

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

Tuesday, 12 October 2021

(10.00 am)

LADY SMITH: Good morning. Today we return to some witnesses in person and a videolink and, who knows, we may have time for another read-in, maybe not. Mr Brown, are we ready?

MR BROWN: My Lady, the first witness is John Findlay.

Mr John Findlay (sworn)

LADY SMITH: First, how would you like me to address you? Mr Findlay? John?

A. John or Johnny. Friends and family call me Johnny. Work is normally John. So either of which, my Lady.

LADY SMITH: Whatever you're comfortable with. The red folder in front of you has your written statement in it but you'll also see it coming up on screen in front of you, so you can use either if you wish to, or neither if you don't want to look at them, but Mr Brown may be referring to bits of your statement as he asks you questions.

A. Yes.

LADY SMITH: If you have any queries at any time or any concerns, please don't hesitate to let me know. If you want a break, that's fine by me if it works for you. So guide me as to what keeps you comfortable because that's what matters.

1 A. Thank you very much, my Lady.

2 LADY SMITH: If you're ready, I'll hand over to Mr Brown and

3 he'll take it from there. Is that all right?

4 A. Absolutely, of course.

5 LADY SMITH: Mr Brown.

6 Questions from Mr Brown

7 MR BROWN: My Lady, thank you.

8 If I can call you John --

9 A. Of course you can, most definitely, of course.

10 Q. -- I think having heard friends are Johnny.

11 A. Or Johnny, yes.

12 Q. Okay. Her Ladyship has just referred to your statement,

13 which you'll see, I think, in front of you on the screen

14 and in front of you, in the folder. It's actually

15 behind you as well. It is ubiquitous.

16 A. I can only see in front of me.

17 Q. Right. If you turn around, you'll see a larger version.

18 This is a statement obviously that you prepared with the

19 Inquiry some years ago now; is that correct?

20 A. That is correct, 2018 I believe that I signed it.

21 Q. Yes. It has a reference number of which we have to read

22 in for the transcript, which is WIT.001.0019906. That

23 having been done, could you go to the last page of the

24 statement, which I think you just touched on. That's

25 page 33.

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. We see there, as you correctly said, that's when you  
3 signed it, on 3 July 2018.

4 A. Correct.

5 Q. And the last paragraph numbered 134 says:

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

10 And that's correct, presumably you read through this  
11 statement before you signed it?

12 A. I did, and I have subsequently read through it in  
13 hindsight and I can totally and wholeheartedly confirm  
14 every single thing in there is totally true.

15 Q. Thank you. As you will understand, the statement is in  
16 evidence so we don't have to labour through it, but  
17 obviously there are things that I do want to ask you  
18 about.

19 A. Of course.

20 Q. And should there be any confusion on your part, please  
21 say so. If I'm asking daft questions, tell me.

22 To start with, you're John Findlay, you were born in  
23 1977?

24 A. That's correct.

25 Q. You're now 43?

1 A. Far too old, but, yes, 43.

2 Q. And we would understand that you went to Aberlour in the  
3 late 1980s, speaking broadly, then moved on, as happened  
4 to many pupils from Aberlour, to Gordonstoun until  
5 I think 1996?

6 A. Yes, I did, I left in the summer of 1996 from  
7 Gordonstoun.

8 Q. Right. We see from the beginning of the statement, and  
9 we don't need to go into the exact details, that  
10 Gordonstoun or Aberlour, the Kurt Hahn establishments,  
11 were something your family were already very familiar  
12 with. Is that correct?

13 A. It is, absolutely. [REDACTED]  
14 [REDACTED]  
15 [REDACTED] My father previously had attended both  
16 Aberlour and Gordonstoun. [REDACTED]  
17 [REDACTED]  
18 [REDACTED]

19 Q. You've mentioned your father. What was his attitude  
20 towards Gordonstoun and Aberlour?

21 A. Oh, it played a significant and very, very positive  
22 impact on his life. Gordonstoun was a fantastic part of  
23 my father's upbringing and that's why he gave [REDACTED]  
24 [REDACTED] the same -- well, tried to give [REDACTED] the same  
25 opportunity. My father latterly ended up on the Kurt



1           Hahn Foundation, which I believe, I'm not too sure, but  
2           to my understanding was to do with spreading the word of  
3           Gordonstoun and the ethos of Gordonstoun, and I believe  
4           raising money for Gordonstoun. I'm not too sure with  
5           regards to exactly the remit of the Kurt Hahn  
6           Foundation. However, I know that my father was  
7           a committee member of that said foundation.

8       Q. All right. Obviously we are here, and we'll come to  
9           this in a little while, to speak about abuse you  
10          suffered at Aberlour. Your parents were aware of that,  
11          we'll come back to that also. Did that affect your  
12          father's outlook about Aberlour/Gordonstoun?

13       A. Sorry, could you clarify the question? Did it affect my  
14          father's outlook at the time of the abuse or  
15          subsequently?

16       Q. Subsequently. You've talked about him being involved in  
17          working as a volunteer --

18       A. Yes.

19       Q. -- for the Kurt Hahn Trust.

20       A. Correct, yes.

21       Q. Was that after?

22       A. Yes, it was. Yes, absolutely. I believe that my father  
23          still believed very strongly in the school, however  
24          regretted deeply that action wasn't taken earlier and at  
25          the time of the abuse.

1 Q. All right. And can you tell us how long his connection  
2 with Gordonstoun and Aberlour continued?  
3 A. Until he died.  
4 Q. And that was, I think, five years ago?  
5 A. About that, yes.  
6 Q. What about your feelings about Gordonstoun/Aberlour?  
7 And they're distinct legal entities, we would  
8 understand, until almost the turn of the century. That  
9 may be a matter you have views on but that's not  
10 a matter for today. What is your view about the  
11 education you received and the experience you had?  
12 Overall?  
13 A. Overall?  
14 Q. Abuse aside.  
15 A. Both Aberlour and Gordonstoun are exceptional  
16 educational establishments, now they've merged. I --  
17 I walked away a far better, stronger individual. The  
18 fact that I can sit here today and hold my head up high  
19 despite what happened to me, I think that strength was  
20 probably part of my education.  
21 Q. Yes.  
22 A. It taught me to stand up for what is right and to speak  
23 out when things are wrong.  
24 Q. And should the opportunity arise, would you contemplate  
25 sending your own children there?

1 A. I wouldn't hesitate.

2 Q. All right. If we can go back, however, to the 1980s,  
3 I think we understand that you went to Aberlour when you  
4 were seven?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Which was quite young in context. Most pupils might be  
7 a little bit older.

8 A. No, actually, the initial -- the first term -- first  
9 form was that age. I went one term, so I went for the  
10 summer term. That was the only kind of early bit that  
11 I was -- and that was purely because my parents were  
12 relocating from Sussex up to Morayshire.

13 Q. And quite close to the school?

14 A. Very close, 15 miles. Literally home was in between  
15 Aberlour House and Gordonstoun School.

16 Q. And for periods you were a day boy?

17 A. I was.

18 Q. And periods you were a boarder?

19 A. Correct. I was -- I boarded for the first term at  
20 Aberlour House because basically home was being  
21 refurbished and it wasn't ready, hence why I boarded for  
22 the first term, then I was a day boy for three years and  
23 basically I begged my parents to allow me to go back and  
24 be a boarder. As a day pupil you missed out on a lot of  
25 things, silly little things that are totally trivial now

1           when you look back, but being able to talk after lights  
2           out with your friends. When you're a kid, that means  
3           a lot, and as a day pupil you miss out on an awful lot  
4           of the whole environment. And so, yeah, I wanted to be  
5           fully involved in the school.

6       Q. Aberlour, and I take it Gordonstoun, were not 9 to 5  
7           organisations?

8       A. No, it's 24/7.

9       Q. Yes. And I think, as you tell us at paragraph 7 on  
10          page 2 of the statement, even your interview with the  
11          then headmaster, Toby Coghill, was something that stands  
12          out in your memory?

13      A. Oh, absolutely. I wanted to go to a school where all  
14          the kids got a day off if it was snowing and it was  
15          nice. And I think Sir Toby had a fantastic attitude.  
16          He realised perfectly well that a bunch of pre-teenagers  
17          sat inside a classroom when it's beautiful weather and  
18          snowing, they want to be outside having a snowball fight  
19          and building a snowman and sledging and he realised  
20          there's no point trying to teach them maths or geography  
21          or history at that point in time, they're not going to  
22          learn anything, they're better to have the day off and  
23          enjoy the environment.

24      Q. You have a positive impression of him?

25      A. I do, yes.

1 Q. And his wife, what was her role in the school?

2 A. Lady Gay Coghill, she was matron, so if you bumped

3 yourself or bruised yourself or you fell off your

4 skateboard, you went to her and you were basically told

5 to man up and get on with it.

6 Q. All right.

7 A. But that was fine.

8 Q. And a general question: other teachers? What was your

9 attitude to them? You mentioned some very positively;

10 Mr Hanson, for example.

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Tell us about him.

13 A. Mr Hanson was my maths teacher and an exceptionally good

14 teacher. He pushed me, he tested me and he got me to

15 excel in a subject that previously I showed very little

16 interest in and he was an exceptional teacher.

17 Q. Obviously we're going to talk about one particular

18 teacher and abuse, but putting him to the side, what was

19 your view of the other teachers in the school?

20 A. It's very difficult to say. I look back with nobody

21 particularly that stood out and shone, whereas with

22 Gordonstoun I could actually say that about a couple of

23 teachers in my own mind in recollection. However,

24 I could also not say anything bad.

25 Q. All right. One thing that you say in paragraph 18 on

1           page 5 is there were normally two student teachers each  
2           year who came from Australia or New Zealand. Was that  
3           a regular part of life at Aberlour and also Gordonstoun?  
4           Was the use of student teachers from abroad common in  
5           both or just the one?

6       A. No, I never recall that at Gordonstoun. However at  
7       Aberlour, yes, I believe -- whether or not they were  
8       there for the whole year and whether or not it was two,  
9       I remember times that there were two, but then I can  
10      recall then there was only one person, but yes, it was  
11      almost -- I'm not sure, and I couldn't answer the  
12      question if asked, but perhaps through the Round Square  
13      schools it was essentially kids from a Round Square  
14      school that would come and in their gap year they would  
15      come up to the Northern Hemisphere from Australia or  
16      wherever.

17     Q. Should we understand the Round Square schools are  
18     institutions set up under the same ethos as Gordonstoun  
19     and Aberlour, the Kurt Hahn approach?

20     A. I couldn't comment on that, I'm afraid. I don't know  
21     the ethos that they're set under. However, I believe  
22     that's the general idea. I believe so.

23     Q. All right. Do you know if they had any connections with  
24     Aberlour, these student teachers?

25     A. I don't believe so. I can't understand why a chap from

1 Melbourne in Australia would know anything about  
2 Aberlour in Scotland.

3 Q. All right. What about the staff more generally,  
4 teaching staff? Were you aware of connections between,  
5 say, the headmaster and staff who were appointed? They  
6 were known quantities to him?

7 A. I couldn't comment, I'm afraid.

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. I know that Sir Toby was a very young individual when he  
10 was appointed as headmaster of Aberlour, and I know that  
11 David Hanson joined the school in a fairly senior role  
12 relatively soon after Sir Toby became headmaster.  
13 I know that they both enjoyed a very successful and  
14 I believe very productive career in their respective  
15 roles within the school.

16 Q. Did your father help out at Aberlour?

17 A. Yeah, as and when he could. He taught cricket, for  
18 example. If they needed dad to do something, he would.  
19 A local parent. It's an international school and so as  
20 a local parent and someone that cared about the school  
21 and obviously cared about his son being there, if dad  
22 could help out, of course he would.

23 Q. He would be brought in?

24 A. Yeah, of course he would.

25 Q. And I think in that regard in terms of helping out in

1 sport, as you say, there weren't houses at Aberlour as  
2 such but there were flights, which allowed -- with  
3 different names --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Of Scottish mountains?

6 A. That's correct. Aigan, Rinnes and Conval off the top of  
7 my head. Is that right?

8 Q. I think that's what you say at paragraph 22.

9 A. Good memory.

10 Q. And that was just to allow for competitive sport  
11 essentially?

12 A. Yes, it was, yeah.

13 Q. You talk at some length about the routine, and we don't  
14 need to trouble ourselves with that because we can read  
15 it. Obviously when you're a day boy presumably the  
16 routine was very different. You would arrive for  
17 classes and then go home at the end of the day, which  
18 is, as you've said, why you wanted to come into the body  
19 of the school and enjoy the whole experience?

20 A. Yes, absolutely. As a day pupil you arrived after  
21 breakfast and you left just before dinner, which was  
22 at -- well, supper, at I believe six in the evening.

23 Q. Yes. As a day boy, perhaps, you would receive pastoral  
24 support at home?

25 A. If I say I didn't, my mum's going to hate me.



1 Q. Exactly.

2 A. But of course I did, yes.

3 Q. What about when you were a boarder? Were you aware of

4 what you would understand as pastoral support in the

5 school?

6 A. No, not really. But we didn't know that that existed.

7 We didn't know there was such a thing.

8 Q. Was there someone you could speak to if you were upset

9 about something?

10 A. Yes, the matron would have been -- if you were homesick

11 or something -- if anything was wrong with you, it

12 didn't matter if you'd twisted your ankle or you were

13 homesick, you spoke to matron, I suppose.

14 Q. Was that explained formally or was it just understood?

15 A. No, no, it was never told to anybody. Just you found

16 out.

17 Q. That's Lady Coghill?

18 A. It was, yes. At the beginning of my time at school,

19 yes.

20 Q. But were then other matrons employed?

21 A. Yes, they were.

22 Q. Were they elderly ladies who were sympathetic?

23 A. Matron Alison, an absolute firecracker. Great lady,

24 fantastic matron. Massively, if you'd be like oooo,

25 I hurt my arm, hugely sympathetic but also motivational,

1 as in it's not that bad, you'll be okay. She was  
2 absolutely brilliant. And then there was a female  
3 matron whose name I can't recall and I believe that she  
4 was from New Zealand. They were fantastic individuals.  
5 Q. What about discipline? We've talked about Lady Coghill  
6 and her matronly role. It would appear that her  
7 husband, the headmaster, was, if discipline was  
8 required, the person you would go to?  
9 A. Not voluntarily.  
10 Q. No, but he was the one teacher who used to cane you, you  
11 tell us?  
12 A. Yes, that's correct.  
13 Q. And is it fair to say that you, he and the cane were  
14 sometimes --  
15 A. Familiar.  
16 Q. -- familiar?  
17 A. Yes.  
18 Q. I think as you say at paragraph 65 on page 16:  
19 "Normally I deserved it so it was fine."  
20 A. And I stand by that to this day.  
21 Q. And you go on to say:  
22 "I don't think I was ever caned without it being  
23 merited. I had been a naughty little boy on each  
24 occasion. I can't complain about it."  
25 And you don't, I take it?

1       A. I do not at all.

2       Q. I think from what you tell us that he would cane up to  
3       a maximum of six strikes, except --

4       A. Well, my father would say -- because on occasion,  
5       I believe, not every occasion, but I believe the sort of  
6       routine was that if I'd been naughty enough to warrant  
7       the cane, that my father or my parents would receive  
8       a phone call from Sir Toby to say, "John's done this,  
9       I'm going to cane him, is that okay?" and on occasion my  
10      father would say, "Give him one from me", so yes,  
11      I ended up with seven as opposed to six. But again,  
12      I probably deserved it.

13      Q. All right. From what you're describing, your life at  
14      Aberlour both as a day boy and then as a boarder,  
15      thinking in your later career at Aberlour, perhaps from  
16      ten onwards, was one you were quite happy with?

17      A. Very much so.

18      Q. Very much so.

19      A. Yes, the school challenged me academically, outside the  
20      classroom, and encouraged and built on what was there.  
21      Yes, very happy.

22      Q. Did you have any worries about being there?

23      A. I can remember as -- I can remember being on the phone  
24      to my parents in floods of tears asking me to take me  
25      out of the school, but I can't for the life of me

1           remember why.

2       Q. Was that connected with what we're coming onto, the

3       abuse?

4       A. No, it was earlier than that.

5       Q. All right, so you were a younger child?

6       A. Yes. I genuinely cannot recall why I was in tears on

7       the phone begging my parents to take me out of the

8       school. I have no idea. But -- sorry.

9       Q. That's fine. But I think what you do remember is

10      an English teacher joining the school who was to have

11      a significant effect upon you, is that fair?

12      A. Correct, yes.

13      Q. And did this teacher stand out as different from the

14      remainder of the staff? Not talking about abuse, just

15      in terms of behaviour generally towards pupils.

16      A. Looking at it with hindsight, yes.

17      Q. What was that? What was different?

18      A. Trying to be too familiar with the pupils. Supervising

19      showers. And normally that was matron's role.

20      Q. When you say -- sorry to interrupt, but when you say

21      supervising showers, we would understand they are

22      communal showers, large bathroom?

23      A. Yes. An area of tile, no cubicles, no curtains, just

24      shower heads sticking out of the wall. Probably 12 of

25      them, so 12 boys showering.

1 Q. And ordinarily when boys are showering, members of staff  
2 would not be there?

3 A. No, absolutely not. Matron would supervise, but that  
4 was not to make sure that you wash yourself, it was  
5 probably because it was tiled and so if a kid slipped on  
6 basically soapy tiles and hit their head, then matron  
7 needed to be there.

8 Q. But this English teacher was different, he chose to  
9 come --

10 A. Oh, he did absolutely, yeah.

11 Q. -- into the washroom, the shower room?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. And I think, as we see in paragraph 69 on page 17, you  
14 say he'd often have his camera with him?

15 A. He did, yes.

16 Q. Did anyone else from the teaching staff or sports staff  
17 go around carrying a camera?

18 A. No.

19 Q. What did the pupils think of this behaviour?

20 A. We weren't in a position to question anything. So even  
21 in our own minds, whilst we may have thought that's  
22 unusual, we -- it wasn't for us to question it.

23 Q. All right. Do you remember thinking it was unusual at  
24 the time? If you can't, please say so.

25 A. I remember thinking it was strange, but nothing -- it

1           was a case of: that's unusual, strange, but can't say,  
2           do anything.

3       Q.   Just to be clear, he's got a camera. Was that commonly  
4           with him, always with him?

5       A.   No.

6       Q.   No. But did you see him, for example, taking  
7           photographs when he was supervising showering?

8       A.   No.

9       Q.   Okay.

10      A.   I saw him with his hands on his pot belly, thus, and  
11           I could not tell you if at the same time he was going  
12           click, wind, or anything like that. I couldn't. If I'd  
13           have heard something like that, I would have done and  
14           said something.

15      Q.   But did he have the camera with him as you remember it?

16      A.   Yes, he did, yes.

17      Q.   All right. We would understand that some teachers lived  
18           on site, others lived in houses close to the school.

19      A.   That's correct.

20      Q.   So there would be some provision of supervision, say,  
21           overnight --

22      A.   That's correct, yes --

23      Q.   -- because there would be some teachers living in?

24      A.   Yes.

25      Q.   Did this teacher live in at times or did he live in all

1 the time?

2 A. Permanent.

3 Q. He was permanent?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. How many people did live in permanently?

6 A. Derek Jones had a room, a bedsit of sorts, although

7 there were no cooking facilities, there was a wash basin

8 in the corner of his room. He ate school meals the same

9 as pupils did, with the pupils. YXP-SPO he

10 was the teacher, she wasn't a teacher, really,

11 I don't think she taught any subjects at the school

12 officially. They lived in a self-contained flat

13 downstairs. There was the headmaster's house, which

14 Sir Toby and Lady Gay Coghill resided in, which was just

15 up the hill from the school area. But they moved,

16 obviously, when they left the school.

