store and they opened it up for youth. So, a lot of the kids that mum had, they would go there and play billiards and darts.

But they were troubled teenagers – not all troubled teenagers, I mean, my brothers were going there too. But they were all young teenagers that had nothing to do, so she worked with the – with the Government services at the time that offered, but it was only through the Pākehā system that she got funding, you know, she had no other help from anyone else. And so, they got funding for her and then she actually got paid for what she was doing. She didn't do it for money. That's how she was, you know. She just wanted to protect them from what she had been through when she was young, as I said. It was all about unconditional love and protection for anyone that come across her path, it didn't matter who it was.

I didn't like some of the people she was involved with, but she wouldn't turn anyone away, you know, and actually opened up a home and she went as a foster mother and they started putting kids in there that she could look after and get paid for it. So, she moved out of her own home, I think it was up in Forrest Hill if I recall, and she was up there for a few years looking after children that – they weren't little kids, they were more young adults, teenagers, you know, in that period, but because she had done so well with them at her own home, they decided to send her other people. And she got on with them, you know. Once I said to her, "How can you look after these people? You don't even know them," you know, but it didn't matter to her, you know, it was just a job she was doing that she'd done all her life. Yeah.

So that was the only help she got was from the Pākehā system, you know, and they were actually just neighbours that lived up the road from us that could see all these kids coming and going, you know, and they offered their help, and that's how she got help for

what she started doing. You know, she was doing it for free, she didn't want money for it, as I said, and a lot of the kids as they were growing up used to call our house the Weetbix house because we had tonnes and tonnes of Weetbix, because you could get full on Weetbix bars. We had lots of Weetbix to fill everyone up. And eggs, tonnes of eggs.

So yeah, we were never – I wouldn't say we weren't short of a dollar, but we were never short of kai. You know, yeah, and as Tracy was saying, after dad died, my oldest brother, he finished school and I finished school too, I finished a couple of months after him. Mum was trying to keep me at school because I was actually sitting my School Certificate, but I said, no, I'm finishing school, I want to help, you know, because the kids were young. I think my youngest brother was seven, seven or eight. So, she stayed home with the younger ones and me and my brother after me, who's passed on now – redacted – he finished. So, there was three of us working and we were helping mum and she was on a widow's benefit at the time, you know, I don't know what that was, but we survived, you know. We didn't have luxury, heaps of cars and TVs.

MS KARANUIGOLF: Not ones that worked anyway.

MS FALWASSER: Yeah, but we made do, you know, as a whānau and yeah, mum taught us that from a very young age after dad died. Even before dad died, you know, she was very religious, she was a Christian, and she'd cart us off to church and that put a lot of values in us too, you know, going to church and learning things and discipline, and of course they'd send the kids off to church, "Go with nana to church," but they learned a lot from the church too. Her faith was – her God was her God; her faith was so strong, and she carried it all her life. I mean, a lot of that kept her going. So yeah, she was a powerful woman, yeah.

MS KARANUI GOLF: It started I think with a lady called Linda Blinco(?) and when I talked to her recently, when my nana was passing she said that – because she was involved in trying to help young people in Raki Paewhenua here on the North Shore and she said she wasn't having any luck at doing it, that she was setting up all these programmes and had this funding but it wasn't working and then she said down the road she could see nana's house with all these teenagers that were wanting to go there and that looked safe and happy and she was thinking, you know, "What am I doing wrong?" And she said that rather than try and, like, mould nan to stop doing what she was doing to do what the State wanted her to do, or Social Welfare might have wanted her to do, instead they just allowed nana some extra funding to care for the way she wanted to care for people without the rules that, you know, or without the structure that they thought would have been the right way. And Linda

thinks that's why it worked, you know, because nana was like: it was my way or no way kind of thing. She wasn't going to raise her children differently or have the house run differently just to have support from Social Welfare. But she had kind of created her own little welfare system internally and, you know, that's how it was going to happen.

MR RIKIHANA: Do you know how long it was that she did this, that she cared for these other people coming in? It would have been from the time that your whānau, your siblings were young. Do you know how long it went?

MS KARANUIGOLF: She says in her statement here about 40 years of informally kind of caring for people coming in and out of her life, but I would say her entire life.

