
**KEI MUA I TE AROARO O TE RŌPŪ WHAKAMANA I
TE TIRITI O WAITANGI**

BEFORE THE WAITANGI TRIBUNAL

WAI 3060

WAI 2925

IN THE MATTER OF The Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975.

AND

IN THE MATTER OF claims concerning Te Rau o Te Tika – The
Justice Inquiry (Wai 3060)

AND

IN THE MATTER OF The NZMC Justice and Mana Wahine Claim.
(Wai 2925)

BRIEF OF EVIDENCE: HONE J SHZARIC

19 June 2025

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Waitangi Tribunal

23 Jun 25

Ministry of Justice
WELLINGTON

E TE KAIWHAKAWĀ, TĒNĀ KOE

1. I am Hone Jimmy Shzaric, of Ngāpuhi and Croatian whakapapa.

The dominant ancestor in my Māori whakapapa is Tupoto, the great-grandson of Rahiri. From my understanding, Rahiri is the tūpuna to whom all members of Ngāpuhi can trace their lineage back. The Croatian side is from my paternal grandfather, Ivan Shzaric, who immigrated from Yugoslavia and married my paternal grandmother Karetoia. I was born in Rawene and am the seventh of eleven children. I spent my early years in North Hokianga with my maternal grandparents and was very connected to Motukaraka marae and the Catholic church. After many years spent away, I have returned home to the Far North, where I am fostering connections within both the Māori and Baha'i faith communities.

2. My brief of evidence outlines my experiences with the criminal justice system from a young age, including with police and the courts, and the many years spent in institutions, ranging from boys' homes to solitary confinement at Paremoremo.

Beginnings

3. I was a whāngai child to my grandparents, as my parents moved around for work and had many children to care for. I was content with my life on my grandparents' farm – it was an environment of order, and I was responsible for many jobs such as collecting eggs, helping smoke fish, etc. Everyone in the community had a role to play. We attended the Catholic parish at Hokianga every Sunday on horseback. We were often at Motukaraka marae for events such as birthdays and weddings,

mainly due to my grandfather's role as one of the marae caretakers and speakers.

4. My grandfather was an earnest, reverent man, a veteran who had served in the war. He spent a lot of time in the mornings deep in prayer on our porch. There was little conversation exchanged between us; it was more of an instructional relationship with me learning how to complete tasks through watching his actions. One clear example I have of this is being woken up very early to join him for exploring expeditions. We would spend hours next to the river in complete silence, apart from the occasional direction. At the time, as a child, it was sometimes difficult to have these long periods of stillness, but it provided a peaceful environment to think, in stark contrast to the institutional environments I later spent time in. You could listen to the water rushing and creation slowly waking up.
5. My grandmother also played an instrumental role in my early life. She had the same sense of responsibility and work ethic and was very devoted to the Catholic faith. But was more talkative, taking an interest in me as a person and asking how I was getting on at school. She provided the sound in the home, either through her infectious laugh or the music she played on the piano while adult relatives visiting would gather around and sing.
6. When I was around 6 or 7, my grandmother's health began deteriorating. I could hear her coughing violently in the middle of the night as if she might not take another breath. I knew it was only a matter of time before she would pass away and that my life as I knew it would end also.

7. My grandmother's death was a major turning point in my life. It was at this time that my bad side, the kino side, started to come in. At the gravesite, watching the coffin be lowered into the ground, I remember thinking, "this is not how it should be".
8. My grandfather was no longer able to take care of me, shortly after the tangi, I was taken to stay with the priests temporarily until my parents arrived to move me down to Auckland.
9. I had had a strong connection to my parents whenever they visited me in the Hokianga – I used to watch them interacting with my grandparents and felt a familiarity with them. As a young child I had become upset each time they left. However, moving into an established family unit as an 8 – 9-year-old in a starkly different environment was jarring. The behaviour of my siblings and parents was at odds with my upbringing on my grandparents' farm. I had been content with the way my life was and the responsibilities I had – this provided a lot of structure. In contrast, this new phase of my life lacked structure and it was difficult to find my place among my siblings. I had grown up with a clear sense of right and wrong instilled in me by my grandfather, who was honest and fair. My older brothers encouraged behaviour such as stealing, which I knew was wrong, but they reassured me this was normal in the city. My parents were involved with the Catholic church and were also part of the group setting up Te Unga Waka marae in Epsom - they would gather here with other Māori families to discuss how to navigate life and raising their families in the city. But we were often left to our own devices while they spent time drinking with our aunties and uncles.
10. I felt so incompatible with this family, but I was unable to change my environment – the only coping mechanism available to me was to

put up walls within myself for protection and go through the motions until I had had enough.