17 Q. Okay. What about David Hanson? Did he live in?

18 A. No, David Hanson lived in Dufftown with his wife and

19 children. However, he did have, again, a bedsit room in

20 the boys' dormitory area.

21 Q. So from that should we understand on occasion he would

22 be the cover overnight? He would be in the bedsit?

23 A. Yeah, I'm not sure of the frequency, if he was supposed

24 to be there a certain number of days a week or -- I'm

25 not sure of the routine --

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. -- that he was -- when he was there.

3 Q. But I think, as you set out, and we're now moving on

4 obviously to the events that have troubled you since,

5 which is set out on page 17, it follows a rugby match,

6 as we see at paragraph 71, against, you think,

7 Lathalian.

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. To precis it, you had to wear someone else's boots which

10 were too small and that caused your feet to hurt

11 significantly?

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. Because your toenails had been pushed back into your

14 toes?

15 A. Mm-hmm.

16 Q. You got some medical treatment, but when you go back to

17 bed, the anaesthetic wears off and you're in pain and

18 you go and look for support from a teacher, is that

19 fair?

20 A. Correct.

21 Q. Looking essentially for some more pain-killing --

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Was that the purpose?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. All right. And I think, as we see on paragraph 74,



1           page 18, initially you went to see whether David Hanson  
2           was in his room?

3       A. That's correct. The reason for that was nothing to do  
4           with trust, I hasten to add. It was to do with the fact  
5           that from my dormitory he was the closest available  
6           opportunity. Walking from my dormitory down that  
7           corridor, David Hanson's room was on the left about  
8           halfway down the corridor and Derek Jones' room was at  
9           the far end of that corridor.

10       Q. But David Hanson wasn't there?

11       A. No.

12       Q. So the next point of call was the English teacher,  
13           Mr Jones?

14       A. That's correct.

15       Q. He gave you painkillers, as far as you understood at the  
16           time? He gave you them?

17       A. That's what I believed I was taking, yes.

18       Q. Yes. And you went back to bed?

19       A. I did.

20       Q. But, as we see from the statement, and we don't need to  
21           labour it, he then came to visit you in the dormitory  
22           and abused you?

23       A. That's correct.

24       Q. And from your perspective, you simply couldn't move?

25       A. Believe me, I tried.

1 Q. And you tried because, as you've told us, he began to  
2 engage with you under your duvet?

3 A. Correct.

4 Q. He had his camera with him?

5 A. Correct.

6 Q. And, as you say, it came to the point that with a torch  
7 he was under the duvet with his camera, which you could  
8 hear him using?

9 A. I could, yes, absolutely.

10 Q. And he had his hands on your body, on your penis?

11 A. Yes, he was masturbating me.

12 Q. Okay. You said you were trying to move. Could you move  
13 at all?

14 A. No.

15 Q. Could you speak?

16 A. No.

17 Q. But you were conscious of all of this happening?

18 A. Horrendously conscious.

19 Q. But I think, as you say at paragraph 77 on page 19:  
20 "It felt like all of that was going on for years but  
21 it probably only went on for a few minutes. It  
22 certainly wasn't seconds. He then left."

23 Just to be clear, what age were you at this point?  
24 Can you remember?

25 A. 12.

1 Q. 12. He left your dormitory, I take it?  
2 A. Yes, he did.  
3 Q. And could you hear him going back to his own room?  
4 A. I beg your pardon?  
5 Q. Could you hear him going back to his own room?  
6 A. Yes, I could. Footsteps become very familiar on wooden  
7 floors. You knew who was walking around.  
8 Q. You say that the inability to move and respond passed  
9 after a while. Can you remember how long?  
10 A. I couldn't tell you with any degree of accuracy. Again,  
11 it felt like a very long time because I was angry, I was  
12 frustrated, I was hurt, I was confused. But as soon as  
13 I could move, I did. I couldn't give you  
14 a quantifiable -- we didn't have clocks. I didn't wear  
15 a watch.  
16 Q. But I think, as we can read, you sought the support of  
17 a friend?  
18 A. I did, yes.  
19 Q. And with him, you went to the teacher's room?  
20 A. Absolutely.  
21 Q. To challenge him about what had just taken place?  
22 A. Yes.  
23 Q. And indeed, as we see at paragraph 79, you were clearly  
24 concerned about film in his camera.  
25 A. I knew that was evidence.

1 Q. Yes. And you persuaded him to hand over films?  
2 A. (Witness nods).  
3 Q. Did he at any stage admit doing anything to you --  
4 A. No, of course not, no.  
5 Q. How long did this exchange between you and him with the  
6 other boy present take place, do you think?  
7 A. Half an hour to 45 minutes.  
8 Q. All right.  
9 A. And I'm guesstimating.  
10 Q. Of course. And did he try and explain why this must  
11 have happened?  
12 A. Oh, of course, because I had imagined everything.  
13 Q. I think we read that your friend duly went back to bed  
14 and it was just you and him?  
15 A. That's correct.  
16 Q. And as you say in paragraph 80 on the top of page 20:  
17 "He convinced me that I had imagined the whole  
18 thing. He said that it must have all come about because  
19 of the painkillers. He reminded me that the painkillers  
20 were secret and I wasn't to tell anybody about them."  
21 Why would painkillers be secret?  
22 A. Perhaps they were prescription strength.  
23 Q. All right.  
24 A. I know that now, as an adult, but ... he basically made  
25 out that if I said -- he was doing me a favour by giving

1           me these painkillers to try and help me because of the  
2           help that I'd sought in the first place, and by helping  
3           me out, if I told anybody, that he could get into  
4           trouble and that I'd be the bad guy because he's just  
5           a nice chap trying to help me out.

6       Q. I think, as you say at the end of paragraph 81:  
7                 " ... Jones had put sufficient doubt in my mind."  
8       A. Complete doubt in my mind.

9       Q. All right. You gave him the films back?  
10      A. I did.

11      Q. And how did --  
12      A. Stupidly.

13      Q. Sorry?  
14      A. Stupidly.

15      Q. And how did this exchange end? Did you simply go back  
16                 to your room?  
17      A. I did, yes.

18      Q. And how were you feeling by that stage?  
19      A. Confused.

20      Q. Okay. Was there any follow-up from the teacher the day  
21                 after or in the days after that?  
22      A. No. It was as though nothing occurred.

23      Q. We'll talk about what you did next in a moment in terms  
24                 of reporting this, but should I understand or should we  
25                 understand that since your school career you have

1 obviously engaged and heard about forums online where  
2 people are talking about experiences at Gordonstoun, at  
3 Aberlour, that you've spoken to someone else who was at  
4 Aberlour and had experiences with the same teacher?

5 A. Yes, that's correct.

6 Q. When did you speak with this person?

7 A. A few years ago.

8 Q. Are we talking five years?

9 A. I believe that he got in touch with me after I waived my  
10 anonymity in the press.

11 Q. All right, because we should understand that you have  
12 spoken to the press --

13 A. Yes, I have.

14 Q. -- in the last decade?

15 A. Yes, I have.

16 Q. And it's been very open in terms of the experience that  
17 you had and the impact that it has had upon you?

18 A. I believe it's the only way that I can possibly speak  
19 with anybody, is to be open.

20 Q. So having read the article which came from your  
21 interview, he then got in touch with you?

22 A. That's correct.

23 Q. Was this a boy that you knew at school or was it  
24 a different time period?

25 A. No, I didn't -- no, no, I knew him at Aberlour.

1 Q. Was he the same year --

2 A. The same year as me, absolutely.

3 Q. And time-wise, he was talking about abuse?

4 A. He was talking about abuse in the same term as me,

5 exactly the same -- well, not exactly the same modus

6 operandi; however, the abuse that he described to me,

7 Jones gave him alcohol and asked him if he knew how to

8 masturbate, was kind enough as a teacher to show him how

9 to masturbate and also performed oral sex upon him.

10 Q. And you would understand from this boy that he did make

11 a report to the police?

12 A. I believe that he -- from what he has said to me, he

13 made a report to the police in Fife. However, that was

14 about two years after the police were involved on my

15 matter.

16 Q. Yes.

17 A. Well, no, actually, it would have been slightly longer.

18 Sorry, I correct myself. He said two years after he

19 left Aberlour House, so that would have been two and a

20 half years after --

21 Q. Yes, because for your year there would be a little while

22 longer to remain --

23 A. Yes, because I completed the school year at Aberlour

24 before going on to Gordonstoun.

25 Q. Okay. You mentioned your reporting and I think if we

1           move on to page 22 in paragraph 89 you tell us that  
2           about two or three weeks after the incident you were  
3           being picked up by your mother and there was a news  
4           article on the radio about a girl who had been abused  
5           and you said, "I know just how she feels", and things  
6           unfolded from that remark?

7       A.   Yes.

8       Q.   Your mother asks you what went on, she then tells your  
9           father?

10      A.   Yes.

11      Q.   And he comes home and presumably you tell him?

12      A.   I don't actually remember telling my dad. I don't  
13           remember -- I don't know if my father went straight to  
14           the school, if he came home, if he spoke to me.  
15           I actually can't remember.

16      Q.   All right. But I think we do know that he went to speak  
17           to David Hanson?

18      A.   Correct. David Hanson had a meeting with both my  
19           parents.

20      Q.   Was that the same day that you had reported it to your  
21           mother?

22      A.   I believe so, yes.

23      Q.   So they responded immediately?

24      A.   I believe so, yes.

25      Q.   David Hanson, I think you describe him at that stage was



1 acting headmaster?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Why was he acting headmaster?

4 A. I believe Brian Head -- you'd have to ask my parents,  
5 but there was instability, unhappiness amongst parents  
6 with regards to Brian Head being headmaster. I couldn't  
7 tell you the ins and outs of it, obviously not involved.  
8 And I haven't subsequently learnt the details of  
9 those, so.

10 Q. Okay, we can pursue that line. Should we understand  
11 however that after Toby Coghill, Brian Head came to the  
12 school but didn't last very long?

13 A. That's correct, yes.

14 Q. What sort of time frame did he last?

15 A. A couple of years, maybe.

16 Q. Okay. So your parents go to the school as the first  
17 port of call and speak to David Hanson. What about the  
18 police?

19 A. It was reported to the police.

20 Q. By whom?

21 A. My parents, I believe.

22 Q. All right, okay.

23 A. I'd have to ask my mother, and I believe my mother has  
24 made a statement to the Inquiry.

25 Q. She has. But you were then spoken to, we would

1 understand, by a female police officer?

2 A. That's correct. I was interviewed at home in my --  
3 [REDACTED] which is where we lived, and within that  
4 building there was a separate granny flat which housed,  
5 not surprisingly, my granny.

6 It, to me, was a really safe place and, yeah, I was  
7 interviewed in front of the fire there by two female  
8 police officers, as I recall.

9 Q. Okay. You've told us obviously about the connection  
10 your father had with Gordonstoun and the connection he  
11 had with Aberlour. Was there a tension for him between  
12 hearing what had happened to you but some loyalty to the  
13 schools?

14 A. Honestly, that's only a question my father could answer,  
15 were he here. However, I do believe that there was,  
16 yes.

17 Q. Well, put it more simply, did the police inquiry  
18 continue?

19 A. No.

20 Q. Why not?

21 A. To my understanding, Aberlour said Jones will leave and  
22 he will never ever teach again, so there's no need to go  
23 down the police route. I know latterly that my father  
24 before he died and my mother to this day both regret not  
25 pursuing police action and encouraging the police to

1           take action.

2           Personally, sat here with hindsight, I'm  
3           disappointed that the police didn't take action,  
4           irrelevant of what the school thought or what my parents  
5           thought. Their duty was to take action.

6       Q. But I think, as you say in paragraph 92, reading from  
7       page 22, reading the last three lines:

8           "I believe there was an agreement made between my  
9           parents and the school that charges would not be pursued  
10          on the understanding [as you've said] that Jones would  
11          never be allowed to teach again. That is what my father  
12          told me."

13       A. That's correct, yes.

14       Q. So there was a degree of discussion, negotiation?

15       A. Oh, I'm sure there was not just a degree of. I'm sure  
16       that -- my father was not fully supportive of the  
17       school. My father was an exceptional father and would  
18       want to protect me entirely. However, that discussion  
19       most definitely took place.

20       Q. It would appear as well as being protective of you and  
21       a good father, he was also loyal to the school and  
22       didn't want to see harm, is that fair?

23       A. My father was an exceptionally loyal and devoted  
24       individual in every aspect of his life.

25       Q. Yes. But what they did want, as you would understand

1           it, as your mother has said in her statement, was to  
2           ensure that this man would not teach again?

3       A. Absolutely.

4       Q. And from your understanding, having spoken to both your  
5           parents, was that an assurance that they were given?

6       A. Yes.

7       Q. By whom?

8       A. I believe by David Hanson. He was the acting  
9           headmaster. However, I don't know if that was  
10          an assurance that was given by the supervising  
11          individuals from Gordonstoun or whether that was  
12          something that was given from the governors of Aberlour  
13          House or that was David Hanson himself. I've been  
14          fobbed off left, right and centre saying that yes, there  
15          was a database that existed of teachers who weren't  
16          allowed to teach anymore and I don't believe that to be  
17          accurate because, quite frankly, I didn't see a single  
18          computer at school, let alone a database on anyone that  
19          nowadays we would know as commonplace. There certainly  
20          wasn't the internet. So if the schools amongst  
21          themselves, the Fettes and the Gordonstouns of the world  
22          turned round and went, "Do you know what, this chap's  
23          a bad egg, don't employ him", maybe that's what  
24          happened, but that's no cast-iron guarantee that this  
25          teacher could not teach again.

1 Q. I think you may be aware the Inquiry has heard evidence  
2 of a List 99, as it was known, which was a list held  
3 centrally, of teachers who should --

4 A. I wasn't aware that you have evidence of this and I'm --  
5 if this list existed, then, as someone involved with  
6 that, I'd love to know how it worked.

7 Q. All right. That's something we may discover.

8 A. Thank you. I very much look forward to it.

9 Q. Okay. Practically, though, you have told your parents,  
10 they have acted as you've just been describing, and to  
11 move on to page 23, which is headed, "Immediate  
12 aftermath of reporting abuse", you go home for the  
13 weekend and when you go back after that weekend, the  
14 teacher has gone?

15 A. Yes, that's correct.

16 Q. He's out?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. So to that extent, it would appear the school moved  
19 swiftly?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Was anything said to you by anyone about what had  
22 happened when you got back to the school? Was there any  
23 effort to provide pastoral care, as we would now  
24 understand it, on your return?

25 A. No, absolutely not. It was just another day, crack on

1 as usual.

2 Q. I think to use the phrase "as if nothing had happened";

3 is that correct?

4 A. Exactly.

5 Q. You set out at paragraph 94, however, there was fallout,

6 and just reading that, we see after the English teacher

7 left, another teacher, who's name has been blacked out,

8 [REDACTED] is that correct?

9 A. Yes, that's correct. [REDACTED] YXP [REDACTED]

10 [REDACTED]

11 [REDACTED]

12 [REDACTED]

13 Q. Was she a friend of Derek Jones?

14 A. I presume so.

15 Q. Just because what you then go on to say is:

16 "I recall that during my first class with her the

17 day after I had got back she called me a liar in front

18 of everyone. She basically said in front of everybody

19 in the class that I had made it up. She said that I had

20 got a perfectly innocent lovely man kicked out of his

21 job. She did that very deliberately to belittle me."

22 A. That's correct.

23 Q. That's in front of a class of how many people?

24 A. 12.

25 Q. Were the other 11 boys, you being the 12th --

1       A. Boys and girls.

2       Q. Boys and girls. Were the other 11 pupils aware of what  
3       had happened?

4       A. Of course they were aware. No one keeps secrets in  
5       an establishment such as that. If there's smoke at one  
6       end of the corridor, people at the other end of it know  
7       there's a fire already. There's no secrets. Everybody  
8       knows what goes on.

9       Q. All right.

10      LADY SMITH: John, at the end of paragraph 93, you say you  
11      went straight back to the same bed with the same duvet  
12      cover.

13      A. Correct.

14      LADY SMITH: What are you telling me there? Apart from  
15      literally that you went back to the same bed with the  
16      same duvet cover. Why does that strike you as  
17      significant?

18      A. It sticks in my head because I remember that duvet cover  
19      from when I was abused and it was the same duvet cover  
20      and I had to get my body underneath that same duvet  
21      cover and then somehow try and fall asleep.

22      LADY SMITH: So what would have been better for you,  
23      the 12-year-old child?

24      A. My Lady, I don't think there is a solution to that  
25      particular thing. Some way or somehow we have to move

1           forwards. Putting me in a different bed wouldn't have  
2           made anything necessarily easier, because at some point  
3           in time those demons have to be faced.

4       LADY SMITH: Thank you.

5       MR BROWN: Presumably you did have ongoing discussions with  
6           your parents then?

7       A. I did, yes.

8       Q. You've talked about confusion, but I think we see at  
9           paragraph 106 on page 26 down at the bottom, you  
10          remember sitting with your dad in front of the fire when  
11          you were 13 or 14, so this would be a year or two  
12          afterwards?

13      A. Yes.

14      Q. "I was in floods of tears about my abuse. I was still  
15          asking 'why me?'"

16                So that's a year or two after the event. Is that  
17          a question that you'd been asking yourself throughout  
18          the period after the abuse?

19      A. It's something I never understood. Why. And as I say  
20          later in my statement, my father answered that question  
21          to me.

22      Q. And his answer was?

23      A. Because I stood out.

24      Q. And stood out in what way?

25      A. Academically one of the best pupils at the school,



1           sporting, I exceptionally stood out.

2       Q.   You were --

3       A.   David Hanson himself said I was the greatest athlete

4           that that school had ever seen, and that's not just in

5           terms of athletics; its greatest sportsman. And that

6           was an exceptional compliment to be given. But

7           I enjoyed my sports. I'm a very competitive individual,

8           but at the point in time at Aberlour, I was competitive

9           in the classroom as well, not just on the rugby field.

10      Q.   I think, as the statement goes on, you held various

11           roles in the school to reflect that you were well

12           thought of. You had responsibility --

13      A.   Yes.

14      Q.   -- in the hierarchy of pupils?

15      A.   Yes, I did, yes.

16      Q.   Were you, if I can just be colloquial, in terms of the

17           pupil group, the top of the tree?

18      A.   Yes, probably.

19      Q.   Confident?

20      A.   Arrogant, perhaps.

21      Q.   Did that continue when you went to Gordonstoun?

22      A.   No.

23      Q.   Why not?

24      A.   I didn't want to stand out.

25      Q.   You've told us that you had the remainder of that term

1           to finish at Aberlour and then you moved on to  
2           Gordonstoun.

3       A.   Mm.

4       Q.   Did your attitude to school and how you presented  
5           yourself change at Aberlour or was it just from  
6           Gordonstoun?

7       A.   I think I -- I viewed the break from -- and the move  
8           from Aberlour to Gordonstoun as a natural, "I can  
9           change, I don't need to stand out any more, I can just  
10          merge into the background".

11      Q.   Is that something you positively tried to do, just  
12          disappear?

13      A.   Not consciously, no.   However, in hindsight, if I look  
14          back as to how I was, it wasn't a case of I sat down and  
15          looked myself in the eye in the mirror and thought I'm  
16          making this conscious decision.   However, I believe in  
17          hindsight that yes, consciously that is exactly why  
18          I chose to be average.