MS FALWASSER: Yeah, I think on a level of what you're asking is, us as teenagers, all my brothers, when we finished work and then caring for kids that we took home and that had just come anyway, friends of friends of friends, and then getting involved with Linda, she did that for probably 10plus years with these different homes that they had opened up for her and, yeah, I'd say over a period of about 10 years. And she gave it up because she wanted to travel too, you know, and we sold the home in Devonport which was – but yeah, she travelled after that and – but yeah, I'd say on a level with the system that she worked with, probably 10plus years, 10 to 15 years. But before that, it was, you know, it's been throughout her life, you know, some of my first cousins were living with us because their parents were sick and different things, you know, and parents died and they'd come, you know, and even my first cousins, they wanted to adopt my mum because they didn't want their parents and I loved my uncles and aunties, but they didn't, you know, but – so there was a lot of my first cousins that grew up with us.

We were really close because our parents used to always – every weekend we'd get together somewhere and we'd go to Aunty Owai's house and they'd play cards – not for poker or anything, but just like Gin Rummy, that was their thing you know because they weren't – they were all Christians so they didn't drink, they didn't go out and party like we did when we were young, but they'd go and play cards and take food to everyone's house and have a big feed and have a whānau day, as you say. But yeah, and her and her siblings did that here in Auckland, they all lived here in Auckland, different places, but it was either at my mum's or at Aunty Owai's, or we'd go over to Uncle Peter's, and Uncle Tom had a church in Papatoetoe, and we'd go there. So, every weekend was exciting because we were going to all different places, but they were all my uncle and aunties, but, yeah.

MR RIKIHANA: Some values that I can see coming through in Whaea Kuini's kōrero, even from the time when she was young, values like – of a collective or whānau centred approach to

things, there's a strong emphasis on faith in her story as well, on hard work. And those values, I guess, had come to inform the reason why she was wanting to care for those other tamariki that were coming into her purview.

There's a part of her statement, that I think it would be very good to perhaps read out, at 44.

MS KARANUI GOLF: Yeah, I was just reading that too. She says: "Looking back on this time of my life, I think I wanted to care for these kids and make them feel like they were part of the family because of what I had been through. All the children that I cared for during this time have their own children now and are still connected with me to share their memories that they remember from their childhood."

And when my nana passed, I think – it was Covid, so we were restricted, but it was so beautiful to watch how each person that came to see her genuinely, like really genuinely had such a deep connection with her. So, every person that met her that wasn't even direct whānau to us felt like they had a special connection with her, because they did, because she genuinely just listened and loved, like everybody that she met. That each person that met her really said that they, you know, they felt her, they knew that the she loved them. Like, I wouldn't know anybody else in the world that I could think – there isn't anyone in the world that could say a bad word about her.

MS FALWASSER: Yes.

MS KARANUI GOLF: I don't know if there's anybody else in the world that could leave this world thinking there would be not one single person on this earth that could have a bad thing to say about her. And I think that she's able to do that, but was able to do that based on the trauma that we've spent the morning talking about, is such, like a testament to her commitment to family and forgiveness. Yeah.

MR RIKIHANA: I think that's an important part too, and it goes on to touch on the impacts of what actually happened to her. She does include briefly some kōrero about the impacts, but the impacts of her experience of abuse, weren't just restricted to her, I understand it had an impact also on future generations of hers, on your whānau.

MS KARANUI GOLF: Yeah. So, we grew up always from a very young age, I grew up listening to my nana talk about her sexual abuse and so openly, and Aunty Sue or my dad would be like: "Hell, listen to mum talking to the kids about that stuff, she shouldn't be talking about that." Because when they were growing up, she didn't talk about that with them. She also didn't speak te reo Māori to them growing up, so like my dad says, you know, "I didn't hear any of the stories that you heard growing up, I didn't – Mum didn't talk