11. That time came one day when my mother was hitting me with a wooden spoon; in my frustration, I snatched it and struck her back. I immediately knew I was in big trouble, so to avoid punishment, I jumped out the window of our house and ran away.
12. In the evening, I was found by the police. This was my first experience with police - and it was a scary experience for me. I was 10 years old at the time.

Ōwairaka boys' home.

13. They eventually moved me to the Ōwairaka boys' home. I was driven into a building that looked like a school, in an unfamiliar place, with an unfamiliar set of people who oversaw me. They established a routine in the home and were responsible for all the boys.
14. The staff were very strict with this schedule; you had to make your bed by a specific time and eat breakfast at a specific time. The staff cared about the boys, but it was very different compared to how I had been raised. I found that I had a difficult time adjusting to this new style of living
15. Looking back on my journey, I have often asked what could have made it better for me and others. The most important thing for all would have been consultation and communication, especially for the young boys.
16. With observant eyes, it's not difficult to see the bullying tactics of older boys. If there had been a way of confidentiality and private consultation for these young, vulnerable boys, who are alone (not

surrounded by family or friends), saddened and in need of good guidance, then many would have walked a different path.

17. Hope should be given to them by genuine caring staff, to show them an outlook on possibilities for their lives. The welfare and well-being are dependent upon communion and consultation. This could have begun at the boy's home, but there was no such system.
18. After about 6 months at the home, another one of the boys told me that he and a friend were planning on escaping that night. He offered to allow me to join in their attempt. I had grown bored of the routine and was looking for a change, so the idea appealed to me. That night after roll call, the 2 other boys and I made our way out the window and jumped the fence.
19. One of the older boys, Stirling, jacked a car and showed us how to do it. We didn't have a plan for after we escaped, but one of the other boys was from Levin, so we decided to head south until we reached there. Both were slightly older than I, so I looked to them for guidance at times.
20. We went south past Levin and ended up in Wellington. We didn't realise at the time that the limit for how south you could go was Wellington; after that, you ran out of country.
21. Eventually, we were stopped by the police; we refused to give them our details. So, they had to find out who we were the old-fashioned way, by the paper trail. This meant that until they realised that we were the missing boys from Auckland, we were sent to the police cells in Wellington.
22. I was 11 at the time. This process took them 3 days. I was alone in these cells the whole time, with my only interaction being officers interrogating me about who I was and where I had come from.

23. The cells were like walking into a tomb; it was a dead place. The only lights are the artificial lights from the ceilings; the grills stop all other lights. I didn't fully understand what was going on, and it felt as though I was being intombed.
24. The police were very aggressive towards me during my stay there; they attempted to intimidate me to get the information they wanted. I knew that this treatment was wrong. Yes, I knew I was in the cells for doing the wrong thing, but that did not mean the police could treat me like I wasn't a person with my own needs. It felt like part of me died in the cells in Wellington; in my mind, I felt like I became hardened in those tombs. This was the beginning of my institutionalisation.
25. After our 3-day stint, it was decided that I would be transferred to Hōkio Beach School. Hōkio Beach was for younger boys aged 11-13, so I was separated from the others. I never saw them again. There was no explanation on why I was taken to this school.
26. As I recall, I spent quite an extended period here, where I had my ups and downs; the difference was that we all attended school classes.
27. This made a big difference for me, as I enjoyed school. It was while here I first saw males being sexual with one another, and on one occasion the rape of a young male.
28. I was involved in fights because I naturally stood up for boys whom I saw as being intimidated without reason, as bigger boys often used fear to get what they wanted. It showed that the beliefs that my grandparents instilled in me still held firm.
29. There was no place to go for confidential discussion or consultation; you had to bottle it up within your own self, and inevitably, until it exploded. The only reason I survived is I still remembered my church

hymns in Te Reo from Hokianga. When I felt lost, I would say these in Reo until I could function again.

30. It was a system to me that had no vent for frustrations and violence, which developed both above and below the surface, and the only outlet was violence. My teachers watched as I fought another boy to see who would win.