19      Q.   In terms of Aberlour, because as you've said everything  
20          was known in a small school, was there impact  
21          immediately in terms of the way your fellows treated  
22          you?

23      A.   At Aberlour?

24      Q.   Yes.

25      A.   Yes.   Yes, there was.   I was teased, I was called

1           a homo, which is a vile word, archaic and disgusting  
2           with regards to little boys teasing about being  
3           a homosexual. I was teased by my peers, berated, which  
4           didn't last terribly long. I was a relatively big chap.  
5           There was a fight against the other big chap in our  
6           year. I came out on top and everybody else knew  
7           perfectly well that if I was teased or bullied, they  
8           would end up in pain.

9           Q. Did it follow you to Gordonstoun at all or --

10          A. Not at all, no.

11          Q. No?

12          A. No, absolutely not.

13          Q. For Gordonstoun it was a clean slate?

14          A. Completely and utterly a clean slate.

15          Q. All right.

16          A. Basically no one knew at all, to my knowledge.

17          Q. Okay.

18          A. I don't remember it ever being mentioned.

19          Q. And in terms of your experience at Gordonstoun, we've  
20             talked about you engaging with others. You're aware of  
21             complaints from others at Gordonstoun but your  
22             experience of Gordonstoun was benign?

23          A. I had a great time in Gordonstoun. I loved Gordonstoun.  
24             In hindsight, looking back, I wish actually I'd taken  
25             more of the opportunities that were presented to me, but

1           because of my mental attitude that I don't want to get  
2           involved, I'm scared of something terrible happening  
3           again, not -- I know it sounds really silly, perhaps,  
4           but you just don't want to put yourself forward and that  
5           sort of thing, and that means that actually I went  
6           through Gordonstoun and whilst Gordonstoun was  
7           incredible, I know perfectly well that I personally from  
8           a selfish point of view did not take and reap the  
9           rewards that Gordonstoun actually offered me from my own  
10          full potential, if that makes any sense.

11        Q. And I think, taking that on, paragraph 112 on page 28 is  
12        talking about impact of the events in Aberlour and it's  
13        very simple:

14                "I don't trust anybody."

15        A. I don't.

16        Q. And was that the position at Gordonstoun that may be  
17        part of why you were ...

18        A. I'm sat here and I don't trust anybody.

19        Q. All right. Did you trust anyone at Gordonstoun?

20        A. Yes. Well, as much as I can. But I know I have to  
21        force myself to trust. Yes.

22        Q. Was that friends or teachers?

23        A. Both.

24        Q. Both?

25        A. Yes. To this day, Richard Devey, teacher, he joined the

1 school whilst I was at Duffus House. To this day  
2 I regard him as 100 per cent gentleman and I trust him  
3 implicitly. He worked with my father on the Kurt Hahn  
4 Foundation. My father trusted him implicitly. And  
5 I have nothing but the highest respect for him.

6 Q. What about anxiety?

7 A. I have a lot of it.

8 Q. Has that been present since Aberlour, aged 12?

9 A. Yes, although it's only something that I've come to  
10 understand and realise what it is in the last few years.

11 Q. And in terms of formal treatment, tell us about that.

12 You say it's something you've understood in the last  
13 couple of years, were there diagnoses --

14 A. Well, no, I have a diagnosis, but that's a little bit  
15 like going to a doctor and saying, "Yes, this is wrong  
16 with you, here's your prescription, but you can't go and  
17 actually get the medication or treatment". I am  
18 diagnosed with clinically severe levels of anxiety,  
19 depression and post-traumatic stress disorder. However,  
20 because I haven't tried to kill myself within the last  
21 couple of weeks, I'm not able to get any help.

22 Q. But help is something you have sought presumably in the  
23 past?

24 A. Most definitely.

25 Q. Do you feel you still need help?

1       A. I don't feel it, I know it.

2       Q. Is one of the things that does help speaking to others  
3       who have suffered abuse?

4       A. Of course, because we understand each other and I can  
5       turn around to someone with the same illnesses and I can  
6       say, "Yeah, do you know, I'm not having a good day", and  
7       they go, "That's okay, I understand", and the thing is  
8       they do understand. I couldn't paint a picture or show  
9       you a film or describe or write down how we feel. And  
10      thankfully you will never ever feel it. I wouldn't wish  
11      how I feel at times upon my own abuser. That's how  
12      awful it is.

13      Q. You mentioned that you've gone to the press.

14      A. Yes.

15      Q. Or the press contacted you I think is perhaps the more  
16      accurate way of --

17      A. A bit of both.

18      Q. Bit of both.

19      A. Equally guilty.

20      Q. After that, did you re-report the matter to the police?

21      A. I did, yes.

22      Q. What gave you the impetus to contact the police?

23      A. I wanted to find out and stop this human, if he was  
24      still alive and still in a role that he could be abusing  
25      anybody.

1 Q. Obviously you've told us very clearly that your parents  
2 had the expectation that he would never teach again.  
3 A. Correct.  
4 Q. Did your enquiries and the police enquiries clarify  
5 that?  
6 A. Yes. He did teach again.  
7 Q. In relation to his departure from Aberlour?  
8 A. Yes, after Aberlour he went on to teach again. As far  
9 as I'm aware, he taught in a school in Essex. After  
10 that he left the school under a very similar cloud that  
11 he would have left Aberlour under, and then I believe  
12 that he went to work in Kenya, the Rift Valley school,  
13 if I remember correctly.  
14 LADY SMITH: Sorry?  
15 A. The Rift Valley school in Kenya.  
16 LADY SMITH: In Kenya?  
17 A. Yes, in Africa.  
18 MR BROWN: And you would understand that he is now dead?  
19 A. I believe so.  
20 Q. Yes. At the same time as speaking with the press, which  
21 obviously brought it out into the public eye, speaking  
22 with the police, did you at the same time contact  
23 Gordonstoun?  
24 A. I did indeed, yes.  
25 Q. And that was the then headmaster Simon Reid?

1 A. Correct, yes.

2 Q. And we have the correspondence between you, it was by  
3 email, of course. What was your sense of the response?  
4 Did it give you some satisfaction?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Why not?

7 A. Because Gordonstoun are still trying to distance  
8 themselves from Aberlour, pretend it's a -- well, it  
9 legally is a separate entity. However, Aberlour is the  
10 junior school to Gordonstoun, end of story. And we need  
11 help. We're not looking to blame. We are people that  
12 need help and we are asking for help and support. These  
13 events happened to us under their care. It's not blame.  
14 It's no malice. We're just looking for help.

15 Q. You'll be aware that the Inquiry has been sitting in  
16 relation to this phase, boarding schools, since the late  
17 spring/early summer of this year.

18 A. Correct.

19 Q. Have you read the evidence of the current principal,  
20 Lisa Kerr, about what steps are being taken and in  
21 particular her response to accepting supporting pupils  
22 from Aberlour?

23 A. I have read parts, yes.

24 Q. All right.

25 A. At the end of the day, I want to be able to forgive so



1           that I can move on with my life, but I cannot forgive  
2           until acceptance is taken by other individuals. How can  
3           I forgive if people aren't willing to acknowledge that  
4           these things happened and they have had devastating  
5           effects?

6       Q. If we hear that the current chair of Aberlour's board  
7       has apologised for what happened to you and others,  
8       would that help?

9       A. It's reassuring. However, if I can refer back to the  
10      prescription for the treatment that I need, what is  
11      stopping me going downhill now after I walk out of here  
12      in a week or a month or a year and taking my own life?  
13      Because that is something that I have tried to do in the  
14      past.

15     Q. So what would you like?

16     A. What would I like?

17     Q. Yes.

18     A. Personally, I believe an institution such as Gordonstoun  
19     potentially has within its remit the possibility of  
20     setting up a trust, whatever it is called, whereby  
21     victims of abuse, be it historic or current, would be  
22     able to access treatment as prescribed to them for  
23     mental health illnesses before having to go through  
24     a prolonged civil action to be able to get the finances  
25     just so that they can afford enough money to talk to

1 a therapist to stop them killing themselves.

2 Q. You'll be aware that Lisa Kerr is giving evidence later  
3 this week.

4 A. I am indeed.

5 Q. And we can ask that question.

6 A. I would love the answer. And if I may, I would like to  
7 point out also that Lisa Kerr has invited me to  
8 Gordonstoun to talk about these exact subjects, and  
9 personally I look forward to that conversation and  
10 I hope that not just for myself, but also everybody  
11 involved, that it is a very productive meeting and  
12 conversation and a way to move forward. That said, it  
13 is at this point in time very little and it is also very  
14 late. However, I still hope that steps can be made in  
15 the right direction for everybody involved.

16 Q. Do you consider that meeting to be progress?

17 A. I genuinely hope so.

18 Q. Okay. The final thing I'd like to ask you about is  
19 under the chapter heading, "Lessons to be learned", and  
20 you've touched upon this in your statement. If we go to  
21 page 31 and paragraph 128, you talk about continual  
22 assessment and background checks of staff and say:  
23 "I personally believe that no matter how accurately  
24 you vet a barrel of apples there still might be a bad  
25 one. Any paedophile or predator was probably not always

1           like that. Interviews, pre-interviews and background  
2           checks will catch a certain number but it won't catch  
3           the people who become that way later on. I think it is  
4           important to continue to analyse people throughout their  
5           employment. I think that is especially important in  
6           establishments such as Aberlour and Gordonstoun where it  
7           is essentially 'jobs for the boys'. If you have been  
8           a staff member at an establishment for 20 years your  
9           record before you joined might be whiter than white.  
10          However, that might have changed in the intervening  
11          period. How you catch that element I do not know.  
12          Perhaps some form of continual assessment is the way  
13          forward."

14                 Do you actually have a sense of what schools are now  
15          doing? Is this something you've looked into or is this  
16          something --

17          A. No, of course not. I don't work in education.

18          Q. No.

19          A. And I'm certain that the schools do do that now.

20          Q. I was just going to say --

21          A. They wouldn't get insurance policies if they didn't.

22          Q. So that's not the question for the school.

23          A. And I look forward -- and I know, I know that

24          Gordonstoun -- I don't know the details, of course not,

25          I don't work there, but I do know that Gordonstoun has

1           made huge steps in the right direction and I applaud  
2           them wholeheartedly for doing so.

3       LADY SMITH:   John, you mentioned this phrase "jobs for the  
4           boys" in that paragraph, and I take it that's  
5           an impression you had from your own direct experience.  
6           Am I right about that?

7       A.   It is, yes.

8       LADY SMITH:   How did you get that impression?

9       A.   Well, you end up with a governor of Aberlour who's --  
10          you know, he went to Aberlour and he went to  
11          Gordonstoun, then he sends his children to Aberlour and  
12          also to Gordonstoun and he lives in Elgin and he becomes  
13          a governor of Aberlour because he's known to the school  
14          and he's -- yes, I'm just -- off the top of my head.  
15          It's someone well-known and apparently trustworthy but  
16          actually just given a job that they've got no experience  
17          in whatsoever.

18       LADY SMITH:   So a failure to look beyond what you already  
19          know?

20       A.   Yes, basically.

21       LADY SMITH:   Are you just talking about governors or were  
22          you talking about people who worked at the schools as  
23          well?

24       A.   I'm using the example of a governor in particular just  
25          because it's one that sticks in my head -- actually,

1           stuck in my father's. My father was at school with the  
2           chap. No, I personally -- and I know from my time at  
3           Gordonstoun, David Hanson applied to be housemaster of  
4           Duffus House, however failed the interview process  
5           and -- well, didn't fail the -- he wasn't selected, fail  
6           is the wrong way of putting it, he wasn't selected as  
7           housemaster. I believe that's when QWP became  
8           housemaster. And Gordonstoun absolutely got it right.  
9           So that wasn't jobs for the boys. This is a complete  
10          counter to what I've just said, but I believe in certain  
11          areas there were, yes. But in other areas, no, the  
12          recruitment process, that I can recall as a junior at  
13          Gordonstoun, was clearly not a case of jobs for the  
14          boys.

15       LADY SMITH: Thank you.

16                Mr Brown.

17       MR BROWN: Thank you. But as a general observation,  
18                changing culture away from close connections with  
19                establishments is something you would wish for?

20       A. Mm. Yes.

21       Q. And proper processes?

22       A. I believe so, absolutely. How that -- I don't work in  
23                education, I've no idea how that should be done or the  
24                best way of actually ensuring that. It's not my area so  
25                I don't know.

1 Q. Again it may be that you would find some of the  
2 discussions from earlier on in the Inquiry might be  
3 instructive.

4 A. I'm sure. I'm absolutely sure. It will be very  
5 educational for me and very eye-opening and I look  
6 forward to hearing it.

7 Q. All right. The other thing that you have particular  
8 concerns about is the culture of reporting and what you  
9 go on to say is:

10 "In the past it was definitely all hushed up. You  
11 just didn't talk about it and carried on. I'd like to  
12 believe that if something inappropriate was done to  
13 a child now that child would feel comfortable enough to  
14 turn around and make a noise."

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. So openness and channels of communication that are  
17 understood, is that a fair summary?

18 A. Absolutely. And I think people should have no shame  
19 whatsoever with regards to speaking out of this -- with  
20 regards to these things. It just occurred to me, but  
21 people speaking out about things is -- it is so  
22 important, but people still don't. It's apparently  
23 embarrassing. I want to say something, but I'm not  
24 going to, sorry.

25 Q. That's fine.

1 LADY SMITH: If you want to say it and you're worried that  
2 I don't want you to say it, don't refrain because of  
3 that, John.

4 A. No, my Lady, it's not -- if people weren't embarrassed,  
5 more people would waive their anonymity.

6 LADY SMITH: You're talking about when it's something very  
7 personal --

8 A. It sounds like a terrible thing but it's -- yes, I'm  
9 still to this day embarrassed that this happened to me  
10 as a child. Obviously it's not something that anybody  
11 can be proud of, of course not. But we -- we shouldn't  
12 feel ashamed. It's unfair.

13 MR BROWN: John, thank you very much indeed. Is there  
14 anything else you would wish to add?

15 A. There is, actually. I would like to extend ... excuse  
16 me. (Pause). I'd like to extend my thanks because it  
17 is really important for people such as myself to have  
18 an opportunity to talk, and, my Lady, my thanks don't  
19 just go to you, but they go to your staff, the  
20 colleagues and the countless people that have provided  
21 exceptional support in my experience, and I cannot thank  
22 you enough. I've given my evidence without a tear, but  
23 my thanks mean so much.

24 LADY SMITH: Well, thank you, John. I do appreciate that  
25 and I know how difficult it is, as you've identified

1           already, to come forward and speak about embarrassing  
2           but very painful events, which you've helped me to  
3           understand. It's enormously valuable.

4           Are there any outstanding applications for  
5           questions?

6           John, that completes all the questions we have for  
7           you and I am able to let you go, as I say, with my  
8           thanks. It does really, really help the work that we're  
9           doing here that you've been able to come forward and  
10          explain your experiences to us and as fairly as you have  
11          done, making sure I understand the positives as well as  
12          the negatives, and that is important.

13        A. My Lady, thank you for the opportunity.

14        LADY SMITH: I'm able to let you go, and I hope you're able  
15          to unwind for the rest of the day.

16        A. I'm sure I shall, my Lady. And again, my thanks.

17        LADY SMITH: Good.

18                               (The witness withdrew)

19        LADY SMITH: Mr Brown, I think we'll take the morning break  
20          now.

21        MR BROWN: That would be helpful, my Lady. The next  
22          witness, I think, is primed to appear on the video at  
23          11.45.

24        LADY SMITH: Very well. Thank you very much.

25        (11.20 am)



1 (A short break)

2 (11.47 am)

3 MR BROWN: My Lady.

4 LADY SMITH: We have a link, do we?

5 MR BROWN: We have a link and it has been tested and works.

6 LADY SMITH: Good.

7 MR BROWN: The next witness is Dr Mann.

8 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

9 Dr Mann, good morning.

10 THE WITNESS: Good morning.

11 LADY SMITH: Can you hear me and see me?

12 THE WITNESS: I can indeed.

13 LADY SMITH: Let me introduce myself. I'm Lady Smith and

14 I chair the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry. Thank you for

15 agreeing to link with us today to give your evidence

16 orally. I do already have your written statement but

17 it's really helpful to me to be able to hear from you

18 yourself.

19 Before we start your evidence, I'd like you to take

20 an oath, please. Is that all right?

21 THE WITNESS: Absolutely.

22 Dr Mann (sworn)

23 LADY SMITH: If it's all right with you, I'll hand over to

24 Mr Brown and he'll take your evidence from there.

25 Please, if you've got any queries or questions during

1           your evidence, don't hesitate to ask. It's very  
2           important that you are as comfortable as you can be in  
3           giving your evidence, so do let me know if there are any  
4           difficulties.

5           A. Thank you very much, Lady Smith.

6           LADY SMITH: Mr Brown.

7                               Questions from Mr Brown

8           MR BROWN: My Lady, thank you.

9                               Dr Mann, hello.

10          A. Hello.

11          Q. Her Ladyship has referred to the statement which you  
12             have a copy of in front of you and if we can just begin  
13             with that, I think you can confirm that that's  
14             a document that runs to 14 pages.

15          A. Correct.

16          Q. On the last page, it's with numbered paragraphs, we see  
17             the last paragraph reads:

18                        "I have no objection to my witness statement being  
19             published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry.

20             I believe the facts stated in this statement are true."

21             And we see that you signed that statement in 2018.

22             Is that correct?

23          A. Yes.

24          Q. And you will have obviously read through the statement  
25             to confirm its accuracy before you signed.

1 A. Correct.

2 Q. Thank you. Please understand that that statement is now  
3 in evidence, which is obviously of assistance to the  
4 Inquiry, but I still want to ask you a number of  
5 questions about some of the detail that you've provided.

6 A. Okay.

7 Q. Before I do so, though, I understand that you wish to  
8 read a brief statement that you have prepared; is that  
9 correct?

10 A. Correct, yes.

11 Q. Could you please do that?

12 A. Sure.

13 First of all, I would like to very sincerely thank  
14 the organisers of the Inquiry. It makes a colossal  
15 difference to people who are abused as children, so I'm  
16 delighted to be participating in this event.

17 I spent five years at Gordonstoun. There was not  
18 one day where I was not physically or verbally abused  
19 because of my ethnicity. This led to my being diagnosed  
20 with post-traumatic stress disorder, in consequence not  
21 having children of my own, et cetera. Additionally, the  
22 education that I received was abysmal. I remember the  
23 last words that my housemaster said to me were, "If you  
24 can get a polytechnic anywhere in the country to offer  
25 you a place, take it". Ignoring his advice, I took

1 a year off, worked during the day and studied into the  
2 night and was offered a place at the University of  
3 Cambridge.

4 There were many people who have had an even worse  
5 experience than me, I can think of a dozen names  
6 offhand. Many of us approached the school over the  
7 years to share our concerns. The school's response has  
8 at best been evasive, at worst dismissive.

9 Thank you.

10 Q. Dr Mann, thank you. I think you'll be surprised to  
11 learn that some of those headings, if I can describe the  
12 various points you made, are matters that I will now ask  
13 you questions about in rather more detail.

14 A. Please do.

15 Q. Thank you. In terms of background, you've said you  
16 spent five years at Gordonstoun and that was in the late  
17 70s; is that correct?