to us in Māori like that, we didn't hear any of that stuff." And I think that that's – like, I really look now at our ability to be, like our – the fact that we were able to be raised by her speaking Māori to us, and raising us in the church, that has been such a huge privilege and it has really instilled in us some values that like we just – you just see it missing in people, you know, and I just feel like so privileged to have that. And also, really sad for my aunties and my dad, that they weren't brought up listening to my nana kōrero Māori because it's been such a huge part of my life that I can't even imagine her without that. And I think that that's kind of a generational impact on what happened to her, because she was – she talks in her statement too about different times of feeling discriminated for being Māori. So she went to a native school, she was beaten for speaking Māori, she felt like when she came to Devonport, she talks about the fact that there was racism in Devonport and that she would feel like people were – people were judging her because she was Māori. She said: "Being Māori in Devonport during those times I could sense there was a lot of prejudice ideas about me caring for and taking care of children, especially if it was Pākehā children." And so, she told stories about when the kids were little, people feeling judged, people sending them back saying kids were not allowed to play with their kids or whatever. And so, it's sad to know that she was embarrassed of that part of her, or she was protecting that side. But also, so grateful that she then went to church, eh, and then I think it's when she went to church that she then started to speak Māori and stuff. But in the statement, in her statement here she talks about not – she said that she didn't talk to her husband about – "I never spoke to my husband about the abuse because I was worried about how he would take it", and that after he passed away then that's when she started to open up and share her experiences.

So, she was still carrying all of that shame with her about that abuse that had happened. So, I'm just so grateful that she – whatever happened, she had opportunity to like get rid of that whakamā so that she was able to share, because she talks in the statement too about – she says: "My grandchildren have grown up hearing and knowing these stories. And part of the reason for sharing this with my whānau was to protect them and to ensure that they understood what was right and wrong. Because as a child I didn't know that the sexual abuse was wrong." So, I think that must have been so brave of her to open up like that when she'd been shamed for it for so long.

MR RIKIHANA: I want to shift now and have a look at some of the kōrero that Whaea Kuini had directed towards the Crown and the State, particularly around her experiences of abuse in care. And so, she had thoughts in relation to how she interacted with social workers while

she was in care. She also had thoughts about the system as well. Maybe I'll hand over to you to share some of what her thoughts were.

MS KARANUI GOLF: So, as you know, when she was removed from the State she didn't get to see her family for a long time. She moved from foster homes and she felt like nobody ever really explained to her what was happening. She had no rangatiratanga, she was just a person in placements. And – but she's always believed that the teachings that she had while she lived with her whānau are what have driven her all of her life, so those values of manaakitanga, you know, of tikanga practices, they are the values that, you know, have kept her going, and that gave her the solutions to be able to raise her family in the way that she knew that she needed to be raised. So, she was taken away from – we talked about this earlier, but she was taken away from her whānau and her whenua so early in her life, but somehow, she managed to help us to retain a connection to that land. Even though she left there so early, we grew up feeling like that was our tūrangawaewae, like that was our place in the world. And as we've developed our own pūtea and resources, that's where we're going. So my parents are back there, my aunties are back there, this aunty will be there later today, and so somehow the values that she got early on as a child, even though they were short in time, were so deep in value that they have – they're still being passed through, that her – despite the Crown trying to disrupt her connection to her whānau and her whenua, what she had in her from her whānau was strong enough that it kept her connected to that place, and to that language, you know, even after – how many years, 30 years or 40 years of not speaking a language, she was just able to start speaking te reo Māori and live by a Te Ao Māori world view even though she had been taken from that, you know, for so long.

And so, I think if the Crown, you know, she would kind of say if the Crown let us care for our people the way that she cared for her people, maybe things would have worked better. Because of five generations and over 90 grandchildren she does not have one moko or one child in any kind of State care. We are able to look after our whānau. We're not perfect by any means, but we have been able to take care of each other, and we haven't needed any Crown help. And I think that's because she was – she had sovereignty, she didn't have to do what the Crown said, and she raised us and her children and then her children raised their children and now we are raising our children with the way that she taught us to.

What do you think, Aunty? Yeah.

MR RIKIHANA: If Whaea Kuini had the opportunity to direct kōrero straight to the Crown, what do you think she'd want to say?

MS KARANUI GOLF: Oh, did she do that? She did, eh? I'm just looking. She did do that at 51. But did she do something else though? Can I start from 48?

MR RIKIHANA: Sure.

MS KARANUI GOLF: So, she says: "Many of the values that drove me to care for others throughout my life, including my mother and grandmother when I was a child, through to my own children and other children as a mother came from my grounding in Te Ao Māori. Tika, pono and aroha are values that were instilled in me from a young age and through these values I know that Māori have the solutions and capabilities to care for their own tamariki but we need the support and guidance because of the system. The system has not changed from my time to now. And many of the children and young people that I cared for did not know what their rights were when they were getting into trouble and were going through the courts. I think there needed to be more information for those who were going through the system. I didn't know how to navigate the systems and Linda played a big part with that. I think Social Welfare should have more people and communities – help in communities that it's serving."