Foster Home - Papatoetoe, Auckland

31. When I turned 13, I was deemed too old for the school and was sent home. I could not fit in with my family and was instead sent to foster care. I attended Papatoetoe High School while I was in the care of a Foster home, third and fourth Forms.
32. In the foster home, I was comfortable but found communication with the foster parents not easy; it was like they were in charge and we had to obey. An older girl in this home (End Cook), always seemed to want sexual encounters; she would have been 15/16 at this time. She bartered sexual favours amongst the males. But not with the foster parent male.
33. I still had nowhere to take these concerns festering in my mind, no place or person to confide in, no guidance relating to our future, we were here because. We had nowhere else to go, and again, we were vulnerable with no wrap-around from family or friends.
34. My time in Papatoetoe ended when, one morning, my cousin pulled up in a car and asked me to “come for a ride” I didn’t know where at the time, but I thought it was a good idea, other kids in the foster home would leave from time to time so this would be my equivalent of that. After picking up a few acquaintances we decided we would go to the rock concert in Ngāruawāhia to see a music festival.

35. On the way down, we were stopped by the police. I didn't realise it until later, but the car was stolen. We were taken into custody and questioned by police in Hamilton. This was my second trip to the police cells; I was 14 at the time.
36. I did not want to cooperate with the police by giving them my name or any of my information because, in my mind, I had not done anything wrong, but eventually, one of the boys we were with told the police our information. Because of our age, we were released on bail so long as we gave them our names and addresses for a future court appearance.
37. When we were released, we stole another car to drive to Ngāruawāhia and attend the festival. I was separated from my cousin and his friends while I was at the festival. I ran into another group. They said they were from Wellington and spent some time with them. One of them, an older girl, offered to let me come down to Wellington with them. I was familiar with the area, so I accepted. Eventually, I got into trouble in Wellington and was arrested.

Mt Crawford – Wellington

38. I was sent back to the Owairaka boys' home. I escaped and ended up in Wellington prison (Mt Crawford). I would have been going on 14/15 years old.
39. While in prison - in my own yard and single cell, a probation officer came to talk and consult with me about my future and what he thought would be happening if I didn't change.
40. As a result of that consultation and the dire straits I was heading towards (Borstal), I was released to live in Wellington and to find work on my account. I was now in a foreign place, 700 km from family or friends, without any support system other than the State

system (probation), and all they were concerned with was the roof over my head.

41. For at least 12 months, this was the most settled I had become. I found myself working as an apprentice platemaker. I had solid accommodation (Mansfield House, Newtown), and I was exploring my new living place, Wellington City. I got two visitors (an old friend from Hokio and the girl from the Foster Home).
42. That shifted my focus, and as a result, I spiralled into crime and incarceration. No support, still vulnerable, old associates from worlds of criminal and deceitful practices. I let down my guard and lost my focus (work and good behaviour).
43. About 8 months after my release from Mt Crawford, an old friend from Hokio Beach school, RW, tracked me down. He offered to take me out on the weekend in his car to meet some girls and some of his mates. Seeing as it was Friday and I was craving social interaction and friendship; I accepted his offer. This was the beginning of the end, so to speak.
44. We had to get a ride for the trip, so that evening, RW and I went to one of the local bars that was gang affiliated. RW showed me how to break into and hotwire these cars so that we had something to get us around for the weekend.
45. That evening, I saw how much money RW had on him and learnt that as a young man, crime pays well if you know what you are doing. Most of Ray's money came from things like petty theft.
46. RW and I found some girls who wanted to come up with us for the weekend, so we all travelled up to Masterton that weekend. We had a party that night that never really stopped. We had our keys, and we would just drive on and on, having a good time wherever we

went. We would drink and smoke, these trips happened more and more often.

47. Eventually, RW got me involved with the financing of our trips. This meant stealing, typically from service stations. I still remember breaking into my first petrol station by Tītahi Bay. He also started introducing me to people who would buy stolen goods.
48. At this stage, I was becoming far more engaged in these sorts of activities than I had been in the past. I was spending more time at pubs and pool bars, and always spending time with RW. This, of course, meant more drinking and smoking as well. Eventually, I just stopped showing up to my job; I didn't even call in to say I was leaving.
49. RW was gang-affiliated but would leave his patch behind when we went up the coast on the weekends. I would have been considered a prospect, but I had always made sure to stay away from gangs where possible.
50. I did have some part-time work at the meat works after I left my internship, but other than that, I was providing for myself with crime. I remember thinking that I should be working, not doing this, but whenever I did, I would remember that I needed cash now for the weekends, so I would need to case a store before we went into steal.
51. Later that year, we were stopped by the police while driving a stolen car. I knew that this was likely going to be the end of the road for a while. The police were quite rough with us, and I can understand why, to a degree, we were strong young men. But they did not need to beat us or put their knees into our necks. Certain officers were more egregious in their treatment of us.