18 A. From 19 -- yes, 1975 to 1979.

19 Q. Thank you. But your route to Gordonstoun was rather  
20 more international than most, I think it's fair to say?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Because by way of upbringing, you spent most of your  
23 childhood until you went to Gordonstoun or very shortly  
24 before you went to Gordonstoun outwith the UK?

25 A. Yes, correct.

1 Q. I think, as you tell us, you were born in Germany and  
2 I think we know from what you tell us the two languages  
3 that you would speak naturally before coming to the UK  
4 would be French and German.  
5 A. Correct, yes.  
6 Q. English was not a language that you learnt at an early  
7 stage?  
8 A. English was technically the fifth language I tried to  
9 engage with over the years.  
10 Q. Okay. In terms of schooling, you tell us that you  
11 initially went to a French school in Germany, hence the  
12 French and German.  
13 A. Yes.  
14 Q. But then with your mother you moved to Iran; is that  
15 correct?  
16 A. Correct, yes.  
17 Q. And then from there on to Pakistan?  
18 A. Correct.  
19 Q. And you went to school in Lahore, in a school called  
20 Aitchison College, which you describe as a semi-military  
21 institution but with a British tradition, if I can put  
22 it that way?  
23 A. Very much so, yes.  
24 Q. How would you expand on British tradition?  
25 A. Oh dear. A certain amount of discipline. It was sort

1 of a -- the equivalent of a boarding school -- well, it  
2 was a -- it is a boarding school. It is -- I was a day  
3 pupil at that school.

4 I would say, you know, issues of -- sport played  
5 a role, great issues of fair play and sort of, you know,  
6 concepts I was at that stage not particularly familiar  
7 with, which sort of resurfaced when I came to the UK.  
8 So without going into too much detail, there was  
9 a somewhat antiquated sort of public school culture at  
10 Aitchison because of various colonial issues, but yeah,  
11 they were reflected in my experience later on in the UK.

12 Q. Okay. I think, as you say, that's where you first had  
13 connection with Gordonstoun because the SNR at  
14 Aitchison had been to Gordonstoun?

15 A. Correct. He had been to Gordonstoun and his son was at  
16 that time also at Gordonstoun.

17 Q. By this stage in Pakistan, presumably English is the  
18 language you are trying to use because that would be --  
19 would that be the language of the school or was it not  
20 the language of the school?

21 A. Very much so, English was the language of the school and  
22 that was my first real exposure to the language.

23 Q. So did you stand out because your language skills were  
24 less than your fellow pupils'?

25 A. Yes. Yes, I -- I struggled through -- you know, there

1           wasn't a section devoted to people who had language  
2           problems, I was just thrown into the deep end with all  
3           the other boys to just pick it up as I went along and do  
4           as best as I could.

5       Q. Did that difference cause you any difficulty at  
6       Aitchison?

7       A. Well, yes. I mean, obviously if you're trying to learn  
8       texts and history and write essays and, you know, all  
9       these kind of things, and you don't have a confident  
10      grasp of the language, you're going to be at -- you're  
11      going to have issues.

12      LADY SMITH: Dr Mann, how old were you when you went to  
13      Aitchison College?

14      A. Aitchison College, probably about nine years old.

15      LADY SMITH: So prep school age?

16      A. Very much so, yes.

17      LADY SMITH: Thank you.

18      MR BROWN: And obviously that caused difficulties because,  
19      as compared with your fellows, you were running behind  
20      in terms of language.

21      A. Mm.

22      Q. Did that difference make you stand out to the other  
23      pupils? Did that cause them to treat you differently?

24      A. No, because it's Pakistan, so, you know, their own  
25      language, their own culture, you know, basically is --

1           is not an English culture, it's a Pakistani culture  
2           based on Urdu, so to most of them, English was also  
3           a secondary language and quite a few of them also  
4           struggled. So I was not in any form seen -- I mean, not  
5           being Pakistani in a fairly purely Pakistani environment  
6           obviously makes you stand out without a doubt, but I was  
7           not ostracised in any shape or form by the other boys  
8           because of my language skills. No, it was not the case.

9       Q. And you've told us, I think, you were the only Christian  
10       in the school?

11      A. As far as I know. I cannot speak for hundreds of boys,  
12       but to my awareness, yes, I was the only Christian  
13       there.

14      Q. To use your word, were you ostracised for that?

15      A. Because my mother was a diplomat and I was a foreigner,  
16       no, I wasn't -- I was -- that did not mean that I was  
17       respected less by the others because without going into  
18       too much sociological sort of detail in terms of  
19       Pakistan and the relationship between Muslims and  
20       Christians in Pakistan, I was not ostracised as such,  
21       but truth be told, I didn't, you know, exactly pick up  
22       a megaphone and, you know, let everybody know my own  
23       personal religious convictions. I basically let them  
24       know that it's a personal matter and I chose to keep it  
25       so, so on the whole I kept these things to myself in



1           order to possibly avoid any issues.

2           Q. But I think, to put it succinctly, there were no issues  
3           at Aitchison because you were different?

4           A. No. I was treated the same. I was, you know, in terms  
5           of the seniors, the prefects, the Master's, I was not  
6           aware of being treated differently in any shape or form,  
7           no.

8           Q. Okay. But the decision was taken that you should go to  
9           the UK to continue your education and this was assisted  
10          by the fact that the [REDACTED] at Aitchison himself  
11          moved to the UK and took up a headship at a prep school  
12          in Yorkshire?

13          A. Yes. He was instrumental in -- my mother's next posting  
14          was going to be in East Germany, which is not conducive,  
15          you know, at that stage before the -- was not going to  
16          be conducive to -- you know, my not having problems from  
17          an education perspective. Because of the lack of  
18          stability in my education at that stage, she decided to  
19          send me to boarding school and Mr [REDACTED] made a very  
20          good case for me to follow him to that prep school with  
21          a view purely to be there to prepare for the Common  
22          Entrance exams for Gordonstoun.

23          Q. And he was successful in that aim because you were  
24          accepted, having passed the exam?

25          A. To my eternal joy and delight, yes.

1 Q. A hint of irony?

2 A. A hint.

3 Q. You go to Gordonstoun in 1975 from London, I think, as

4 you tell us, on the sleeper. You would be 14 at the

5 time?

6 A. No, going off to Gordonstoun I was 12, going up to

7 Gordonstoun. For the first time.

8 Q. For the very first time.

9 A. Yeah, for the first time I was 12 years old.

10 Q. Okay. You travelled on your own?

11 A. Very much so, yes.

12 Q. What was your first impression on arrival at

13 Gordonstoun?

14 A. So just to clarify, I travelled on my own, I was not

15 accompanied by an adult that I was friendly with or, you

16 know, a member of my family, but there was a system

17 where basically you booked your tickets through the

18 school and everyone was put on the same sleeper

19 together, so I was together, as far as I can recollect,

20 with other boys who were also going to that school at

21 that time.

22 Q. I follow.

23 A. Yes. So my first impression upon arriving at

24 Gordonstoun?

25 Q. Yes.

1       A. Gosh. Well, obviously the buildings, the main  
2       Gordonstoun House and so on and the Round Square,  
3       they're very imposing. It's -- you know, from  
4       an architectural perspective it's a very impressive  
5       place. I was a bit intimidated, obviously, because it  
6       was the first time I was away from home and I didn't  
7       really speak the language with any sort of fluency at  
8       that stage. So I was intimidate but I was also, you  
9       know, optimistic. I was kind of looking forward to  
10      a good challenge and seeing what was going to come my  
11      way.

12     Q. I think, as you tell us, that initially you were put  
13      into Hopeman House?

14     A. Correct.

15     Q. And as you say, each person had his own bed space and  
16      that wasn't too bad, but then after a year you moved to  
17      Bruce House, which was --

18     A. Yes.

19     Q. -- perhaps rather different?

20     A. So just to clarify, I don't know if this makes sense,  
21      but we had our own beds but they were what they called  
22      horseboxes, so there were like four rooms sort of --  
23      think a corridor divided into four and there's four sort  
24      of beds in there with desks and there's a separation, so  
25      each one has its own door, but otherwise you can see

1           your neighbour completely and so on and so forth.

2           So yes, and then I was sent to Bruce House, which  
3           was a completely different matter.

4       Q. I think from what you tell us it was, initially  
5           certainly, contained in wartime Nissen huts.

6       A. Very much so.

7           We were told -- and I'm not sure if this is fact or  
8           fiction -- they were built during the war to train  
9           soldiers and then shortly after the war and then for  
10          some reason, which I don't want to speculate, they were  
11          kept going and boys were put in there. But as I said,  
12          I have no evidence, empirical evidence, to substantiate  
13          this.

14       Q. You're obviously in a new country, a new school. What  
15          was your impression of the sort of pupils who went to  
16          Gordonstoun? I think you mentioned there were two  
17          types.

18       A. Yes, I mean, I would say that -- again I'm having to  
19          look at this from the perspective of my initial  
20          encounter at that school as a 12-year-old and my  
21          perspective as a 12-year-old which was much more limited  
22          than 40 years later, which it's a more evolved way of  
23          looking at it. But on the whole my feeling was that  
24          there were a lot of people who -- because the  
25          Royal Family was there, or members of the Royal Family

1           were at that school, whose parents had sent them there  
2           in order to rub shoulders, for lack of a better  
3           expression, so there was a small contingent of people  
4           who had been -- whose parents maybe had been there and  
5           sort of from more sort of elite, perhaps, members of the  
6           aristocracy and so on, as I said, maybe 15 per cent of  
7           those, and then many others were the sons and daughters  
8           of people, entrepreneur-types who had done very well for  
9           themselves and made a lot of money and wanted to have  
10          their kids educated along with members of the  
11          Royal Family. So that's -- I don't want to get into too  
12          close a distinction between the two groups, but that's  
13          a fair assessment.

14        Q. I think you say in paragraph 11 on page 2 it was the  
15          latter group of children, they were the ones who would  
16          deal out a lot of beatings.

17        A. Yes.

18        Q. And they were rough?

19        A. Yes. I think I should have used the word "feral" if I  
20          haven't used it; it was very reminiscent of Lord of the  
21          Flies.

22        Q. All right. You said in your opening statement there  
23          wasn't a day where you did not suffer some form of  
24          abuse.

25        A. No. To the day I left.

1 Q. I beg your pardon?

2 A. To the day I left.

3 Q. To the day you left. And you obviously talk about that  
4 abuse on page 9 to 11 of your statement.

5 To begin with, what was the first experience of  
6 abuse, do you remember?

7 A. Gosh, you mean the very first time I was called certain  
8 names or hit? I can't pinpoint a particular incident.  
9 It just came as a wave and it started very early on.  
10 I think the trigger point, to the best of my  
11 understanding, was the fact that (a) my English was not  
12 very good but the English that I did speak, I spoke with  
13 a very heavy Pakistani accent, so that I think sort  
14 of -- various individuals who had issues with people of  
15 a Pakistani heritage, and so -- I don't -- you know, the  
16 words I was called are in the document that you have in  
17 front of you, I don't think it's appropriate for me to  
18 repeat them in the court unless you really want me to,  
19 but I respect the court, but it was -- I mean, it was  
20 fairly brutal. It hit me like a wave. Initially I had  
21 no idea why, and not being of Pakistani heritage, I was  
22 also, "Why are you calling me these things?" As  
23 mentioned also, this was the time when the TV series  
24 Roots came out and they didn't make a great distinction  
25 between what ethnicity you came from as long as they

1           could abuse you, find a term of abuse. This to me was  
2           new because I didn't know any of the words that they  
3           were using to insult me, to abuse me. I had to  
4           literally go and ask what they meant, and so, you know,  
5           it just went from there. I mean, the physical abuse was  
6           a very much accepted part of our existence there. It  
7           just -- nobody ever seemed to think or say that, well,  
8           this is not on, this should not be happening, this  
9           should not be allowed. It just -- you know, it was --  
10          it was such a feral society that I think the physical  
11          abuse, especially by the more senior boys, was a way of  
12          corralling or reining in the younger boys. But  
13          culturally it was completely accepted.

14        Q. If I can just break that down into a couple of parts,  
15          starting with the racial abuse, if I may. You mentioned  
16          the programme Roots and the lack of distinction as  
17          between ethnicity and I think this was presumably  
18          referring to paragraph 57 where you say there was  
19          a Saudi boy who was called [REDACTED] after the TV  
20          programme Roots.

21        A. Mm.

22        Q. You go on:

23                "When the seniors were away [so in this instance it  
24                wasn't the seniors, it was the juniors] the juniors got  
25                ahold of [him]. They stood him on his head in a large

1 garbage bin. They hit him with broom handles."

2 A. So prefects would on the whole avoid such sort of  
3 encounters, they would just stay in their rooms. We  
4 need to make a distinction between seniors, who had  
5 rank, who were prefects, and seniors who had no rank.  
6 In this instance, there were quite a number of --  
7 I think he was, I don't know, 15, and there were several  
8 seniors who were 17/18 years old, but they were not  
9 prefects who did that to him.

10 So think about a fair-sized room with about 25 to 30  
11 boys of all different ages standing around whilst this  
12 chap was being made to do a headstand in a bin and one  
13 figure or character hitting him in the legs every time  
14 his legs sort of came down because of gravity obviously,  
15 he was trying to get away and they would hit him in  
16 order to get him to do a headstand again in the bin.

17 I know the boy was -- is -- was from a Muslim  
18 family, so I'm sure there was some colossal issues there  
19 with being made to do a headstand, you know, in a dirty  
20 bin surrounded by this Lord of the Flies sort of manic  
21 presence of all these boys around. It was just  
22 appalling.

23 There were numerous incidences like that and again  
24 considering the house that I was in was not that big,  
25 considering how much noise was being made by 25 boys



1           being screaming at the top of their voices in this  
2           appalling fashion as this boy was being beaten up, it is  
3           impossible for seniors or the housemaster not to have  
4           heard what was going on. It is absolutely impossible.  
5           They chose not to interfere when these things happened.  
6       Q. I was going to ask what room was this taking place in?  
7       A. It took place in a room that had all the -- it had  
8           a view going towards the exterior of the house but it's  
9           a place where all the cups and various awards that were  
10          won by members of the house were kept. So it was very  
11          central. It was very close to the noticeboard, and it  
12          was in that area. It's one of the few areas in the  
13          house big enough to accommodate that number of people.  
14       LADY SMITH: And this was in Bruce House, was it?  
15       A. Yes, Lady Smith, it was in Bruce House.  
16       LADY SMITH: Thank you.  
17       MR BROWN: And did this happen just the once or was it  
18          something that happened more than once?  
19       A. Well, that -- they were quite imaginative. They rarely  
20          did the same thing twice. But that particular  
21          incident -- manifestation only really happened once, but  
22          there were different occurrences, as evil, as wicked, as  
23          outrageous in other parts of the house at different  
24          times.  
25       Q. I think you go on to say that you would be locked up in

1           a wicker basket for up to 30 minutes at a time.

2       A. Mm, yes, and put under the cold showers as people went  
3           to dinner.

4       Q. And they would leave you there until after they'd had  
5           their dinner and this was the senior boys who were doing  
6           this to you?

7       A. Yes, I mean -- yes. There were always boys who were  
8           bigger than you, there were boys around you -- I'm not  
9           particularly big, so if a chap in my own year comes up  
10          and he's already, at 16, 6 foot and weighs 13 stone, you  
11          know, it doesn't make a difference if he's a, quote  
12          unquote, senior or not, it's just physicality that  
13          was ... that was the element that, you know, prevented  
14          you from defending yourself or doing anything about it.

15      Q. You've made the point that given what was going on was  
16          overt, it was in public, there was noise, it couldn't  
17          not be known about.

18      A. So -- yes. So events of that ilk, impossible. Because  
19          also think about it, it's huts. The walls were, like,  
20          incredibly thin. Noise would travel from one end of the  
21          house to the other, so there's no way that could have --  
22          I must -- I don't want to be accused of exaggerating.  
23          These events did not happen every day of the week. They  
24          happened maybe once or twice a month but that was  
25          already pretty bad. There were also all sorts of

1           microaggressions throughout the house on a daily basis  
2           continuously and I need to emphasise it happened to me  
3           quite a lot, but it happened to a lot of people quite  
4           a lot. I was not the only one who was being abused in  
5           such a way. It was currency. It was, you know, it was  
6           just an acceptable way of -- it was -- basically, you  
7           know, explained to us as being part of the Gordonstoun  
8           culture, this violence. You know, it makes you tough.

9       Q. You tell us that you reported this repeatedly to senior  
10       prefects.

11      A. Yeah, I mean, even some of them saw it, you know.

12      Q. If they saw it, would they stop it?

13      A. No, not really. No. They might say something like,  
14        "Oh, stop it", and the guy would stop for 20 seconds,  
15        the prefect would walk away and they'd start all over  
16        again. There was no real conviction, you know, in  
17        stopping any of this violence going around because, you  
18        know, it was kind of: look, I suffered this when I was  
19        a young boy in this place, you should suffer this coming  
20        up the ranks and you shall do it to the others as they  
21        come up the food chain. So I survived it, it made me  
22        tough, you can go through the same thing. That was the  
23        thinking behind it.

24      Q. In terms of the housemaster, you mentioned him and you  
25        say that he knew what was going on. Is the same

1           rationale applying in terms of his behaviour? It was to  
2           toughen you up?

3       A. He was not the most charismatic man and at times  
4           I really felt that he was scared of the boys, I'll be  
5           frank with you. He was not a -- the boys mocked him  
6           a lot and, yeah, he had authority as a housemaster but  
7           he very much gave us the impression of being keen to  
8           avoid trouble as much as possible and not get involved  
9           in issues. So it's not like any of the boys were really  
10          scared of him or, you know, to make them change their  
11          behaviour. It's just he didn't have that level of  
12          authority over the house.

13       Q. I think you say at paragraph 59:

14                "He would see things but would just come up with  
15                platitudes and not intervene."

16       A. Yes, that's really -- yeah.

17       Q. Sorry, to be clear, he would actually see violence or  
18          racist behaviour but let it pass?

19       A. In all of my time there, this was in my last term, there  
20          was one chap who caught me -- called me an f-ing, you  
21          know, something racist, and he happened to walk in at  
22          that time. He obviously heard it and he was really  
23          quite embarrassed and he told him -- he told the person  
24          who had been doing it, for years, not to do it again and  
25          he made him, he gave him PD, as they called it, penalty

1           drill, made him go and run around outside for  
2           30 minutes. That was the only time ever in my five  
3           years there that he intervened in any sort of racism or  
4           abuse going on. So that one time.

5       Q. And did it have any lasting effect?

6       A. Absolutely not. I mean, this was the brother of one of  
7           the most popular guys, you know, define "popular", and  
8           he took it as a joke, he ran around, you know, the back  
9           of the house for about an hour cracking jokes. His  
10          friends were there. It was not seen as a punishment, it  
11          was just -- it had no consequence whatsoever, no.

12       Q. You're describing events in Bruce House and the  
13          housemaster there was nominally in charge. Was there  
14          any supervision from the school as a whole within the  
15          house or was the house essentially autonomous?

16       A. Very much autonomous. I mean, there was an assistant  
17          housemaster, a chap called Mr Bues(?), who was horribly  
18          bullied by the boys. I mean, he just -- I think he  
19          left. I think he only lasted a year or something like  
20          that. I don't want to speak on his behalf, but -- so  
21          then there was another chap, an Australian tough one who  
22          came in afterwards and he was quite authoritarian. But  
23          the only time the school ever sent anybody else -- we  
24          had tutors and they sort of appeared, I don't know,  
25          maybe once a month to just ask how you were doing and

1           then they would leave. But otherwise there was no  
2           school presence in there whatsoever. So, to answer your  
3           question, I would say that largely, significantly, to  
4           a 95 per cent extent that this house and pretty much  
5           I think all the other houses were completely autonomous.