She says to the Crown: Me whakarongo rātou kia mōhio ai rātou, e ahu ana rātou ki hea. Nō reira, kei konā koutou hei awhi, hei hautū, ngā tiaknga me pēhea te Karauna e awhi ia ō mātou whānau e mahi tika ana i ō rātou mahi.

["English: They need to listen, so they understand where they are going to. Therefore, you are here to assist and to help manage how the Crown assists our families and to do so correctly and justly."]

She says: "We have the solutions to take care of ourselves." And I truly believe that, because I've seen it with my own eyes, eh, Aunty?

MS FALWASSER: Yeah.

MR RIKIHANA: We've come to the conclusion of Whaea Kuini's kōrero, and she did include some kupu whakakapi at the end of her statement, but before we get to that, I wanted to give you the opportunity to share any final comments you want to share about Whaea Kuini.

MS KARANUIGOLF: I think that – my nana always – I was – since my nana passed I, every evening – sorry.

Every evening I watch video clips of her on my phone. She was quite unwell before she passed away, she spent lots of time in the hospital. She hated the hospital, so she

wouldn't stay at the hospital by herself, so we all – a few of us would share, Aunty mostly stayed, when she needed a break, I'd step in or my cousins would step in, and so there was plenty of hours just for lots and lots of chatting, and so I have all these little videos of stories that she told me. And one of the stories she always talks to us about is her dad calling her – it was her dad, right? Calling her Kuini o te maunga (Queen of the mountain). And she said that he always used to call her Kuini o te maunga, Kuini o te maunga (Queen of the mountain, Queen of the mountain) and she'd say, she didn't know why he would do that, and when she was little, it scared her she thought, "Why does he call me Queen of the mountain?" And when she got sick she started to explain that she viewed her life as a journey up the mountain and that early on in her life the winds would try and push her down the mountain all of the time and that's why she looked at her life like in Social Welfare and that as the winds pushed her down, she learned how to climb the mountain even when the winds were blowing, and so she said her journey up the mountain was slow and hard, but that it got easier and easier because she learned how to deal with the winds as she was climbing up them. And she said that she wouldn't get her Queen crown until she met the Atua. So, we now know she has her crown and she's reached the top of her mountain. So, we miss her dearly, but we're glad that she has the crown. And although the winds were tough, she's actually grateful for them in her own humble and loving way, because she says without the winds, the climb wouldn't have been the same.

She was always forgiving, so I guess she had this unconditional love and she's been very clear in the statement, she didn't want to name anybody, and she wanted no follow-up for any whānau that she was harmed by. And I guess what she would want to do to finish up is to finish up with forgiveness and for recognition of the lessons that were learned, I think, as she lived her life, and now we have to live by the values that she's left with us. Thank you for coming and for being so flexible and –

MR RIKIHANA: It's totally fine.

MS KARANUI GOLF: Yeah, she, yeah, lots of the reason she wanted to share this story, to share her story, was because two of her sisters had significant mental health problems, like not anything spiritually Te Ao Māori, there was no – it was mental health problems from trauma inflicted on them, and she felt like as the last surviving sibling of her – from her whānau, that they didn't have the opportunity to share their story, and so I guess we just want to say that, yeah, she was acknowledging her siblings while she was doing this. And doing it on their behalf as well, because it is highly likely that their stories are very similar to hers.

MS FALWASSER: She did say when she was back there with her nana and the abuse was occurring that it was also occurring with her younger siblings, and it had occurred with her older siblings before they left home. So it was an ongoing thing that Māoris, I suppose not only Māoris, but people didn't know how to deal with, I'd say they just, I don't know, kept it quiet, you know, it was – to me, looking back, and this isn't the only case I've heard about, it's like they just put it in the back closet, you know, it's nothing to them but the emotional stress it puts on that person like Mum, but she was quite brave right through and she knows for a fact that her sisters were abused before they left home, and after, or before they were taken into Social Welfare care like her, and it probably happened through their life and as they got older they talked about it, but they never talked about it when they were young. They didn't know what it was, but it wasn't until years later when they had their own families and two of their sisters didn't take it very well, so they had mental health issues, whereas Mum didn't. So yeah, it affects a lot of people in a lot of different ways, but it is out there.