52. This was not my first encounter with the police. I had done a few stints on remand during my time in Wellington. Often, when I dealt with police, I would end up being injured, bruised, or walk away with a black eye.
53. The police would always lie if someone brought up our injuries. They would just say it happened because we were resisting arrest. Police were always just taken at their words, so there were no consequences for their actions.
54. The police split us up straight away, and we were taken into the cells at the Wellington police station. I was back in those cold and lifeless cells; they still felt like a tomb. They would wait until I was trying to sleep to interrogate me, and I assume they did the same with RW. When we were sleepy and disoriented, they kept yelling and accusing us of committing crimes we did not commit. The process was designed to dehumanise me.
55. They tried to make me turn against RW by blaming things on him; they told me I would have a lighter sentence if I told them it was all his idea. They also kept trying to manipulate what I was saying and make things seem like I was admitting to crimes I hadn't committed. They would get agitated and impatient if I didn't tell them what they wanted to hear. They were trying to intimidate me, but I was defiant and made sure that they knew it would not work.
56. They would also assault us in the cells; it was never one-on-one; they would always have 3 or 4 officers to deal with us, and they could then get away with it by saying it happened throughout the arrest. Sometimes they wore uniforms, and at other times, they wore plain clothes.

57. One officer was particularly bad when it came to violence and intimidation; he would make sure that the plainclothes were in with us, as they were usually the most violent.
58. They would also constantly lie to try to get their conviction. I once asked an officer why he lied to get his conviction, and he said, "That I'm believed, and you are not".
59. That officer ended up being right, as I was convicted on several charges and sent to the Invercargill borstal for 2 years. This was my first time being sentenced long term. I was 16 at the time. I remember being flown down to the Borstal with 2 police officers escorting me thinking "shit it's all crumbling around me now".
60. The court process felt like it was designed to fail me as well. My lawyer simply accepted the sentence that I was given. There was no discussion with me about appeals. I wasn't even allowed to speak for myself; there was always someone speaking on my behalf, but they did not know my situation, and they did not know me, so how could they speak on my behalf? The whole process felt very unfair.
61. My time on remand at Mt Crawford was also difficult. I was kept separate from the adults this time, but this stay was for a far longer time. I could feel the eyes of all the other people in the prison on me, the guards, the older prisoners, the warden, all of them were trying to figure me out. As a 16-year-old, this was incredibly unsettling.

Invercargil Borstal

62. I spent approximately 12-14 months in the Borstal, purely based on punishment; this system has no rehabilitation, just a dab of cultural taste (Kapa - haka) club. The Borstal was a place to build oneself up for egotism, especially an animal type of action, physical and mental strength.

63. I started a riot in this institution through a fight with another inmate from the South Island. No consultation, no communication other than you and I - us and them, I spent time in solitary confinement and learned to shut off any tender-heartedness or mercy.
64. Solitary confinement was very different from the normal prison cells and the rest of my stay in the Borstal. It's empty; there is nothing for you to do, no exercise, no people. The only interaction that you have is with the guards when they bring you food. The food was all very bland, just bread and boiled potatoes, and it had to last you 24 hours. We would only get a proper meal every 3 days. Water was only given every 24 hours as well. It was quite a grim affair.
65. I was released into the care of a priest in Invercargill. Pre-release, I couldn't stay under the priest's conditions, so I caught a train and ferry back to Wellington. Eventually, I made it up to Auckland and found out that my Grandfather had passed.
66. My family made sure that I was comfortable before telling me that my grandfather was in the hospital, that he was dying, and that I should go to see him. But by the time I went up in the morning, he had already passed on. It had happened that night I had travelled up to Auckland.
67. I felt like I realised that it was him calling me back home when I had started longing to see my family, so I might get one more chance to speak with him. That chance never came.
68. The effect that his death had on me was severe. I couldn't break down in front of my family, but as soon as I was alone, I cried and grieved for him. He was the last real family that I had left, and now I was alone. I never felt the connection that I had with him from the rest of my family.

69. The bus ride up to Hokianga was long and gave me a chance to work through my grief. It was eventful as well, with there being a dispute on where my grandfather should be put to rest. My family from Utaura wanted him to rest there with his mother as none of her children had returned to her, but our family was adamant that he be allowed to return to Hokianga to rest with my grandmother in the place he loved. Tensions were very high, but I remember watching the negotiations thinking that they would not be taking him, no matter what.

70. The kōrero that was taking place reminded me of watching my grandfather as a child and how he would navigate disputes. I realised that everyone at this hui had learnt from him how to act in these meetings. Everyone was very careful in choosing the words that they used, making sure not to be aggressive but ensuring that the weight of what they were saying would come through.