6       Q. We know there were a number of houses at Gordonstoun.  
7           Did Bruce have a particularly bad reputation amongst the  
8           school or --

9       A. It had the -- again this is elements of subjectivity  
10           here, but it had the second-worst reputation. It had  
11           the reputation of being the second toughest and violent  
12           house in the school. The most violent by a significant  
13           stretch was the house next door to us called Altyre  
14           House which was linked to Bruce through a corridor,  
15           through the loos, so that place was really considered  
16           very violent.

17      Q. Was that just chat that you heard or do you actually  
18           have experience of that?

19      A. No, no, I mean, I didn't -- I saw -- I -- well, I had  
20           friends there and I would hear stories what was going  
21           on, but you would always hear about, you know,  
22           somebody's head being put through a wall, because that  
23           was a favourite pastime because the walls were so thin  
24           that they thought it was really quite cool to actually  
25           physically put someone's head through one of those --

1       you know, I don't know what the texture of the walls  
2       were, but through one of those walls. You would have  
3       incidents all the time, fights, and the housemaster was  
4       a chap called Fitzgibbon, who was actually a very nice  
5       man, a Latin teacher, quite soft spoken, again not the  
6       authoritarian that Altyre House needed.

7               So the stories about the violence going on, and then  
8       you'd go into their shower room and you'd see there's  
9       holes in the wall and smashed furniture and all sorts of  
10      stuff. People took pride in the fact that they went to  
11      Altyre and they survived Altyre and that was the  
12      toughest, most violent house in the school. There was  
13      a sort of machismo element by association.

14      Q. You mentioned tutors coming in to speak to you  
15      occasionally. Did you feel that you could raise these  
16      issues with them or could you raise it outwith the  
17      house?

18      A. No, no, no. So the tutor would see you, he would  
19      just -- during prep he would drop into your study and  
20      there would be, like, six or eight other boys there and  
21      say, "How's it going?" and so on and so forth. It was  
22      not exactly the environment where you'd kind of go,  
23      "Well, actually, I'm not having a good time of it". But  
24      what we learned very much in the first term in that  
25      place was that omerta ruled, you could not without

1           serious consequences of greater violence towards you,  
2           you could not go and tell anybody about what was going  
3           on, the prefects or any sort of sneaking on others or  
4           what was going on. If you did that, your life would be  
5           made absolute hell. You'd come in, your clothes would  
6           be thrown on the floor out of your locker or they would  
7           put shampoo all over your clothes. I mean, the  
8           repercussions for doing anything like that were just  
9           absolutely extreme and it was just -- so for me or  
10          anybody else to address these issues with the, you know,  
11          once a month tutor that came round, in front of all the  
12          boys, was absolutely impossible.

13                 And truth be told, I think a lot of us, because this  
14                 is the only school we knew, we thought this is what  
15                 boarding school is like, you know. If I leave this  
16                 place and go somewhere else, it will just be the same  
17                 thing, I'll be on the slippery road to nowhere because  
18                 I'll just be leaving one place for another. It wasn't  
19                 until I left and went to university and ran into other  
20                 people, met other people who went to boarding schools  
21                 and actually had a really good time that I really  
22                 realised the extent to which I'd been subjected to  
23                 something which was avoidable.

24         Q. You mentioned the word microaggressions.

25         A. Mm.



1 Q. And they were daily. Just to be clear, what do you mean  
2 by microaggressions?

3 A. Well, I mean, you know, verbal abuse. People calling  
4 you stuff, every X minute somebody over their shoulder:  
5 you f-ing so-and-so and you -- you get out of my country  
6 and, you know, again without using some pretty vile  
7 words in court, I can't fully explain that, but head  
8 tonks, dead arms, dead legs was the physical  
9 manifestation of that. They had bog flushing, you can  
10 pretty much think what that means.

11 So that was -- the thing was it was -- you never  
12 knew where -- this is one of the reasons my psychiatrist  
13 told me I've got post-traumatic stress disorder because  
14 you never knew when it was going to happen and from  
15 where it was going to happen, so you would be walking  
16 down to your dinner and suddenly somebody come up and  
17 just give you the worst dead arm, dead leg, for the  
18 reason because they enjoyed it, they thought it was fun.  
19 So there was no moment in the day when you didn't walk  
20 from A to B to C when you didn't somehow suspect  
21 somebody could or would come up to you from some angle  
22 to verbally abuse you, physically abuse you. That was  
23 the real stress. You couldn't see it coming and there  
24 was no catalyst that you could see that would allow you  
25 to predict or protect yourself at any time. It would

1           just happen. It was considered sport. It was sport.

2           It was fun to those who would impose it on others.

3       Q. In terms of the verbal aggression, obviously you're  
4       loath to use words which I think you've set out in your  
5       statement so we would understand them and I think anyone  
6       who's worked in a criminal court would understand them  
7       and has heard them before, but in terms of the verbal  
8       microaggressions, was that always racial or was it  
9       beyond that?

10      A. That's a really good question. I would say 95 per cent  
11      of the time it was racial.

12      Q. And that would be aimed at you or fellow pupils such as  
13      the one from Saudi Arabia who stood out as different?

14      A. Yes. I mean, to greater or lesser extents it would  
15      depend on your status in the school or if you had other  
16      relatives. For instance, this Saudi Arabian chap I was  
17      talking about, he had a cousin there at the same time  
18      who was very popular, a very good rugby player, so he  
19      was really up the food chain in terms of popularity. So  
20      people would not abuse him as much because they knew  
21      that this guy had his back and he would not put up with  
22      too much nonsense. But I guess on that day I just told  
23      you about, he was initially -- he did come in, he was  
24      the one who busted up that bin trashing business, he  
25      came up and grabbed the bigger boy who was subjecting

1           the Saudi Arabian boy to the bin trashing, he's the one  
2           who grabbed and stopped the whole thing.

3           So, again, you can't make these blanket statements.  
4           Everyone's status was a little bit -- if you were --  
5           there was one chap who was, you know, much more --  
6           I don't know, I don't feel comfortable with these ethnic  
7           sort of observations, but he was a lot darker skinned  
8           than I am but he spoke very pristine English and as  
9           a result he didn't get anywhere near as much abuse as  
10          those of us who spoke, you know, with heavily accented  
11          English. So it was -- it's hard for me to understand  
12          their way of thinking and their way of making decisions,  
13          but this is the best explanation I can give you.

14         Q. So there were a number of variables at play?

15         A. Yes.

16         Q. Okay. But I think one of the words you use regularly in  
17          your statement is there were cool boys and, presumably,  
18          by inference, boys who were not considered cool, and was  
19          that another distinction that would, in the minds of the  
20          cool pupils, justify ill-behaviour towards pupils they  
21          considered different?

22         A. If somebody -- if one of the cool or popular guys  
23          decided against you, then your life was made hell  
24          because all of his sycophants and his followers would be  
25          expected to replicate this person's animosity towards

1           you, and so you suddenly went from one person wanting to  
2           abuse you to, you know, I don't know, a dozen people  
3           wanting to replicate that for no reasons of their own  
4           apart from sucking up to the big guy.

5           I had an altercation in my first year with a chap  
6           who ended up being head boy, I think the details are in  
7           this document, and he basically went on this jihad to  
8           make my life hell as a result and partially it was  
9           because when asked by a teacher at that stage what had  
10          happened, I came from a culture -- I come from a culture  
11          where basically if a teacher asks you what happened, you  
12          give him your best perspective, but I wasn't aware of  
13          this omerta business and I told the teacher what had  
14          happened and, you know, that didn't work in my favour.

15        Q. You learnt a lesson, perhaps?

16        A. Well, I mean, in ways, a survival lesson at Gordonstoun,  
17          but one of the less -- one of the poxic lessons, which  
18          I have formally rejected in the rest of my life in terms  
19          of telling the truth or not telling my truth.

20        Q. Yes. You've been talking, obviously, about your  
21          experiences within the house but I think there's one  
22          episode you describe at paragraph 51 where this sort of  
23          casual racism was displayed before the whole school.

24        A. Yes.

25        Q. This is the inter-house swimming competition you talk

1           about when you were about 15 and just to read it:

2           "The head boy from my house organised our swimming  
3           teams. He made all us 'darkies' swim in the same team.  
4           We were made to wear black swimming trunks and we were  
5           called the 'All blacks'."

6       A. Yeah.

7       Q. "It was so humiliating. I don't think the housemaster  
8           was aware but the swimming competition was in front of  
9           the whole school."

10      A. Yes. I guess Scott didn't want to get involved in  
11         anything that could be uncomfortable.

12      Q. Was there any concern from the rest of the school if it  
13         was in front of the entire --

14      A. No, no, no, no. I mean, they were just kind of  
15         cheering -- I mean, look, it was marketed within the  
16         house as being all the Pakis in the black -- the black  
17         swimsuits and get them to swim. It wasn't marketed to  
18         the entire school as such, it was an in-house thing and  
19         obviously a few people realised what was going on when  
20         they were watching the swimming going on, the  
21         competition going on, but it was more of an in-house  
22         thing that was played out on a much larger canvas.

23                 But I can't say that the entire school was made  
24         aware of: look, this is what we're doing. But a lot of  
25         them would have thought: hey, hold on a second, why are

1           all these foreign chappies in black swimsuits all  
2           swimming together in the team? Because some of them are  
3           good swimmers, a couple of the others could barely  
4           float. It was a Bruce House thing.

5       Q. But it was an opportunity that this whole school could  
6           see and perhaps do something about but I take it from  
7           what you're saying nothing was done?

8       A. There was no critical thinking. There was no sort of  
9           analysis like perhaps we do more these days to see: hold  
10          on a second, there could be a problem here. There  
11          really wasn't. It was not their thing. It was not  
12          a school that was heavily emphasising deconstructing  
13          such things or, you know, any form of critical thinking  
14          on that kind of occurrence.

15      Q. Can you remember, since this was an inter-school or  
16          inter-house competition, would the headmaster have been  
17          present? Senior staff?

18      A. Oh, he was present. Absolutely, yes.

19      Q. But there was no critical thinking, obviously?

20      A. None whatsoever. It just wasn't seen as a problem.  
21          It's -- the whole ethos of the place was that, you know,  
22          they didn't look for trouble and they didn't -- you  
23          know, no one thought violence or racial verbal abuse or  
24          all these manifestations that we talked about were  
25          really problems. It was like part of growing up as far

1 as they were concerned.

2 Q. Given your opening statement, should we understand that  
3 this sort of level of micro and greater aggression was  
4 perpetrated until you left?

5 A. Very much so, until the very last day. I mean, I became  
6 a mid-ranking sort of prefect and, you know, you would  
7 have thought that would require a little bit more -- or  
8 deserve a little more respect, but you'd still get that  
9 even from younger boys. I mean it's -- it was -- there  
10 was also -- I'll be frank with you, there was a great  
11 deal of arrogance from people who were there who were  
12 from extremely rich families and they just -- they had  
13 no issues about, you know, racism or abusing others  
14 because they felt entitled. It's hard to really  
15 explain, but -- my mother was a civil servant. There  
16 was no sense of entitlement in me, you know, I just had  
17 to get on with it in life and try and make something of  
18 it, but a lot of these people were just fantastically  
19 wealthy. This was the second-most expensive school in  
20 the country after Millfield at that time, so a lot of  
21 people went to -- you know, there'd be one chap arriving  
22 back and he told us about his holidays on his dad's  
23 yacht with a helicopter in the background, one arm  
24 around Mick and the other arm around Bianca Jagger.  
25 There were a lot of people around like that and they

1           just -- they didn't care. They didn't care.

2       Q. The other aspect that you mentioned about your time at  
3       Gordonstoun was the education or, as you, I think,  
4       perceive it, the lack of, because you left and you were  
5       saying you were encouraged to go to a polytechnic if one  
6       would take you?

7       A. Yeah, yeah. Yeah.

8       Q. Was that something that you were concerned about  
9       throughout your time at Gordonstoun? Were you conscious  
10      that the education you were getting wasn't suiting you?

11      A. I was. Where I made certain -- because I'm a linguist,  
12      you know, I mean obviously I've spent time in all these  
13      countries so I speak a few languages, so I thought  
14      wouldn't it be great if I did, you know, language  
15      O-levels and A-levels. To a certain extent that was  
16      allowed, but they didn't -- the school basically -- they  
17      basically told me I couldn't do it. Academically there  
18      was -- let me give a brief example. When I was due to  
19      sit my A-level exams, Bruce House, and I think all the  
20      other houses, they did not allow the prefects to  
21      basically take time out and basically concentrate on  
22      their studies. On the morning of my exams when I was on  
23      duty I would still have to get up at something like  
24      6 o'clock in the morning, make sure that, I don't know,  
25      65 boys are out of bed, the house is clean, blah, blah,



1       blah, and then, you know, in a nervous state roll up for  
2       my exams. So there was no acknowledgement whatsoever  
3       that quite a few of us had to get academic results in  
4       order to be able to get to university in order to be  
5       able to have some sort of career or so, because there  
6       was so much emphasis on, you know, rich people, well,  
7       you know, trust fund kids and -- they'll be all right.

8       So I -- initially I bought it. I really thought,  
9       you know, I was thick and although my exam results were  
10      in the top 5 per cent of that school, it didn't mean  
11      very much. I mean, I think most people left -- I don't  
12      know what their results are like nowadays, but most  
13      people left, you know, barely with O-levels and, you  
14      know, very few got to a decent university and so on and  
15      so forth. So it was really appalling.

16      It wasn't until I left and took my -- control of my  
17      own education and, you know, did these Cambridge  
18      entrance exams and succeeded and I've got multiple  
19      university degrees and, you know, a doctorate and so on  
20      that I -- I -- well, you know, I mean, I come from an  
21      academic family, my parents have doctorates and so on  
22      and so forth, so I couldn't really believe I was as bad  
23      as they told me I was, but the educational support I got  
24      at that school was -- I remember the chap who did the  
25      German course, he came up to me and said, "Well, you'll

1           probably be all right, but you're not going to get an A  
2           and you're not going to pass your A-level because, you  
3           know, you're just not good enough", and I was like,  
4           "Okay, thank you". I mean I'm fully a German speaker  
5           and I got my A and I passed my A and AS level as well  
6           but I -- why be demeaning towards pupils, instead of  
7           encouraging them and helping them to excel, so browbeat  
8           them to thinking they'll be no good? To this day  
9           I don't understand that.

10          Q. You told us that in Pakistan you were very much behind  
11           the curve in English. Presumably that was still true  
12           when you first came to Gordonstoun?

13          A. Yes, very much so.

14          Q. Was any effort made to assist you to catch up with  
15           English?

16          A. None whatsoever. None whatsoever. I was thrown into  
17           the deep end, sink or swim.

18          Q. At any stage in your time at Gordonstoun?

19          A. No.

20          Q. No, okay.

21          A. No.

22          Q. But I think, as you said, you went to a crammer rather  
23           than a polytechnic, redid your exams and went on to  
24           Cambridge thereafter?

25          A. Well, to be clear, I enrolled in a crammer but I soon

1           found out I really couldn't afford them, but one of my  
2           teachers passed away -- excuse me, I just need to take  
3           a moment.

4       Q.   Sure.   (Pause).

5       A.   She passed away.   (Pause).

6           She took me under -- sorry to be pathetic.

7       LADY SMITH:  Dr Mann, please don't worry.  Help me with  
8           this.  Are you talking about a teacher at the college  
9           that you went to?

10      A.   No, I couldn't afford the crammer, so I went --  
11           I think -- if it weren't for her, I wouldn't have got  
12           into Cambridge and she only ...

13           Sorry, please go on.

14      MR BROWN:  But I think, as you pointed out earlier on, when  
15           you got to Cambridge, you discovered that your image of  
16           a boarding school was not universal; in fact, there were  
17           people who had had good experiences quite distinct from  
18           yours?

19      A.   Yes.  I met people who went to Shrewsbury, Downside,  
20           Ampleforth, all sorts of places, and when we sat down,  
21           you know, to exchange war stories, I said, "How did you  
22           survive?  How did you get on?"  And they would look at  
23           me quizzically and say, "I had a great time, I loved it,  
24           I go back as often as I can, I'm best of mates with my  
25           teachers now", and that really was a punch that winded

1           me because I realised that what I'd been through had  
2           been avoidable.

3       Q. Obviously, from what you've told us in your statement,  
4           you progressed thereafter and have had a successful  
5           career, but equally you talk in some detail about the  
6           impact Gordonstoun has had upon you and you mentioned,  
7           obviously, a diagnosis of post-traumatic stress.

8       A. Yes.

9       Q. When was that diagnosed?

10      A. The thing is, you know, I spent many years in -- in  
11       California and there's such a, you know, dependency on  
12       psychiatrists and psychologists. I always knew that  
13       something wasn't quite right, but I was like, you know,  
14       still toeing the Gordonstoun line: just get on with it  
15       and don't make too much of an issue and so on. Then  
16       I said, "Look, this is ridiculous, I need to speak to  
17       somebody and go to therapy", so I went to therapy for  
18       several years. And truth be told, I only considered  
19       being assessed for PTSD very recently and, yeah, they  
20       told me in no uncertain terms that I had post-traumatic  
21       stress disorder. And looking back at my life, now that  
22       I have an understanding of PTSD, looking back at my life  
23       and various decisions, you know, good and bad, over the  
24       years, yeah, it makes sense, I mean, that I've had it  
25       ever since and it explains some of my worst decisions

1           and, you know, why I haven't -- I chose not to have kids  
2           and, you know, all sorts of other baggage.

3       Q.   Part of that baggage is, I think as you candidly say in  
4           your statement, anger issues?

5       A.   Yes.

6       Q.   You talk about having therapy for anger issues. Is that  
7           ongoing?

8       A.   Yes. It was -- and I'm still -- I've been in therapy  
9           now for, on and off, close to ten years.

10      Q.   You talk about the issues of self-confidence.

11      A.   Mm. Yeah. Yeah. You know, I've achieved certain  
12           things and I've got academic degrees and so on and so  
13           forth, but, you know, very often I don't have the  
14           self-confidence to back it or -- or one of the tools  
15           I've used is to create an external sort of more  
16           extrovert personality almost like roleplaying in order  
17           to be able to get through things, but yeah, it's just --  
18           you know. I'm very extremely self-critical as a result.

19      Q.   I think you also say you have issues with authority?

20      A.   I have not been able to hold down a job since -- I've  
21           had a couple of jobs and they lasted about six months.  
22           I've never been good -- I just -- I just can't deal with  
23           having an authority figure above me telling me what to  
24           do, which is not, you know, optimal if you're trying to  
25           get a job. So I've had to sort of invent things, sort

1 of companies and different consulting thingies, you  
2 know, just to get through life or fix up houses from  
3 time to time and try to sell those on and so on and so  
4 forth. I've had a very disjointed career. Now I've  
5 reinvented myself as an author and, you know, touch  
6 wood, things are going quite well. But that's  
7 an independent sort of pursuit.

8 LADY SMITH: Dr Mann, I'm sorry to ask you to repeat  
9 something. You've reinvented yourself as?

10 A. An author.

11 LADY SMITH: Oh, as an author. Thank you.

12 MR BROWN: But just to be clear, Dr Mann, all of those  
13 traits that have caused you issues, from your  
14 perspective, they all derived from your time at  
15 Gordonstoun?