MS KARANUI GOLF: Yeah.

MS FALWASSER: I'm actually glad it's been being brought out in the open now, you know, where people can share these stories. So hopefully it will change.

MS KARANUI GOLF: Yeah.

SPEAKER: She took a lot of that shame out for your whānau.

MS KARANUI GOLF: She did.

SPEAKER: Just talking about it, being open about it too (inaudible).

MS KARANUI GOLF: She did, yeah, she knew that it was a protection, she knew that talking about it openly provided levels of protection, because it wasn't tapu almost. And so, you know, she knows we could talk to her about it, or she was just openly talking about how it was wrong and bad. And so, we grew up knowing that it was wrong and bad. I was just thinking too about when she just passed and how loving and giving, she still is. In her final days she asked Aunty Sue and my Aunty Anne to help her with something and the lady that had helped her in Devonport, Linda Blinco(?), she asked Aunty Susie and my Aunty Anne to get her a korowai and then she asked them to invite Linda over to the house and she gifted Linda this korowai in her final days, literally on her death bed, to thank her for supporting her to love her family in the way that was right for her. And, yeah, I think that's just such a good example of how loving and humble and caring she was. So even in those final days she was thinking of how she could still show aroha to people that were, you know, special to her.

MR RIKIHANA: Remarkable. She sounds like an amazing woman.

MS KARANUI GOLF: She will live on for a very long time. I'm sure that my children and my children's children and their children, their children's children will know all about her. Yeah. Anyone want to say anything?

SPEAKER: (inaudible) didn't even meet her, but because of the person she – the stories that were told of her, they felt like they knew her personally. And I can say that because of the (inaudible). Yeah, even though they didn't meet her, they loved her. So, when she passed, they were all very sad for our family, so – she has left behind a beautiful legacy that's for sure.

MS KARANUIGOLF: She has.

SPEAKER: But yous have done well, Tracy and Susie. Yous have done very well. Awesome whānau.

MS KARANUIGOLF: Thanks Aunty. Like reading that statement when she's talking going to court, so I work as a courtappointed communication assistant, I'm trained as a speech and language therapist and my actual job is to go to court with rangatahi and mostly whānau Māori to help them understand all the important stuff that they need to understand and say all the things that they want to say. And I think, "Man, that is so buzzy, that's like what she was actually doing just for aroha." And now it's a whole job, you know? And I think that the reason that we're able to do jobs like that is because she has shown us how important it is for people to have, you know, sovereignty and autonomy and rangatiratanga and to be able to do things with mana and through manaaki. I miss you, Nanny.

(End of video).

MR RIKIHANA: Tēnā koe, Tracy kōrua ko aunty Susie. Koutou ko te whānau Karanui [English: Thank you, Tracy, both you and Aunty Susie and also to the wider Karanui whānau.] Thank you, Tracy and Aunty Susie for sharing that kōrero on behalf of Aunty Susie. At this point I will hand over to Tracy who wishes to make some closing statements and to share Whaea Kuini's kōrero whakakapi, the closing statement that she had written.

MS KARANUI GOLF: Kia ora koutou (Greetings). My nana did the kupu whakakapi in te reo Māori, but I've translated it into reo Pākehā so that my whānau can understand what she was saying. Sadly, that disconnection means we have generations of our reo Māori lost. My cousins and my aunties listening to me read this will be able to hear her voice as I read it. She said:

"I see how great it is for the wairua, what our ancestors have left and gifted us. I see all of the seeds of greatness that they've sown everywhere that I look, in the trees, in our

land, in our waters, in our entire environment. I see it. I see its greatness in healing our whānau, so that our kids will see the beauty in its healing powers too. We need to normalise it so that our kids can then pass that beauty and knowledge on to their children and their children's children. All of these things are deeply embedded within us. It didn't matter where I went or what happened to me, my spiritual wellbeing was always strong. Irrespective of what happened to me, whatever happens to you on this earth you must still make sure what you do is tika and pono for you, for your generations, and their children to come. I am still holding on despite my pain and the suffering to my old physical body, I have now asked the Holy Spirit to heal me and take me home. He has guided me in the work that I've needed to do in this life. He has healed my body for my precious seeds in my great garden. They are my tamariki and my mokopuna. This is what my heart truly desires. Everything for my tamariki and my mokopuna. They are beautiful seeds of greatness. I look to all of the positives in people. We need to always come together and come together as one to support and love each other. We are all unique, we have different skills and abilities, we all have different jobs to do", my nana would say. [Te reo Māori]. We all miss you dearly nanny, moemoe rā, okioki mai, arohanui, aroha ake, mo ake tonu (undying love to you, my nanny). Kia ora.

MR RIKIHANA: Tēnā no koe, Tracy. At this point I understand the Commissioners may have some comments for you and so, e te Heamana, I will pass the time back over to you.

COMMISSIONER STEENSON: Thank you, Mr Rikihana. Commissioners, we don't have any pātai at this time for Tracy, but I will – I would like to mihi to Whaea and the Karanui whānau. E te whaea Kuini Karanui kua wehe atu ki te pō, haere, haere, haere atu rā. Mā te Atua koe e manaaki. Ki te whānau Karanui, e mihi ana kia koutou. Ki a Tracy rāua ko whaea Susie, tēnā kōrua mō tēnei kete kōrero.

[English: To you the heroine Kuini Karanui who has passed on, farewell, may God keep you safe at all times. To the Karanui family I would like to extend my acknowledgments to Tracy and Whaea. Thank you.] You might remember, Tracy, that I came and visited Kuini, Whaea Kuini at her wharenui, her whare in Devonport and I met some of your whānau, and yeah, what a privilege. She was such a mareikura, quietly changing the world and teaching us all what aroha and manaaki can do. And you know, you talk about that deep connection with everyone she met. I certainly experienced that. We laughed, we cried, we had a cup of tea together. It was a beautiful, beautiful afternoon. I felt the aroha in your nanny's whare. She was an absolutely beautiful Kuia. So, thank you for honouring

her kōrero today. Moemoe rā Kuini, (Sleep on Kuini, rest on) and I want you to take care of yourself as well with Covid, Tracy. Piki te ora (be well).

Kei a koe, Mr Rikihana (over to you, Mr Rikihana). I understand there's some waiata.

MR RIKIHANA: Yes, e te Heamana. (Yes, Madam Chair). As I mentioned earlier, the whānau have sent through some clips of waiata which they would like to end this kōrero. There will be two waiata and a haka shown and then our kōrero will finish with a karakia.

COMMISSIONER STEENSON: We seem to be having some technical issues. Could we start that again please just so we can play it from the beginning, thank you.

(Videos played.)

MS PIRIPI: Nei rā te mihi ki ngā kōrero kua kōrerohia. Mā te karakia e whakakapi i ēnei kōrero. Whakairia te kete kōrero ki te pou tūārongo, hei tiki anō mō muri ake nei. Ki awatea, kia wātea, kia tina. Haumi e, hui e, tāiki e. E te whaea, te māreikura o te Tai Tokerau. Te Kuini o te maunga, moe mai, moe mai, moe mai rā. Kia ora mai tātou

[English: I'd just like to extend my acknowledgments to the presentation. Let everything be clear. Let the narratives shared be acended to the pillars of the house for the time, so te clear the space. Let it be. To you the heroine of Northland, the queen of the mountain, rest on, rest in peace. Thank you everyone.]

COMMISSIONER STEENSON: Mr Rikihana.

MR RIKIHANA: That concludes the kōrero for Whaea Kuini, e te Heamana.

COMMISSIONER STEENSON: Thank you, Mr Rikihana. Ms Spelman.

MS SPELMAN: Kia ora anō e te heamana. E tautoko ana ngā mihi kua mihia ki ngā kaikōrero o te rā katoa. Kua tae ki te mutunga o te rā. Ka tīmata anō tātou a tērā wiki, ā te Rāhina. A te 10 karaka i te ata. Engari kia tīmata ki ate karakia a te hauwhā ki te 10 karaka.

[English: Greetings again, Madam Chair, I would like to support the acknowledgments to the evidence given and we will meet again next week Monday, 10 am. Therefore we will have – our prayer that day will be begin quater to 10.]