71. After some promises were made, they allowed us to continue to Hokianga to put my grandfather to rest. Being in Hokianga once again was strange; I could still feel my grandfather's presence in the Hokianga, but his death had changed my point of view in the world. I was alone now.

72. I was also angry at myself. The last time I had seen him was when I was up on the course for my apprenticeship, so it had been 2 or 3 years since I had seen him. If I hadn't mucked around on my way up from the Borstal, I would have been able to have that final conversation with him that I had wanted. We had always had a special relationship as I had never integrated with the family, and I was also the last Moko to be with him. So, it felt like I had failed him in not getting back to see him.

73. Once the Tangi had ended and we had returned to Auckland, I did not stay with my family for long. I could have tried to find work there because I knew that my apprenticeship would still hold. But I did not want to fall into the routine of Auckland. I had never liked the city much and saw no point in staying there. I think my family would have liked it if I had stayed and helped at the marae, but I knew Auckland was not for me.

74. I returned to Wellington, but I only had my criminal friends left. I fell back into crime, and when I assaulted a man, I was sent to Hautu Prison Farm.

Hautu Prison Farm - Tongariro

75. I was becoming lost in the world of physical and mental prowess, exercising my fighting skills acquired from Invercargill. Now I don't invite sensible conversations or realistic discussions.

76. I was marked now as a criminal with convictions and a target on my back from the Police. Any disturbances, and I would be seen as guilty by the police; I would fight them in the police cells in Wellington. I had no fear of authority, I had no respect for law, and I became lawless.

Mt Crawford Again

77. When I returned to Wellington, I fell into partying. At one party I was at in Wainuiomata, there was this girl. We had some fun together at the actual, and she asked me to come to the car along with two other guys. We had sex in the car with her. The next day I was rounded up by the police and charged with rape. I was held in remand at Mount Crawford because I had no fixed address. This was the first time I had dealt with the police since I had returned from Auckland. I was 18 years at the time.

78. I was not the only one who was charged because of this incident. There were also the 2 other boys who had sex with this girl in her car. They were Pākehā and were also held on remand, but both of them got out shortly after. I was the only one in the group who was found guilty of rape. I was told by my lawyer that I was found guilty and was likely to serve 2 and a half years in jail. So even though we all had identical circumstances, the system had only judged me guilty because the 2 pākehā guys got to walk away, but I was locked up once again. Why I was judged guilty, and the other were not, I'm not sure; maybe they knew her beforehand, or they didn't have past offences to their name like I did. Either way, they got off, and I didn't.
79. This time in Mt Crawford, I was put in with the adults; no segregation for me this time. It was very daunting for me, who was just a little older than a boy, to be stuck in with all these hardened men, many of whom were in for violent offences. I was held here until I was sentenced, which would have been about a month. My lawyer was spot on, and I received a sentence of 2 and a half years. I was transferred to New Plymouth Prison as I had no links there, and they felt I would be better behaved away from Mt Crawford.
80. I wasn't angry with the sentence so much as I was angry with the circumstances. In my mind, I had not committed the crime, or if I had, then the other 2 were just as guilty as me. But I didn't hold resentment towards the judge or my lawyer. I felt that my lawyer had done a rubbish job and that he didn't put much effort into it, and there was never any talk of an appeal or anything to help me, but I didn't resent him. I was very angry at how the other 2 had walked away, it felt like the system was set up to help them and for me to take the fall.

81. I didn't let that keep me down, however; I knew that I would just need to get on and do the time. That was the gift that my grandfather left me; it is what it is, and all you can do is get on with it for the time being. Was it a bad miscarriage of justice? In my opinion, yes, but I didn't let it break me mentally at the time. I didn't know all the facts and details, but I was aware of my situation and understood that fighting was unlikely to benefit me.
82. When I first heard I was being transferred, I didn't care where I was sent because I felt like the time would be the same no matter where I spent it. I thought about requesting to be sent to Auckland to be closer to my family, but I never made that request because I still felt as if they weren't my family, not in the way that my grandparents had been.

New Plymouth Prison

83. I ended up being transferred to New Plymouth Prison, having to ride the way up in the back of a van with corrections. I never felt like the prison guards or the corrections staff were friendly; It was us and them, and they were them. They were not as bad as the police, but that just means they didn't beat us for no reason. Arriving at New Plymouth was also daunting; it had high walls and looked like an old dungeon, not friendly in the slightest.
84. There was some familiarity with the process of getting taken back into prison; it reminded me of the borstal a bit, but there were men around now, not boys. I was strung up on a two-and-a-half-year-long sentence.
85. The cells were very different here, just a tiny opening so that you had some fresh air or some sunlight if you were lucky, for half an hour. I was locked up straight away because I needed to be processed as a

prisoner who was on remand from another prison. I was gradually eased into the jail over time, generally at mealtimes first. After that, you would slowly fall into the prison routine.