16 A. Oh, I mean, you know, some years of therapy have  
17 deconstructed my -- my time there and highlighted many  
18 occurrences that provide a simple explanation for what  
19 has happened to me since, so again I'm -- I don't want  
20 to make blanket statements. We're still in  
21 a fact-finding sort of, you know, process after almost  
22 ten years of therapy and so on, but the evidence, the  
23 empirical evidence strongly suggests that that is very  
24 much the case, yes. Yes.

25 Q. Have you ever been back to Gordonstoun?

1       A. I went back about two years or so -- no, about three --  
2       no, three or four years after I had left. I think the  
3       only way I can explain it is some sort of Stockholm  
4       syndrome sort of situation. I went back with a friend  
5       of mine from Cambridge and went back -- and this was  
6       like, I don't know, '83, '84 -- just for a weekend to  
7       walk around the grounds and so on and so forth.  
8       I didn't feel right doing it, but I hadn't had that sort  
9       of, you know, moment of enlightenment about -- about the  
10      place. I really had not had the opportunity to reflect  
11      fully over that experience. I felt very uncomfortable  
12      being there. This chap wanted to see the school, and  
13      then we just, you know, drove up to Scotland from  
14      London. It was a sightseeing weekend, sort of, you  
15      know, type situation. I did go back that one time and  
16      never since.

17     MR BROWN: Dr Mann, thank you very much indeed. I have no  
18      further questions for you. Is there anything else you  
19      would wish to say?

20     A. No, I think I'm pretty much tapped out. Thank you,  
21      Mr Brown.

22     LADY SMITH: Could I check whether there are any outstanding  
23      applications for questions?

24             Dr Mann, that does complete all the questions we  
25      have for you today. It simply remains for me to thank





1           a witness ready for us, is that right, Mr Brown?

2       MR BROWN: That's correct, my Lady, the witness 'Paul'.

3       LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

4                       'Paul' (sworn)

5       LADY SMITH: 'Paul', you'll find the red folder contains  
6           a copy of your statement. In fact, that might be the  
7           original that you signed there. You'll also see it  
8           coming up on screen, so do use either if you would find  
9           it helpful.

10           If you have any questions or any concerns during the  
11           course of your evidence, please let me know. It's very  
12           important that you're as comfortable as you can be. If  
13           you need a break, it's not a problem. If it works for  
14           you, it works for me. But otherwise, I'll hand over to  
15           Mr Brown if you're ready for me to do that and he'll  
16           take it from there with your evidence. Is that okay?

17       A. That's okay. Thank you, my Lady.

18       LADY SMITH: Mr Brown.

19                       Questions from Mr Brown

20       MR BROWN: Thank you, my Lady.

21           'Paul', good afternoon. You're quite softly spoken.  
22           There is a microphone, but if you'll perhaps just bring  
23           it a little closer because obviously the one person we  
24           want to hear from is you.

25       A. Of course.

1 Q. Thank you.

2 LADY SMITH: 'Paul', can I just add to that it's very  
3 important the stenographers can hear you clearly and as  
4 you'll see, they listen through the sound system rather  
5 than out in the open as we do.

6 A. Yes.

7 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

8 MR BROWN: Thank you.

9 'Paul', you are in your mid 40s, you were born in  
10 1976; is that correct?

11 A. That is correct, yes.

12 Q. And obviously you're here today to speak primarily about  
13 your experience at Gordonstoun School?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. You've spoken about a number of things and we'll touch  
16 on those, but you should understand obviously it's fully  
17 contained within your statement which you have before  
18 you --

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. -- in the red folder and on the screen in front of you,  
21 and can I just, for form's sake, read out the reference  
22 number of that statement so it's on the record. It's  
23 WIT-1-000000804. If you go to the last page in the  
24 statement, and this is paragraph 170 on page 38, we see  
25 that you've signed it and dated it last month.

1 A. (Witness nods).

2 Q. And you've concluded the statement by saying:

3 "I have no objection to my witness statement being

4 published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry.

5 I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are

6 true."

7 A. That's correct.

8 Q. We should understand that obviously that's a statement

9 completed relatively recently but the process took some

10 time with a draft?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. You could assess the draft, correct anything you didn't

13 agree with and it was only presumably having read the

14 final version that you signed because you were happy it

15 was accurate?

16 A. Yes. Correct.

17 Q. Thank you. In terms of your time at Gordonstoun, I'm

18 right in saying that you went there between 1989 and

19 1991?

20 A. That's correct, yes.

21 Q. And that would be perhaps between the ages of 12, 13 and

22 15?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. The statement talks about your background and we should

25 understand that your dad was in the military?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And for that reason, no doubt amongst others, perhaps,  
3 that he wanted you to have a good education?

4 A. Yes, a good education and he moved around an awful lot  
5 so he needed a stable boarding school base for me.

6 Q. Yes. And that explains why your educational history was  
7 in large part in the boarding school setting?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. As we see, to begin with, after a local state nursery  
10 and primary school, you went to Cargilfield school in  
11 Edinburgh, I think when you were seven; is that correct?

12 A. Yes, that's correct.

13 Q. As you say, and we don't need to touch perhaps on the  
14 routine at Cargilfield, looking at page 7, paragraph 32,  
15 you weren't homesick:

16 "Being at school gave me freedom from my sisters."

17 A. Yes, unfortunately, but yes, that's absolutely correct  
18 and I wasn't homesick at all.

19 Q. You weren't. Were you excited to be going to boarding  
20 school?

21 A. Yes, I was quite keen to go to boarding school, yeah.

22 Q. In terms of Cargilfield, you talk about it in a general  
23 sense at page 3, paragraph 10, saying:

24 "I had a positive experience of the school but not  
25 so much of the other pupils. I wasn't keen on them and

1           they weren't keen on me so I kept to myself. Pupils  
2           kept to their year group and you didn't really mix  
3           outside of that."

4       A. Yes.

5       Q. Why were there difficulties at Cargilfield, if you can  
6           put it simply?

7       A. Largely based around my personality, typically being  
8           a shy person, particularly as a younger person. I was  
9           also one of the smallest people in my year group at that  
10          time, so my physical attributes, admittedly there were  
11          only 7- to 12-year-olds so as a young person, but  
12          compared to my schoolmates I was one of the smallest so  
13          somebody has to be near the bottom of the pile and that  
14          turned out to be me.

15      Q. I think we see at paragraph 33 on page 8 that you sum it  
16          up this way:

17                "I was picked on by a few people who felt superior  
18                to me. I was quite small and had nicknames [REDACTED] which  
19                I hated and [REDACTED] which I didn't mind."

20      A. Yes.

21      Q. "Some pupils in my class were horrible. There was no  
22          physical abuse. It meant a lot to me at the time. The  
23          teachers were nice, but I didn't mention what was going  
24          on to them. I think they were vaguely aware of it.

25          I learned to avoid some people and I concentrated on my

1 studies."

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. So in terms of building a picture of you at Cargilfield,  
4 you were quite enjoying school but you were shy and the  
5 effect of not physical bullying particularly but just  
6 being small --

7 A. Constant name-calling and other verbal abuse, basically.

8 Q. And your response to that was what?

9 A. On occasion I would talk back to them. I'm not  
10 particularly known for raising my voice, but sometimes  
11 they pushed me to a point where I would, but for the  
12 most part I tried to stay under the radar and not  
13 attract any attention specifically from the people who  
14 were -- found it enjoyable to get a reaction out of me.

15 Q. Right. So to repeat your words, you were trying to stay  
16 under the radar?

17 A. Absolutely, yes.

18 Q. Did you have a good group of friends or were you --

19 A. Not at Cargilfield. I enjoyed my studies there, but  
20 I didn't have any particular group of friends. You were  
21 forced -- not forced, but you are -- your friends have  
22 to be the people you spend your time with, your year  
23 group, your classmates, and they were the same people,  
24 for the most part, that enjoyed making my life a little  
25 harder than it possibly could have been, so.

1 Q. Right. So would it be unfair to say you were isolated  
2 at Cargilfield?

3 A. It would not be unfair to say I was isolated at  
4 Cargilfield. I didn't have a choice of who I hang  
5 around with, so ...

6 Q. And you were trying to stay under the radar?

7 A. Absolutely, yes.

8 Q. And you were at Cargilfield for five years?

9 A. From 7 till 12, yes.

10 Q. Yes. And was that approach of staying under the radar  
11 and being, to use my word with which you agreed,  
12 isolated, was that throughout the entire time?

13 A. Yes, it was throughout the entire time, yeah. There  
14 were a few people outside of my year who also gained  
15 some enjoyment out of -- I will say picking on me, so  
16 yeah. That was my only method and the age-old "don't  
17 let it bother you, carry on, just ignore them" from my  
18 elders at the time.

19 Q. Was anything done to try and improve the situation by  
20 staff or senior pupils?

21 A. No. Not at all.

22 Q. Okay. And I take it you didn't say anything to them?

23 A. Other than the incident I mention in my statement  
24 towards the end of one of the terms where I had quite  
25 a large group of people trying to find me, I didn't

1           mention it to the teachers there, no. But I'm fairly  
2           sure they were aware of it because I believe my report  
3           card at the time said, "Finds it" -- when I entered into  
4           Gordonstoun, one of the statements on their entrance  
5           was, "Has trouble making friends".

6       Q. So that was a known quantity when you went to  
7       Gordonstoun?

8       A. Yes.

9       Q. Moving on then to Gordonstoun and page 10 of your  
10       statement, paragraph 44, you say that you took a Common  
11       Entrance exam and did very well and got a bursary from  
12       the Forces.

13      A. I absolutely did, yes. I was very proud of that.

14      Q. And in terms of going to Gordonstoun, albeit with  
15       a bursary, was that financially onerous for your  
16       parents?

17      A. Definitely. I believe the RAF bursary was the only  
18       reason I was able to get an entrance into that school  
19       from a financial basis.

20      Q. Your parents chose Gordonstoun?

21      A. Yes.

22      Q. What were your feelings about moving from Cargilfield?

23      A. At the time I saw it as a chance to make a fresh start.  
24       Essentially in my own mind to forget what had happened  
25       at Cargilfield and make a new group of friends. I do



1           remember that specific emotion when I was starting at  
2           Gordonstoun.

3       Q.   And is that what happened?

4       A.   I made a couple of friends in my year group but outside  
5           of those two, I didn't make any, you know, people that  
6           I would effectively call friends, or acquaintances and  
7           my peers.

8       Q.   You talked there of two friends.

9       A.   Yes.

10      Q.   Should we understand those two friends remained constant  
11         throughout your time at Gordonstoun?

12      A.   They did, yes.

13      Q.   But did it stay at two?

14      A.   It stayed at two, yes.

15      Q.   And we know, both from your statement but also just  
16         generally, that Gordonstoun was made up of a number of  
17         differently houses?

18      A.   Yes.

19      Q.   And presumably you were simply put into a house on  
20         arrival?

21      A.   Absolutely, yes.

22      Q.   And your house was Bruce?

23      A.   Yes.

24      Q.   And I think we've heard already that Bruce, around the  
25         time you were going, was made up of Nissen huts; is that

1 correct?

2 A. Yes. They looked like temporary buildings.

3 Q. All right. The two friends you had from your year

4 group, were they in the same house?

5 A. No, they were in Duffus House, which is literally as far

6 away in the school as you can possibly get from one

7 house to another.

8 Q. We've heard that the campus is extensive.

9 A. Yes, very.

10 Q. How long would it take to get from Bruce to Duffus?

11 A. Oh, probably I would say about a 20-minute walk at

12 a good pace.

13 Q. So were these classmates?

14 A. Yes, they were, yes.

15 Q. So would you see them in school time?

16 A. I would see them in school time, for some sports

17 activities, but outside of school time I wouldn't see

18 them. I never went to visit their house, nor did they

19 ever come to visit mine.

20 Q. We talked of isolation at Cargilfield.

21 A. Mm-hmm.

22 Q. Did the isolation continue at Gordonstoun?

23 A. It did continue at Gordonstoun, yes.

24 Q. Was it any better or was it the same or was it worse?

25 A. It was a little bit better. There were at least people

1           in my house that I could do activities with like  
2           backgammon and pool and that kind of thing. I wouldn't  
3           necessarily call them my friends but you have to spend  
4           your time doing something, so I did make an effort to  
5           engage with some of my peers.

6       Q. In terms of the house, would your time, apart from,  
7           I suppose, schooling or particular pastimes, we're going  
8           to talk about the radio hamming club, would you be  
9           house-based? That was where you lived your life?

10      A. Yes. Very much so. House-based outside of specific  
11           activities.

12      Q. How did you find Bruce House? How did that suit you?

13      A. It's a difficult question to answer. It kind of was  
14           what it was. I accepted the situation that I had been  
15           put in without question.

16      Q. And when you say, "I accepted the position I had been  
17           put in", meaning?

18      A. Meaning my parents chose that school for me and  
19           I trusted their opinion, so while I may not have enjoyed  
20           the experience, I was there for a reason perhaps bigger  
21           than my own comprehension, so I basically got on with  
22           it.

23      Q. Was that the ethos of the school: self-reliance?

24      A. No, definitely not.

25      Q. No?

1       A. The school ethos is: take part, participate, enjoy your  
2       activities there. It was quite a physically-orientated  
3       school at the time.

4       Q. Did that suit you?

5       A. That definitely did not suit me.

6       Q. Why not?

7       A. Had there been someone there to entice me out of my  
8       shell a little bit and say, "Why don't we try this, why  
9       don't we try that?" and just -- for someone like myself,  
10      especially at the time I was quite shy and retiring, if  
11      they had taken an effort to understand my motivations  
12      and introduce me a little bit to different things, I'm  
13      sure I would have gone, "Well, actually, that's  
14      something that I quite like doing and there's other  
15      people who like doing that" and I would have engaged in  
16      that. But that didn't happen for me. No one really  
17      particularly paid attention to the gentleman that was  
18      happy staying quiet in the corner. Definitely not the  
19      ethos of the school. I didn't fit that particular  
20      mould, which probably made my life there a little harder  
21      and I had to rely on myself a lot more.

22      Q. Okay. In terms of looking at Gordonstoun as a school,  
23      who did well at Gordonstoun, pupil-wise?

24      A. If -- the people that did well typically were the people  
25      that were good at sports, from my view at the time, and

1           if you were a member of a team or a captain or a member  
2           of a particularly well-known club, you would thrive and  
3           do well in that school. I think there's a question  
4           later about whether I would send my children to  
5           a boarding school and I think I'm a very good judge of  
6           character of who would benefit and who would not benefit  
7           from that kind of experience, and I definitely did not  
8           benefit from that kind of experience. It wasn't  
9           something that someone of my character should be sent  
10          to.

11        Q. Okay. You were introverted?

12        A. Definitely, yes.

13        Q. It's perhaps okay for extroverts?

14        A. Absolutely, absolutely yes. Could not agree more.

15        Q. If you're good at sport. Were you good at sport?

16        A. No, not particularly.

17        Q. All right. And does that explain why the isolation you  
18          described at Cargilfield persisted?

19        A. Yes, that's an easy explanation for why the isolation  
20          persisted, yes.

21        Q. All right.

22        A. I was always the last person to be picked on the team,  
23          which is potentially why I found myself in a position of  
24          having to go through some of the things that I went  
25          through, so.

1 Q. We'll come onto that.

2 A. Mm-hmm.

3 Q. Was there any effort by the school to address the

4 difficulties you'd just spoken about?

5 A. There was an effort by the school, yes. At one point my

6 housemaster I will say volunteered me to do some work

7 for the headteacher, Mr Pyper at the time. I can

8 understand exactly why he did that, he was trying to get

9 me involved in the running of the school, give me a view

10 of the bigger picture of what was going on.

11 Unfortunately, that didn't work for me. It was -- I was

12 essentially put into a -- quite a stressful situation

13 with a figure of authority who I'd never met before, so

14 much like the rest of my school experience, I just said,

15 "Yes, absolutely, I'll do that", did it as quietly as

16 possible, ticked all the boxes, handed over the

17 paperwork and then disappeared again.

18 Q. Now, I think you touch on this on pages 13 and 14,

19 beginning at paragraph 55. You mention that your

20 housemaster was a gentleman called Ben Goss.

21 A. Yes, that's right.

22 Q. And you describe him as:

23 " ... very proactive as a person. He was someone

24 who always wanted to be doing something, he didn't just

25 let things happen. He wanted to be approachable and

1           tried very hard at that."

2       A.   Yes, absolutely.

3       Q.   But there's a but coming.

4       A.   Yes.

5       Q.   That didn't help you?

6       A.   No, it didn't help me.  If there was someone who could

7           have sat quietly with me and asked me, "What would you

8           like to do?" and then given some silence and allowed me

9           to initiate and then start making my own choice, that

10          would have worked for me.  I can't say anything bad at

11          all about Mr Goss.  He was a very good housemaster, but

12          to me he was quite a scary figure in a position of

13          authority.  He was always very, "Let's go, let's do

14          stuff", and my method of survival up until that point

15          was the exact opposite of that, so we were not a good

16          fit, unfortunately.

17       Q.   You say in paragraph 55, the last sentence:

18               " ... he was so forward that his manner scared me

19               off."

20       A.   Yeah.

21       Q.   But, as you've told us, he was in a pastoral role,

22          looking at paragraph 56:

23               " ... it didn't come off that way but I suspect that

24               was the intention."

25          So there was no ill-intent --

1 A. Absolutely no intent.

2 Q. -- just for you it wasn't the right fit?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And being sent to work with the headmaster, as you've

5 told us, Mr Pyper, again would you accept that that was

6 done with the best of intentions?

7 A. I do absolutely accept that was done with the best of

8 intentions. Unfortunately, had they taken the time to

9 sit down and ask me what I wanted or how I thought

10 I could improve, that would have been the last thing on

11 my list.

12 Q. Right. Going over the page to page 14 and paragraph 59

13 you say:

14 "I had to go and see him [which is Mark Pyper] once

15 before that when my report card was saying I was

16 becoming isolated. Reports did get through to him. I'm

17 sure it was arranged by my housemaster. It meant that

18 I then had to do some admin duties for the head. I had

19 a brief conversation with the head when he explained

20 what he wanted me to do. It was a daunting experience

21 for me."

22 A. Yeah, absolutely.

23 Q. So what we can say from that is it was known that you

24 were isolated, they're trying to address it.

25 A. Absolutely. They were trying to bring me into the fold



1           and instill some of the Kurt Hahn beliefs, the core  
2           ethics of the school by doing that, and if that was  
3           somebody who just needed a chivvy, who was like, "You  
4           need to try harder, let's go", that probably would have  
5           worked, but for an insular introvert, it was quite  
6           a significantly daunting experience at the time.

7       Q. As you say in paragraph 60:

8                 "There was no discussion about my isolation.  
9           I remember the emotion of it. I think the housemaster  
10          had a chat with me about it and told me that this was  
11          what they were going to do."

12                There was no choice for you?

13       A. Oh definitely no.

14       Q. It's action?

15       A. It's very much no, it was, "This is what's happening  
16       now, get involved".

17       Q. Is it summed up as set out in paragraph 61:

18                "For me I was just trying to stay out of trouble and  
19       off the radar [to use that phrase again] and as long as  
20       going to see the headmaster meant they wouldn't come  
21       back and speak to me I would do it".