That does bring us to the end of the day, Madam Chair, and I support the mihis that have been given to all of our witnesses of the day. As today is Friday that brings us to the end of the first week and we'll be starting back again on Monday.

COMMISSIONER STEENSON: Thank you, Ms Spelman. I understand we'll be back on Monday at 9.45 am but I just want to make some reflections because it's been a big week. We've had some incredible witness statements that have been absolute rich kōrero here in the wharenui, Tumutumuwhenua, and once again, I mihi to all of our witnesses who have

been so brave and courageous in coming forward and speaking their truth and speaking for those who are not able to speak for themselves, both in the past and now and in the future. I would like to, before we close, have a waiata at this time. So, if I can just gather the whānau in the wharenui together before we ask Matua Wyllis up just to signify the end of this big week.

(Waiata: Ka waiata kia Maria, hine i whakaae. Whahakameatia mai te whare tangata. Hine pūrotu, hine ngākau, hine, rangaimārie. Ko te whaea, ko te whaea o te ao).

[English: The mother of this world. I now sing to Mary, who submitted to being the mother of this world, the peaceful mother of this world.]

NGĀTI WHĀTUA KAUMATUA: Ka whaiwhai ake i te ia o ngā kōrero kua kōrerohia te Kaikōmihana ki a koutou, ngā kaikōrero o te rā nei, otirā o te wiki nei. Tautokohia tō koutou māia, kua whārikihia o koutou kōrero. Ko tērā te tūmanako, te tīmatanga o te rongoā mōu, mō koutou. Nō reira, ngā mihi, ngā mihi, ngā mihi. Me karakia tātou. [English: I would also like to extend my support to those at the Commission and to the speakers today, for your strength in committing your kōrero today and I hope that this will begin the healing process for you guys. Let us end with a prayer.)

Rukuhi, rukuhia ngā kōrero. Ngā kōrero o te rā nei, ngā kōrero o te wiki nei. Rukuhia ki ngā pou tāhūhū o te whare a Tumutumuwhenua. Rukuhia, rukuhia kia ū, kia mau. Rukuhia, rukuhia ngā wheako. Ngā wheako a tēnā, a tēnā. Rukuhia, ki ngā poupou o te whare. Rukuhia, rukuhia kia ū, kia mau. Rukuhia, rukuhia ngā mamae a tēnā, a tēnā kua whārikihia ki mua i te aroaro. Rukuhia ki ngā tukutuku, i ngā taonga o te whare nei. Rukuhia, rukuhia kia ū, kia mau. Rukuhia, rukuhia ngā toanga kōrero kāre anō kia puta mai. Rukuhia ērā atu o ngā kōrero ki ngā taonga, ngā toka o te whare nei, ngā toka mauri e noho nei o Tumutumuwhenua. Rukuhia, rukuhia kia ū, kia mau. Nā tēnā ka kī atu. Hikitia, hikitia. Hikitia kia rewa atu ki runga rawa, kia kore e hoki whakamuri mai. Poua atu te pūmanawa Māori, te mana a tēnā, a tēnā. He mana tikanga, nō te uri o māia. Poipoia ngā tamariki, poipoia ngā mokopuna, poipoia ngā rangatira mō āpōpō. Tūturu ōwhiti whakamaua kia tina, haumi e, hui e, tāiki e.

[English: Let us delve to the depths of what was expressed today this week. Let us be binded to the pillars of this house, to one another, that we may be strengthened, let all the hurt and pain be released, also released from this house. And also, to give us protection for the evidence which is yet to be presented and also bestow your protection upon the people of this house.And let all the burdens be lifted so they do not come back negatively on us and for everybody to keep their mana, prestige, to be – for the children and

mokopuna to be well cared for, for they are the leaders of tomorrow. All is well. Thank you all.]

(Waiata: He hōnore, he korōria, maungārongo ki te whenua, whakaaro pai e ki ngā tangata katoa. Ake ake, ake ake, Āmine. Te Atua, te piringa, tōku oranga.

[English: Honour, glory and peace to God on the land, goodwill to all mankind, forever and ever, amen. Praise be to God, whom we cling to in our hour of need and who is our saviour. Our saviour. Amen.]

Hearing adjourned at 4.50 pm to Monday, 14 March 2022 at 9.45 am