86. The guards at New Plymouth were different from the guards elsewhere; I found that they were more crooked. Cash was passed around so that drugs and other luxuries could be let in. They would also use violence more quickly than I had seen in the past. I never got targeted by them, but I certainly saw others get targeted.
87. The hierarchy that was at other prisons still existed, though; you couldn't allow people to think that you were weak or that they could take advantage of you; there was much more emphasis on the gangs in prison now that we were adults.
88. I saw what happened when you were weak or let your guard down; there were several times when inmates would beat people badly, and it always conveniently happened where the guards could see, so they never did anything about it.
89. I was lucky here and had my first visit from outside at an institution when Marlene came to visit me. That was the first time I had any outside connection in my almost six years of prison until now. I still remember that day really, as it gave me hope that I might see the outside again.
90. There were a few people I became close to at the prison, I didn't want to, but it was a hierarchy, and you needed people to stand with you so you didn't get messed with. I tried to stay on the edges of the prison hierarchy, but if you wanted tobacco or other luxuries, you had to get involved with them. There was also a protocol on how to approach them, ensuring they knew you and that you had been seen around for a while.

91. There were other activities to pass the time, including playing music, educational programs, and a church that visitors could attend. There was also a workshop and other places where you could practice a hobby. There was no social sport or anything like that because we were in a medium security prison at this stage, so I did feel a bit isolated.
92. The split between Māori and Pakeha was still quite high; roughly 70% of the prisoners were Māori.
93. Eventually, I fit in with a crew of younger guys, one of them was a man named "PC". He was planning an escape when I heard that I should join in the escape attempt.
94. When we escaped, I felt so free being outside of jail, but eventually the Police caught up with us. We had a plan to get out, but nothing was planned after that. When they eventually found us, the other four surrendered quickly, but I decided that was not going back, so I ran for it, and when I was caught, I fought back.
95. The four of us were sentenced to an extra 6 months each for the attempt and sent to Paremeremo Prison. Because I had resisted, I got an extra 18 months instead.

Paremeremo prison and Oakley Male 3

96. Paremeremo was a different sort of prison, and I struggled there with my mental health. I was in C block, which meant I could work in the factory making prison shoes. When I was here, I became addicted to sniffing glue; it was the only substance there that could give me a high or a release. I only stopped because my friends stopped me from doing it any further; they could see how it was affecting me.

97. I witnessed all sorts of violence in the prisons. In one scenario, there was a murder in the prison yard where I was. By this stage, I have noticed that I'm becoming more cynical and animal than human. What saved me were the other men in there; they helped, and if not for them, I would not be there.
98. Eventually, after a suicide attempt, I was moved into Oakley Male 3, a high-security mental hospital.
99. This facility was a living hell. I was made to ingest all sorts of drugs to try to control me. These included Fluphenazine, Largactil, and Formaldehyde. Not only did these drugs control you, but they also made you vulnerable to the physical and sexual abuse that was prevalent in the facility.
100. Staff there knew the power that they had and would threaten you with the use of certain drugs. I will never forget when one of the nurses there used Formaldehyde for the first time. It was like wearing a mental straitjacket. Whenever they said they were getting the formaldehyde, I became compliant after that. I was also subjected to electroshock therapy there, which was torture.
101. There were also the other prisoners there, many of whom attempted suicide regularly. It was not uncommon for parts of the bathroom to be cordoned off because an inmate had worked a blade off a shaving razor and tried to take his own life.
102. Throughout this experience, I received one visit from my birth mother and a visit from my two elder brothers and their girlfriends, only in Oakley male 3. These helped me so much, and although I couldn't tell them that, they helped me survive.
103. Eventually, I was released from Oakley and returned to Wellington prison for release in 1978.

104. At the time, I was on so many different drugs that I could hardly function. Other prisoners aided me in recovery from those chemical straitjackets by flushing them down the toilet and forcing me to go “cold turkey”. They physically cleaned my cell every day.

105. Without these helpers, I would not be here today, and most of these helpers don't make 60 or 70 years; they're lucky to reach 55 years. I am sharing this story with them, as many of them experienced similar things to me, but have since passed on.