22       A. Yes.

23       Q. So you were just acquiescing?

24       A. Absolutely, that's the correct word.

25       Q. To make the problem go away?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. We'll come back in a moment to the effects of that  
3 isolation in terms of the conduct of the teacher, but if  
4 we can just stick briefly to the behaviour of your  
5 fellow students towards you, how would you describe  
6 their treatment of you?

7 A. Their treatment of me varied from pupil to pupil.  
8 I have a lot of reference in the diary that I took at  
9 the time to incidents of bullying. At the time I saw  
10 them as annoyances, but it was quite a constant drip  
11 feed of this happened, that happened, this happened, all  
12 the way throughout. So it varies from that to  
13 I particularly remember someone I believe in my year  
14 group, perhaps a year above, called [REDACTED], it's not in  
15 my statement, actually, who was trying to -- he  
16 literally told me, "I'm trying to toughen you up for the  
17 outside world", which was for me the core belief behind  
18 the whole of Gordonstoun: toughen you up for the outside  
19 world, and I specifically remember responding to him and  
20 saying, "I don't want to be toughened up, I want you  
21 just to leave me alone, please".

22 Q. So again someone perhaps acting, as he thought, in the  
23 best interests --

24 A. Absolutely, yes.

25 Q. -- but not for you?

1 A. Not for me, no, not at all.

2 Q. That sounds positive, but what about negative  
3 involvement from other students? You mentioned cold  
4 baths, for example?

5 A. Yeah, that was one of the routine -- I want to say  
6 punishments, but it was something that the older kids  
7 would do to the younger kids when they force -- when  
8 they saw that they had done something which they  
9 perceived as wrong. There's almost a layer of authority  
10 within the older pupils in the school before you  
11 actually get to any of the staff of the school and that  
12 was a punishment that they would deal down, cold baths.  
13 I had cold baths several times throughout my time at the  
14 school. I did not like it at all.

15 Q. And just to explain what that means in real terms,  
16 a cold bath?

17 A. Essentially there was a large bathroom, a large shower  
18 room in Bruce House, a row of baths and a row of showers  
19 all in one room. There would be a few boys in there,  
20 they'd fill up a bath nearly to the top just with cold  
21 water and you would have to get in, put your head under  
22 and then jump out. And depending on how they felt at  
23 the time would be how many of those you had to do before  
24 they felt they were happy about the situation.

25 Q. And from what you've said, this is pupil discipline

1           without any recourse to teaching staff?

2       A. Absolutely, yes.

3       Q. Was it understood that this was a proper approach to

4           discipline in the sense it was recognised this is what

5           went on, or was it not known by the teaching staff, for

6           example?

7       A. I could not tell you whether the teaching staff knew

8           about it or not or whether they knew about it and let it

9           happen or not. It was very much there was no question

10          by the older pupils. You were absolutely doing this and

11          it never occurred to me to report that. It was kind of

12          an accepted: this is the punishment which is handed down

13          within the pupils of the house. It honestly didn't

14          occur to me at the time to raise that with my

15          housemaster. But then, as I mentioned, my housemaster

16          wasn't someone who I considered particularly

17          approachable, so even if I had that thought, I probably

18          still would not have.

19       LADY SMITH: What were these cold baths punishment for?

20       A. A variety of things, but one of the ones that

21           specifically I recall was because I didn't -- I was told

22           I didn't shower enough.

23       LADY SMITH: Oh.

24       A. I remember that very specifically, so -- and for that

25          particular incident I had to do eight in a row and then,

1           as my statement says, yeah, I was pretty cold. I think  
2           I actually raised a concern with one of my pupils in my  
3           year group after that because I was cold for some time  
4           after that.

5       LADY SMITH: Do you know what any other boys were subjected  
6           to cold baths for?

7       A. I don't know what any of the other boys were subjected  
8           to cold baths for. I do know they were subjected to it  
9           but I unfortunately couldn't tell you why.

10      LADY SMITH: Thank you.

11      MR BROWN: Was cold bathing routine?

12      A. No, absolutely not routine, it was just a form of  
13           punishment.

14      Q. When I say routine, I mean a regular occurrence?

15      A. Yes, it was a regular occurrence, yes. If you did  
16           something to, you know, invoke the ire of your elder  
17           housemates.

18      Q. Again, if you can, how many times a week would people be  
19           subjected to cold baths?

20      A. I believe I personally was subject to them about maybe  
21           eight times a year roughly if I was to put that on --  
22           but honestly I couldn't attest to how many times other  
23           people suffered from that, it was a long time ago and it  
24           was kind of an accepted punishment. So it doesn't --  
25           it's not something that stands out particularly in my

1           memory. I just remember specifically the eight times in  
2           a row because it had quite an effect on me afterwards.

3       Q. So it was part of being at Gordonstoun?

4       A. Yes, as far as I'm concerned, absolutely.

5       Q. You talk on page 22 under the broader heading of "Abuse  
6           at Gordonstoun" of the fact that your housemaster got  
7           wind of bullying in the house?

8       A. Yes.

9       Q. You talked of your experience at Cargilfield where you  
10           were experiencing verbal bullying, certainly, and on one  
11           occasion physical.

12      A. Mm-hmm.

13      Q. What physical bullying, if any, did you endure at  
14           Gordonstoun?

15      A. I don't specifically recall any actual physical  
16           bullying. My bullying, I believe, other than the  
17           punishments which I had to endure, cold baths and being  
18           sent off on random runs to -- I don't remember any  
19           specific bullying. Again, other than the specific  
20           incidents in my statement where I was -- I had bad  
21           things happen to me.

22      Q. Yes. But in terms of what you're talking about at  
23           paragraph 98 is it would appear that the headmaster got  
24           wind of bullying in the house --

25      A. Yes, that's right.

1 Q. -- and he'd heard rumours of pupils being made to hold  
2 onto hot pipes with a knife held underneath them.

3 A. Yes, so that specifically didn't happen to me, but that  
4 was -- and I remember it quite clearly, a house meeting  
5 that we had impromptu outside of the normal house  
6 meeting times where he gathered the entire house in the  
7 common room and he specifically said, "I have heard this  
8 happening and I want it to stop". I very, very clearly  
9 remember that because I was just glad that it wasn't me  
10 and I assumed that that was a rumour that had reached  
11 him, not something that had actually happened because it  
12 seems quite extreme, so.

13 Q. Was it a rumour you were aware of before he called the  
14 house together?

15 A. It was not a rumour that I was aware of before he called  
16 the house together.

17 Q. But it was clearly something he was sufficiently  
18 concerned about?

19 A. Oh, he was very concerned about it, hence the -- you  
20 know, it was a: "stop everything you're doing, we're  
21 having a meeting now", rather than the normal house  
22 meeting where, you know, the usual sundries are  
23 discussed.

24 Q. Did that have effect in terms of impact on the boys of  
25 the house?

1       A. You know, it did have an effect, I think there was a bit  
2       of a calm period after that, for me personally. I get  
3       the feeling that everything calmed down a little bit  
4       after that. I think everyone was a little bit  
5       conscientious and didn't want to be caught doing  
6       anything close to that. But I didn't see any particular  
7       responses from any particular pupils that were, you  
8       know, responsible for any of that. Again, even to this  
9       day I'm -- it was a meeting that obviously was his  
10      concern, but it didn't happen to me and I don't know if  
11      it happened to anyone.

12     Q. All right, but you go on in paragraph 99 to set out  
13      a particular experience --

14     A. Yeah.

15     Q. -- where someone put a knife to your throat?

16     A. Yeah, I remember that extremely vividly.

17     Q. And that was someone you didn't know, for no obvious  
18      reason?

19     A. Yes. I can tell you exactly where it was, exactly where  
20      I was standing, outside the pass through the woods which  
21      came out near the refectory entrance. I'd just come out  
22      of that and back to the woods, little paths going off on  
23      my left-hand side, him, one other person to his side,  
24      and as I say, put a knife to my throat, made some joke,  
25      thought it was funny, then took it off and I very



1           quickly got out of there because, you know, no one's  
2           going to like that.

3       Q. Did you tell anyone?

4       A. I didn't tell anyone, not until this Inquiry have  
5           I mentioned that. Not to anybody.

6       Q. Did you even tell your friends in Duffus?

7       A. No, I didn't even tell my friends in Duffus.

8       Q. You just kept it to yourself?

9       A. Absolutely. I locked it away and put it to the back of  
10          my mind.

11      Q. Is that another example of just keeping yourself off the  
12          radar?

13      A. Absolutely, yes. I mean, the last thing I want to do is  
14          draw any attention to that, so. I considered myself  
15          lucky to get out of the situation, so I was happy to  
16          leave it there.

17      Q. All right. If we could now move on though away from  
18          pupils to the physics teacher.

19      A. Yeah.

20      Q. Andrew Keir. Before we go into any brief detail of what  
21          you experienced, can you explain how you came to be  
22          involved with Andrew Keir in terms of just school life?

23      A. So Andrew Keir was my physics teacher. I also took part  
24          in judo lessons, which he was involved in running, and  
25          he was also involved in, I believe, the canoe club,

1           which I also took part in. So there was multiple  
2           instance where I was being taught by him. I also joined  
3           the radio hamming club, which was an after school club  
4           just run by him, so I had -- there was a lot of  
5           different points in the school where I would meet him on  
6           a fairly regular basis for both study and physical  
7           education.

8       Q. And should we understand this is in the first year you  
9       were at Gordonstoun?

10      A. Yeah, I believe so, yeah.

11      Q. So you were involved with him both in class but also in  
12      these extra activities --

13      A. Yes.

14      Q. -- from really the beginning?

15      A. Yes.

16      Q. In terms of you being interested in radio hamming,  
17      boating, judo, can you remember why you were interested  
18      in those groups?

19      A. I definitely recall that Mr Keir was the person that  
20      introduced me to the electronics club. I believe he was  
21      the person who thought I might get something out of  
22      that. At the time I was particularly keen on physics.  
23      I believe I was a good, high-performing physics student.

24           I don't know about the judo, whether or not he  
25      introduced that to me or not. I just know that he was

1           one of the people that were -- ran that particular  
2           class. But it's certainly not outside of the bounds of  
3           possibility that while we were doing one of the  
4           activities he recommended that to me. And I did enjoy  
5           judo and I'm also quite a strong swimmer so that  
6           canoeing club was a natural something that I had  
7           interest in doing.

8       Q. And were these clubs quite small in terms of numbers of  
9       boys?

10      A. Yeah. The electronics club was pretty small, I think  
11       there were maybe five people in it at a time. It was  
12       pretty exclusive because there were only a specific few  
13       people that might necessarily have liked that kind of  
14       thing. I would suggest people of the same temperament  
15       as myself. It's a quiet -- it's as far to the opposite  
16       from a sports field as you can possibly get. There's no  
17       bravado, it's all technical, it's all fine work, so  
18       physical strength and other attributes had no bearing on  
19       it. It's brain dexterity, so the kind of things that  
20       I was interested in. Yes, they were small clubs. The  
21       canoeing club also, there's only so many canoes you can  
22       fit into a pool, so that was quite a small club as well.  
23       The judo club I think was a bit larger, but the judo  
24       club is a very formulaic -- martial arts is a very  
25       formulaic experience, so quite a few people in that one.

1 Q. Were the people in these clubs perhaps the more  
2 introverted?

3 A. Not the judo club, not necessarily the swimming club,  
4 but most definitely the radio hamming club. That was  
5 a group of people that I could relate to, I wouldn't  
6 necessarily call them my friends because I don't recall  
7 their names, but I recall us all having the same quiet,  
8 shy temperament, happy to involve ourselves into the  
9 particular project we were on, focus on that and not  
10 particularly worry about the people around us.

11 Q. Thinking back to the beginning of you going to these  
12 clubs, what was your relationship with Mr Keir like?

13 A. My relationship with Mr Keir was very much and very  
14 quickly became not a student/teacher relationship. It  
15 was far more of an older friend relationship, and  
16 I specifically use the word "relationship" in the  
17 grandest sense because there was a trust there, there  
18 was a confidence there. If you were asked to ask me who  
19 I would speak to if I had any particular issues at the  
20 school, you know, if I'd had an argument with one of my  
21 friends in Duffus, one of the two friends I had in  
22 Duffus, then he would have been the person I would speak  
23 to, and that pretty quickly he became my person in --  
24 weirdly in pastoral care of me. I just didn't see him  
25 as a teacher. It was a close friend who I would confide

1 in.

2 Q. From your perspective, was that something that you  
3 welcomed?

4 A. Absolutely something that I welcomed at the time because  
5 I didn't particularly have anyone in that position.  
6 I mean, I had two friends, but, like I say, they were  
7 the other side of the school, so having someone who was  
8 a teacher and who I could trust and talk through things  
9 with was -- I was in no way unhappy about that.

10 Q. As the friendship developed, did you have any anxiety  
11 about the relationship that was being built up?

12 A. I had no anxiety about the relationship that was being  
13 built up at all. I thought it was based on trust,  
14 mutual interests, and -- yeah, no anxiety about that at  
15 all. Not while it was in the -- in the years before  
16 things happened.

17 Q. You've just said things happened. How long was it  
18 before things began to happen?

19 A. It was in the last year that I was there in 1991,  
20 perhaps in the late stages of 89 -- sorry, 1990, that  
21 things started to happen. I kept getting invited to the  
22 swimming pool, for example, and he kept not turning up,  
23 which I noticed as just odd. One, why have you invited  
24 me to the swimming pool at this time of day, and two, if  
25 you'd gone to the trouble of inviting me and you are

1 still in a position of authority so I do kind of feel  
2 obliged to go, why are you then not turning up? Just on  
3 multiple levels, I didn't quite understand what was  
4 going on.

5 Q. Were you aware by that stage that he had a reputation  
6 with other boys?

7 A. I was not aware at that stage that he had a reputation  
8 with other boys.

9 Q. I think you say at paragraph 107 --

10 A. I do.

11 Q. -- on page 24 about the radio hamming club:

12 " ... there were other people there. I remember  
13 when the class finished, two of the other children said  
14 Mr Keir is a 'bit handsy'."

15 A. That's right. That was the very first time that I had  
16 an indication that -- of his activities, and that  
17 particular incident was after some impromptu judo  
18 wrestling at the back of the class, which again  
19 I mentioned in my statement, it was particularly  
20 uncomfortable and I remember afterwards when they said  
21 that just thinking: why didn't you let me know before  
22 because then I wouldn't have done judo at the back of  
23 the class with him. I didn't really put that together  
24 with being invited to the swimming pool because, you  
25 know, I had no idea what was going to happen at the

1 swimming pool. I just thought that was something  
2 different entirely.

3 Q. Before we come to the swimming pool, though, going back  
4 to the previous paragraph, moving from 107 and if you go  
5 back to paragraph 106, the ad hoc judo lessons you were  
6 talking about were within the radio hamming class, as  
7 part of that?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Not the formal judo lessons?

10 A. Absolutely not. It was literally -- there was a big  
11 physics classroom and there was a room, an area at the  
12 back of floor space where most of the time people just  
13 walk through and sit down and, yeah, that's where --  
14 I say ad hoc judo, but, you know, for the record there  
15 was no -- none of the formalities that would be  
16 associated with a normal judo lesson, which is very,  
17 very strictly routine. You bow onto the mat, you bow  
18 off the mat, there are a lot of rituals which have to  
19 take place. This was -- while it was judo moves, it's  
20 essentially, "Let's just do some wrestling at the back  
21 of the class".

22 Q. And to use your words, inappropriate grappling?

23 A. Absolutely, yes.

24 Q. Putting you in positions you couldn't escape from?

25 A. Yeah, not in a painful way at all, but obviously as

1           a judo instructor, you know, he's truly capable of  
2           putting people in certain physical positions and  
3           I absolutely couldn't escape from them. But at the  
4           time, before the -- before I realised what was going on,  
5           I genuinely thought this would help me in my judo class  
6           because I'm trying to learn a little bit more about the  
7           moves involved.

8       Q.    Though you knew that his hands were being left --

9       A.    I didn't realise how bad that was until that particular  
10           session at the back of the physics class. There are  
11           multiple references, unfortunately, in my diary where  
12           I've put, "We did some ad hoc judo", and looking back on  
13           that, I really don't know how many of those were for his  
14           own gratification. It was just specifically at that  
15           class where the touching was quite long and  
16           inappropriate, and coupled with the fact that, you know,  
17           the comments from the other kids afterwards, that stuck,  
18           has always stuck in my memory.

19      Q.    You've mentioned your diary.

20      A.    Yes.

21      Q.    Were you an assiduous diary-keeper whilst you were at --

22      A.    I was not before, but for whatever reason in 1990, 1991,  
23           I started writing a diary, and I was quite, at that  
24           particular point in time, specific about writing it down  
25           every day. It's a young person's diary, it's quite



1           formulaic. I would always start with what I had for  
2           lunch, which is entirely not interesting when you look  
3           back on it, but for me it was something that I routinely  
4           did every day, and if there was a particular annoyance  
5           or something that happened to me, I would put it in my  
6           diary.

7       Q. You still have the diaries?

8       A. I do still have the diaries from 1991 and 1993. I don't  
9           know if I wrote one in 1992 or before that, but I don't  
10          have them.

11      Q. All right. 1991 is obviously while you were still at  
12          Gordonstoun, 1993 is after Gordonstoun?

13      A. Yes.

14      Q. And we'll come back to that. But 1991, there are  
15          references --

16      A. Yeah.

17      Q. -- to Mr Keir?

18      A. Yeah, several.

19      Q. Were you writing in full about what was taking place or  
20          was it just --

21      A. I was definitely not writing in full about what was  
22          taking place. And the reason for that was that  
23          I have -- none of my property while I was at Gordonstoun  
24          was particularly sacred. At any point in time, you  
25          know, my -- someone living in my room or another

1           classmate or another pupil could come around and did  
2           several times have a look through my stuff.

3           As long as I didn't have anything of particular  
4           interest, they would let it be, but I had no illusions  
5           that that was my own private diary and that no one could  
6           access it, so I was not 100 per cent forthcoming in that  
7           diary at all. Like I say, it was more of a: "this is  
8           what happened to me", and if something particularly  
9           angered me at the time I would put that down, but, for  
10          example, the things that happened to me from Mr Keir,  
11          there's two reasons that they're not in the diary. One  
12          of those is because anybody could have picked that up  
13          and read it and I definitely wouldn't want them knowing  
14          that that had happened, and the other is if I'd written  
15          it down, it would have become real and my coping method  
16          for this for a very long time and instantly in fact  
17          while it was happening was to very much pretend that it  
18          was not and had not happened, to lock that away real  
19          tight and box it up never to be re-opened.

20        Q. Just like the knife episode, it was put away?

21        A. Absolutely, yes.

22        Q. You talk obviously in terms -- and we don't need to  
23          rehearse them -- in paragraphs 109 and 110, episodes in  
24          the swimming pool.

25        A. Mm-hmm.

1 Q. And it was just the two of you?

2 A. Absolutely just the two of us. No one else in the whole  
3 building.

4 Q. How many times did that happen?

5 A. I went to the swimming pool a number of times and he  
6 didn't turn up. It was an annoyance, but Bruce House is  
7 only just literally over the hill from the swimming  
8 pool, so for me not -- you know, irksome more than  
9 anything else. But actually meeting him and then going  
10 into the swimming pool, what happened in the swimming  
11 pool, that only happened the once. Fortunately he  
12 allowed me to exit from that situation when I very  
13 clearly said to him, "I'd like to go, please", and he  
14 didn't invite me again.