Release from Prison

106. A man named Selwyn Boorman, who was a helper to set me up on release and to get me the best help he could, met me outside the gates of Mt Crawford prison, where I was sent for release. He guided me back into society after the time of imprisonment and the ordeal at Oakley Make 3. He became a true friend and a companion; he would listen with no judgment. I was never to ever get a prison sentence again for the rest of my life after this release in 1978. I would still end up on remand, but not face further imprisonment.

107. The police were still quick to jump on me for any offence. I almost felt that they loved seeing me being locked up, and it appeared they enjoyed arresting me. Old associates didn't help, so to get out, I needed to find new people and new places...

Taputeranga

108. After a night out filled with drugs, sex and crime, I was raped after being drugged by a well-known character in Wellington. I decided that it wouldn't happen again, so I had to try to find a safe place at least.

109. One night in town, I was found by Bruce Stewart and his crew at the

urban Marae Taputeranga in Island Bay, Wellington. They took me back there and told me no more drunken and drugged night outs. I was in their crew. Suddenly, I had people I could trust to help me.

110. Over the course of 16 to 18 months, I rebuilt myself from the person I had become, and I was given responsibilities and entrusted with trusteeship by Mr. Stewart. I also met my Whangai mother Dame Joan Metge there. Under the “mahoe’ of this urban Marae, there we began a relationship that was lifelong and enduring. She helped me keep out of the reach of hungry police officers who badgered me relentlessly.

111. I utilised her home and the resources she shared with me to help me show deference to the law. Still, more than that, she was a remnant to me of my grandmother, who had raised me from infancy, and I found a trust in her. Finally, it seemed I was returning to my true nature; I was transforming. While I was physically 23/24 years old, because of my youthfulness being spent incarcerated, I felt more like a 15-year-old.

112. What was returning was the sacred things my grandparents had raised me with. The goodness I was being treated with was the return of the lessons of kindness, caring, love, and hospitality - being helpful and giving more than taking. Joan gave herself and her things, and in doing so, she triggered in me the incredible lessons from my true parents, my Grandma and Grandpa, the noble attributes that were instilled in me during the formative years of my life.

Ngairo

113. In 1980, aged 25, I headed to Taumarunui on the back of a truck with a girlfriend and friends from Wellington, our destination a block of land named Ngairo, meaning maggot. There, I was to come under the

wonderful influence and spiritually guided counsel of my Elder, Koro Huti Barrett. An 82-year-old elder, from the local marae, his Kaitupeka.

114. Thus began my journey into the world of culture and Māoritanga. The shift from city-being to country soul, and the learning, teachings, and guidance of a wonderful being in Koro Huti.
115. I will never forget the lessons and stories he passed onto me and the wisdom that he imparted; they have shaped my very core and showed me the ways of Te Ao Maori.
116. I underwent healing from my childhood and youthful years incarcerated in the State Care structure and system, yet there were more struggles and tests to overcome, and they were of a different calibre, during this time. More about the mind than the locking up of the body.
117. It was on this land block, a milestone in my life, the birth of my first child, that I began to feel stable and happy for the first time in a long time.

Tokanui and Waikeria

118. In a series of events, my relationship with my child's mother ended, and she took him from me, and Koro Huti passed away, very much like my Grandpa. This affected me greatly as he was still my guide, and I was still on my journey.
119. I once again spiralled into depression, ending up in Tokanui Psychiatric hospital, a return to psychiatric drugs and back into the mental straitjacket. A complicated pathway to navigate, which was mostly mental, with doctors telling me I would be on medication for the remainder of my life. The police were trying to charge me with

raping my sons mother, even though she came and saw me to assure me it wasn't of her doing.

120. They transferred me directly from Tokanui to Waikeria prison. The outcome was that I wasn't charged with any offences against my son's mother. When released, I returned to Taumarunui, but by now I had nothing. No place to live, no friends on Ngairo, my Koro was gone, and so was the spirit of our beautiful time together; the lessons had been taught and now needed to be put into reality.

121. I met my second wife while incarcerated in Waikeria in a letter-writing exercise as a friend given to me by my cellmate, and she and I decided I needed to take control, so I went to Lake Alice rehab centre.

Lake Alice

122. My episode in Lake Alice was relatively brief but very sincere in the sense that had I been requested to stay longer, there was a good chance that I may not have come out of there at all. From times in Oakley and Tokanui, I had learnt how to be quiet and say what the doctors wanted to hear- an act of submission.

123. I was getting tired of these places. I needed to find a better, more secure way of living. I needed stability, and for that, I needed a woman, a home, a family.

124. Since leaving the program, I have never relapsed, not even by one glass of alcohol. I was never any good with drugs; I had given them up quite easily years prior. I had a clear and operational mind, finally.

125. I stayed with my second wife for six years, with very few court appearances and the birth of two children, between us, then one night on my return home, I saw a person I considered a brother

jumping out of my bedroom window.

126. He and my wife were having an affair for the last six months. Our youngest daughter was only two, and our son was only five at the time. She took out domestic violence orders against me through court affidavits and absconded with my children and her lover from Hamilton to Christchurch. Once again, the police were happy to have me on their books. The courts were difficult, and if it had not been for a judge taking pity on me, it would have ended worse than it did.

127. It felt like death. I knew that continuing along this path of pursuing them would only end in disaster; she had friends from the Baha'i Faith on her side, the police, the court, and some of my family members. I had to approach this situation differently and wisely. I made the difficult choice to move over to Australia, away from my family and the battle we were having.

128. I visited my son and daughter in Christchurch before flying out to Australia, where I would reside for the next 19 years. I spent my last few days with them before boarding my flight into another world. I had to renew myself in all forms, I had to be reborn to remember the virtues and qualities my Grandpa and Grandma raised me with, and all along this journey Dame Joan Metge was standing right beside me.

A New Place and Outlook

129. Australia was a new start for me. In my 19 years in Australia, I didn't take any psychotropic medications, and I was never ever in a courtroom to be convicted of a crime, any crime. My only offences were transport fines, small stuff.

130. I still went into court cases for my son and daughter, but not one criminal charge was ever brought against me. I kept up constant

communications with Joan Metge; she loved visiting me in Australia, where I found I could live again in a decent way, no harassment, no badgering, no association with the police. I respected the law and showed respect for it. My material well-being grew, and my association wasn't in the criminal world. I lived a good life, I enjoyed my work, and eventually, my children came over and joined me in Australia as well.

131. My mental capacity was growing well, and there I lost my Oakley shuffle, a restless shuffling of the feet that many people had by the time they left Oakley, or any other Psychiatric hospital in New Zealand.

132. The true loss for me was my culture and its spirituality. I became very active in the Baha'i Faith in Australia, and I had the one thing that helped me immensely, my two children with my second wife; she allowed them to come on holiday to visit me. I paid for all their fares, and when she told me to keep our son as he was too troublesome for her, I was saddened by her rejection of him. His sister didn't wish to live with her mum; she wanted to stay with her brother and me in Australia.

133. I returned in February 2019 with a different name and a different game; my past life was now dead and dusted, and I had returned to take up my role and to play my part amongst my family and my friends.

Dame Joan Metge

134. My mum, my matua whangai, my confidant for over 47 years, is 95 years old. I turn 70 in August, and she asked me to return home to write the stories I knew by being there, in them, she told me, "I have your back"; I have returned. Her word was true, I started on the

stories of the different “schools’ I had been educated in and now those stories reside in the Turnbull Library under the name “Aku Kura”.

135. Alice Joan Metge and her people will always be connected to me and my people, not just in this world, but also in the many worlds of God. She got her good friend, Hugo Manson, to do the work with me, and she wanted that task.

136. I made sure to complete this before she left this world. We began the assignment in 2019 and ended it in 2025. She asked me what I was submitting in Abuse in State Care, she said “you never spoke to me of those abuses, was I too prudish for you to tell me those things?”, it was something you shouldn’t sadden a mother with I think, anyway its done.

Huti Hori Barrett

137. My Koro, Grandpa and guide into and out of the Māori world. I tried to keep together the many stories he shared with me of hope and encouragement of life and living, he was a beautiful soul and a definite character to the people of Taumarunui. He gave me inspiration to carry on when there seemed to be no reason to go on, he filled my mind my heart and spirit with intimations of the uniqueness of our heritage.

138. He made learning Māori as easy as eating food or walking alongside a river. he animated the lesson with wisdom and power, with humility and love, a master of the art of teaching-whakaako. he was the first and last Hauhau I had ever met.

139. We joined the Baha’i Faith together, and we continue in that belief that enwraps his Hauhau and my Katarika - Catholic beliefs. I’m glad his works orally shared with me are preserved in the Turnbull library,

the stories are treasures that I kept sacred. In the “Kura”, of te ao Māori, he was the headmaster, who taught me to teach others, who will benefit themselves and others, and will bring about the Great teachings of other Indigenous peoples.

Signed at **Wellington** this Thursday, 19 June 2025.

HONE SHZARIC