15 Q. And to be clear, he had removed his costume and invited  
16 you to do the same?

17 A. Absolutely, yes.

18 Q. But you didn't?

19 A. I did not, no.

20 Q. No. But again was that an episode which was just boxed  
21 away?

22 A. My feelings at the time were very much confusion.  
23 I just didn't understand why we were there. I -- it --  
24 I wasn't getting a thrill of we're doing something  
25 against the rules. That's generally not my character.

1 I'm sure other people would have gone, "Oh, fantastic,  
2 let's go skinning dipping in its middle of the pool in  
3 the middle of the night, no one will know, it's all very  
4 exciting" but that's just not me. So I just was very,  
5 very confused as to why I was there, what he was doing,  
6 why he was asking me to do that. I didn't understand  
7 that that was his motivations, although I do as  
8 an adult. So to be perfectly honest, it was less of a:  
9 put that in a box and forget about it, and it was much  
10 more of a: I just don't get it, as a young person I just  
11 don't understand why, what was going on there, so  
12 I couldn't really put anything down because I just --  
13 I had no idea what -- what I would write to explain that  
14 situation. It's so alien to me at the time.

15 Q. But to be clear, it was at his instigation --

16 A. Absolutely, yes. Absolutely, yes. He asked me to go  
17 there, he said, "Let's go in and let's go swimming in  
18 there", and we both went to the pool, he asked me to  
19 take my swimming trunks off after he took his off and it  
20 was at that point I said, "I'd like to go, please".  
21 He -- again, while he was someone I trusted closely as  
22 a friend, he was still in a position of authority, so  
23 I did feel like I had to do what he said, and honestly  
24 if he'd forced me to, if he'd said, "No, you have to do  
25 this", I probably would have.

1 Q. You go on to talk about an experience with a computer  
2 game.

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Timescale-wise from the swimming pool episode to the  
5 episode you set out in paragraphs 112 and 113, how much  
6 time are we talking between the two?

7 A. I honestly couldn't tell you. However, there is  
8 a reference in my diary where I said very cryptically,  
9 "Mr Keir wasn't successful this time", and I suspect  
10 that was the day. But honestly I couldn't tell you for  
11 sure what date or day that happened on or where it was  
12 in relation to the swimming episode, although I would  
13 suggest that it was after.

14 Q. And as we read in paragraph 113, having got you into the  
15 situation of playing a computer game --

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. -- he took advantage.

18 A. Very much so, yes.

19 Q. And you tried to carry on playing the computer game --

20 A. I --

21 Q. -- as he fondled you?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And put his hands into your trousers?

24 A. Absolutely right. I absolutely tried to block it out  
25 and just focus on the screen in front of me. In fact,

1 I can literally still see the screen right now with the  
2 little game, bomber, lines of mountains underneath.  
3 It's crystal clear to me.

4 Q. And there's other reminders?

5 A. Very much so, yes. The -- just the looking over. When  
6 he stopped. Literally seeing him stretch up like that,  
7 and he had big sweat patches down both arms and I could  
8 literally smell the sweat coming off him and  
9 unfortunately that -- that's something that's been much  
10 harder to forget and get rid of over the years. That's  
11 had quite a marked impact on particularly sensitive  
12 moments with partners and that kind of thing.

13 Q. Yes. The ripples of it have continued through the  
14 years?

15 A. Very much so, unfortunately.

16 Q. You left when you were 15 from Gordonstoun.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. And you moved on to Stonyhurst, and you set out the  
19 details there, and I think from Stonyhurst it's apparent  
20 that, as distinct from Gordonstoun with a massive  
21 campus, Stonyhurst was in one place, it wasn't the same  
22 problems that you'd experienced?

23 A. It wasn't, no, because everybody was far more thrown in  
24 in the same area. It was a vast concentration of lots  
25 and lots and lots of different pupils of different ages

1           rather than them being spread out over a very wide  
2           location.

3       Q. Did that help you as an individual who had been, as  
4           you've been describing, isolated?

5       A. It did help me a little bit, yes. It meant I had more  
6           people that I could talk to. I had -- I wasn't just  
7           limited to the people in my year group, in my house,  
8           which is what was the case in Gordonstoun. I mean, in  
9           Gordonstoun you didn't really mix between the years,  
10          whereas in Stonyhurst there was a little bit more of  
11          that. Mostly you did stick to your own year group but  
12          I had a whole year's worth of people to try and gain  
13          friendships and that kind of thing.

14       Q. Thinking back to your friendship with Andrew Keir,  
15           obviously we've talked about episodes with the ad hoc  
16           judo, the computer, the pool.

17       A. Mm-hmm.

18       Q. Can you give an estimate of how many times there was, to  
19           use your words, inappropriate contact?

20       A. With regards to the judo, I'm guessing probably about  
21           five to ten times. Looking back on it, it's far more  
22           worrying than it was to me at the time. I just assumed  
23           at the time that it was extra judo practice, for  
24           example. The pool, I was invited a number of times but  
25           only actually went the once. And the incident in the

1 physics lab, that just happened the once. I believe  
2 that answers your question, but please let me know.

3 Q. Okay. And again just in terms of timescale, you were  
4 there 89 to 91. This would be 90 to 91, would that be,  
5 when these things were happening, it was in the latter  
6 year of two or was it across --

7 A. I'm just making sure in my head. (Pause).

8 I cannot be sure for the judo. I think that might  
9 expand a greater period of time. But for the incidents  
10 that I remember, yes, definitely in my last year, in  
11 1991.

12 Q. You mentioned the diary of 2003 and by this stage you've  
13 left Gordonstoun.

14 A. Mm-hmm in 1993.

15 Q. Sorry?

16 A. In 1993.

17 Q. 1993, yes, sorry. But I think we know from the 1993  
18 diary there were occasions where you had contact still  
19 with Mr Keir?

20 A. Yeah. My relationship with Mr Keir while we were at  
21 Gordonstoun was of that of a friend, a confidante, and  
22 I was not aware that what he did was wrong. I assumed  
23 it was a mistake, an error, something which if it's  
24 a friend you forgive. It just happened that one time:  
25 I'm very sorry, I didn't mean it to happen. It's no



1           problem, we'll get past it. Because he was, like I say,  
2           a trusted friend. If it was an acquaintance or someone  
3           that hadn't embedded themselves in my life, I would have  
4           absolutely just forgot about it and moved on.

5           But his hold on me, that relationship continued  
6           after I left the school. I kept in contact with him and  
7           he kept in contact with me, not regularly, only two or  
8           three occurrences, but still that contact remained and  
9           I actually went to see him, I believe that's in the 1993  
10          diary.

11        Q. Yes.

12        A. Because I didn't live that far away, it was a couple of  
13        buses from where I lived at the time to get to him, and,  
14        yeah, foolishly and innocently I went to see him, he  
15        showed me a few things around his boat, around his  
16        house, I picked up a box of radio hamming gear from him  
17        which I literally still have in my garage with the top  
18        on. I've taken the top off to see what's in there and  
19        I've just put that top straight back on there. Don't  
20        ask me why I've kept it, but it's one of those boxes  
21        I try not to look into, so.

22        Q. Yes. But while you were there, he was tactile again?

23        A. Absolutely, yes. I vividly remember it. We were in  
24        Hopeman Harbour looking at his boat and he put his arm  
25        around my shoulder, not at a distance but, you know,

1 close so we were all touching down one side.

2 I just got an instant flashback of the sweat and his  
3 closeness, the arm around me is exactly what he did just  
4 before he did the stuff in the physics lab, and  
5 I just -- that was just a: I'm out, I'm done. You know,  
6 let's go, please.

7 Q. And by this stage, you were about 16?

8 A. Yes, that's right. And at the end of that meeting was  
9 the last time I spoke to or communicated with him. But  
10 as I left the front door of his house, that was when he  
11 said, "Let's keep this our little secret". He spoke to  
12 me about how if I was to talk to anyone about this, it  
13 would, you know, not only hurt him but his wife, his  
14 children, and I don't know if -- I'd never met his  
15 children, I don't know whether they're his or his wife's  
16 or whatever, but that's what he said, and obviously  
17 I hope I'm a nice person and I didn't want to damage  
18 his, you know, relationship, his life, so I did.

19 Q. When you were at school with Mr Keir, was he married at  
20 that stage?

21 A. I believe I met his wife once on a visit to his house,  
22 his flat, while I was at school, but I don't know of his  
23 relationship status or whether he had children.

24 Q. But that's the first time he's talked about there being  
25 a little secret?

1       A. Yes, that last time was the first time that he said,  
2       "Let's keep this our little secret".

3       Q. And he was clearly anxious?

4       A. Absolutely, yes. By that time it had been some time  
5       since I'd left Gordonstoun, so although I remember it  
6       then, that was the first time that it raised a question  
7       in the back of my mind as to whether what had happened  
8       had been appropriate or inappropriate. But that box was  
9       already sealed, I'd already left Gordonstoun. All I had  
10      to do at that point was walk away and it would never be  
11      mentioned again. I'd already got myself kicked out of  
12      Gordonstoun. There wouldn't have to be any further  
13      repercussions and it was just me.

14      Q. I think as you say at paragraph 116, another factor was  
15      you didn't want to share with your parents the  
16      sacrifice they had made to get you to Gordonstoun?

17      A. This has always been the hardest thing for me about the  
18      whole thing. My parents sacrificed an awful lot to send  
19      me to Gordonstoun. It didn't financially cripple them,  
20      but I know that was their priority and they literally  
21      sent me to the best school that they could afford at all  
22      costs. And I didn't want my parents to know that that  
23      had happened to me there because I know that they would  
24      never forgive themselves for it. And it's not their  
25      fault. It was my fault at the time, but I understand

1           it's not my fault.

2       Q. No. Did you feel at any stage at your time at  
3       Gordonstoun -- you may think this daft given the  
4       conversation we've had so far -- that there was anyone  
5       you could tell?

6       A. Honestly, the only person I would have told at  
7       Gordonstoun unfortunately was my abuser, Mr Keir. He  
8       was the person who had put himself in a position of  
9       trust relationship. While I appreciate Mr Goss was  
10      a good housemaster, I would not have brought that up  
11      with him. It would have been Mr Keir, and when that  
12      happened with him, that essentially removed any avenue  
13      for me to go to.

14      Q. Tell us about the impact of your experience at  
15      Gordonstoun, first of all in terms of education.

16      A. So when I went to Gordonstoun, I got my nigh on  
17      100 per cent in my Common Entrance exam, which was the  
18      exam that they, I guess, assess your level at when I was  
19      at Cargilfield, so I did very well to get in there.  
20      I remember that because I had a conversation with my mum  
21      and I said that I'd failed all my exams and then, when  
22      she said, well, the college makes -- I'd failed, I then  
23      said actually I didn't, no, I had passed everything with  
24      flying colours. That's why I remember that.

25           My GCSE results were really good, particularly in

1 maths, I got an A plus, and I literally had time to have  
2 a nap at the back of the exam class after having gone  
3 through everything twice. Very confident with it, very,  
4 very good. When I left Gordonstoun, I went from  
5 an A plus to a D in maths, I dropped physics just  
6 because I really didn't want to be in a physics lab any  
7 more, basically, and I did design technology. It was  
8 not a classroom-based activity, it was a workshop-based  
9 activity, creative, with your hands. You largely are  
10 left to get on with things with some, obviously, safety  
11 oversight and I got an E in that, so essentially  
12 I scraped out a pass at Gordonstoun whereas I would have  
13 been expected to, I expect, A, straight out of there  
14 into a good university. I moved into Nottingham Trent  
15 HND -- on an HND course at the time, so not a full  
16 degree course. The impact on my education has carried  
17 on significantly through my life. I would have expected  
18 to leave university to step into a role which I am  
19 currently doing now, whereas what actually happened is  
20 I had to come out, I did, you know, some security work,  
21 admin work, and I very slowly worked my way up the  
22 ladder to the point that I am now rather than this being  
23 a starting point. So there's been on my education  
24 a serious impact largely based on the utter shattering  
25 of any trust I had in teachers and authority figures.

1 Q. And did that shattering of trust impact on other aspects  
2 of life?

3 A. It's unfortunately meant I've not had a fantastic  
4 relationship with my parents since the event, just  
5 simply because -- especially since 2015 when I came  
6 forward, this has been quite fresh on my mind, but even  
7 for the years before that I'd -- I've always known that  
8 there's something I haven't told them. Even if I lock  
9 it up in a box and stick it in the back of my head it's  
10 always been there, so my conversations with my parents  
11 have always been at a much higher, chattier level,  
12 nothing deep and meaningful. Honestly, they're lovely  
13 people, they really are, they don't deserve that. So at  
14 some point I hope to rectify that. But I'm not there  
15 yet.

16 The actual abuse itself has had a long-lasting  
17 effect on many relationships that I've had. Just from  
18 an intimate point of view, it's just -- it's like  
19 something you don't want to think about, so the most  
20 inappropriate time, that's when it flashes up, because  
21 you're trying not to think about it, you end up thinking  
22 about it. Yeah, on multiple levels it's had an impact  
23 for a long period of time.

24 Q. And in terms of receiving help for all of that?

25 A. I've virtually not received any help for all of that.

1 Up until 2015, my coping method was to literally pretend  
2 it never happened. You may -- I apologise if I'm  
3 jumping one of your questions, but one of the reasons  
4 I came forward in 2015 was because I found out that it  
5 happened to other people and I just couldn't --  
6 I literally, within getting that letter to say that that  
7 had happened at the school, it didn't mention any names  
8 or any teachers, but I instantly knew that that had  
9 happened to somebody else and literally within two hours  
10 I had called the police to say, you know, this stuff  
11 happened to me as well, and I just couldn't let someone  
12 stand up alone and go through that kind of stuff.

13 Q. In 2015, it was the fact that the school wrote to you --  
14 A. Yes.

15 Q. -- that you discovered --  
16 A. Yes.

17 Q. -- someone else had come forward?  
18 A. Yes.

19 Q. All right. And I think, as we know, the end result of  
20 that was the prosecution and the conviction at Elgin  
21 Sheriff Court?  
22 A. Yes, that's correct.

23 Q. And obviously you would through that prosecution  
24 discover others were involved?  
25 A. I -- absolutely. I'm aware of at least five victims

1           personally, three of which were involved in that  
2           criminal case.

3       Q.   And we would understand just from the terms of the  
4           charges that the conduct that was alleged and resulted  
5           in convictions for pre-dated you?

6       A.   Yes, that's correct. The earliest known offence I'm  
7           aware of was in January of 1989 and other offences that  
8           happened after I was there.

9       Q.   And talking to others who were involved as complainers,  
10          to use the legal word, in that prosecution, have you  
11          discovered things that caused you distress?

12      A.   I absolutely have, yes. The most distressing and  
13          honestly I think a critical failure at the time was that  
14          Gordonstoun didn't listen to someone who reported the  
15          abuse in the start of 1989. Two things from that. One  
16          is had they listened, potentially the abuse that  
17          happened to me would not have happened because they  
18          would have addressed the issue. Unfortunately, I know  
19          that practices at the time would have been to give  
20          Mr Keir a reference, a good review, and move him on to  
21          a different school and so potentially it could have  
22          happened to someone else anyway. I'm not particularly  
23          happy to say that, but it is what it is.

24      Q.   The experience of reporting and then the prosecution,  
25          from your perspective, was dealing with the police



1           straightforward?

2           A. Other than having to travel a significant distance to  
3           make my statement, the first one, it was relatively  
4           straightforward and the police were very good, very  
5           conscientious about going through what was quite  
6           a lengthy process, and for me pretty harrowing stuff to  
7           go through again. That was the first time I had  
8           actually discussed it with anyone. Up until 2015,  
9           I literally only told one person and that was very  
10          simply, "I was abused when I was a younger lad", without  
11          any details. That was the only thing I'd ever said to  
12          a living person up until 2015 when I sat down with the  
13          police and took them through everything that happened.

14         Q. Now, I think you say that in terms of the court case you  
15         were allocated someone to support you through it --

16         A. I was, yes.

17         Q. -- at court.

18         A. At court, yes. When I arrived at court, there was  
19         someone who took me through the process, someone  
20         dedicated to us as a group of witnesses. You know, very  
21         formulaic: sit here, we'll come and get you; if you need  
22         anything come and get me. The process was, I shall say,  
23         by the book. Not necessarily, you know, for the  
24         witnesses, but very much by the book and I just -- as  
25         with everything, I kind of accepted that as it was

1           because it's something that needed to be done, so.

2       Q. Do you think it could have been done better?

3       A. I do reckon it could have been done better, yes. What  
4       happened yesterday, for example, arriving here and being  
5       shown briefly where you were going to be, you know, the  
6       process involved, a familiarisation with the building,  
7       that was really helpful today. When I was at the court  
8       case, it was very much: turn up, the court's through  
9       that room there, you wait in this meeting room here, and  
10      they just kind of left you be until it was your time to  
11      go in. I don't recall particularly speaking to the  
12      prosecution before going in, the briefest chats as  
13      walking to a room, and then, after quite a lengthy wait  
14      in a waiting room, in you go, answer your questions.

15     Q. I think it's fair to say you were dissatisfied at the  
16      level the case was brought?

17     A. I was definitely dissatisfied with the level the case  
18      was brought. I believe there was a -- there was, not  
19      I believe, there was a comment by the lady presiding  
20      over those proceedings --

21     Q. The sheriff?

22     A. The sheriff, yes, to that effect. The -- what amounted  
23      to grooming of individuals that met his specific  
24      requirements, someone such as myself and someone  
25      isolated from the rest of the school that he could

1 befriended, the fact that he had groomed people over  
2 a number of months and years and then abused them was  
3 something that she thought and I thought should have  
4 been brought to a higher level of justice.

5 It seems odd that he went to jail and then six  
6 months later he's on his merry way. I appreciate he's  
7 on the Sex Offenders Register, and it was a relief when  
8 he was convicted, I felt like justice has been served,  
9 but it was very much a start of the healing process and  
10 it wasn't a very fulfilling start.

11 Q. Did you take that any further or did you just leave it  
12 be?

13 A. There was some communication with the prosecutor, but  
14 essentially I just left it be. There was very little  
15 that could be done about it in my eyes, and having  
16 discussed it with my friends again, I didn't see  
17 anything that could be changed with regards to that.

18 Q. I think the school wrote to you about what had taken  
19 place. Did you find that helpful?

20 A. I didn't find that very helpful, unfortunately. They  
21 have written to me and they have -- there's a number of  
22 open letters to various people, which I do receive,  
23 which on one side say, "We're very sorry for everything  
24 that happened", but there's no -- what I would love to  
25 see is some actual action to back up those statements.

1           It feels very much like, "We're sorry this happened to  
2           you. If you want, call these people, they'll help you  
3           out. Now we don't have to worry about this any more."  
4           I'd like some actual actions to back up the words, and  
5           once that is done, I honestly look forward to  
6           forgiveness. I think that will help me, that will help  
7           everybody.

8       Q. When you say actions, what do you mean?

9       A. I mean acknowledgement of the things that happened in  
10       the past and I've -- since the criminal conviction,  
11       I have been taking part in a civil case and I appreciate  
12       the wheels of law turn slowly, but the only help I have  
13       received so far has been forced out of Mr Keir's  
14       solicitors, not from anything on Gordonstoun's front,  
15       who still have yet to acknowledge any fault other than  
16       some kind words to say that, "We're very sorry this  
17       happened".

18      Q. Thinking broadly about the Inquiry, what would you hope  
19      it could achieve?

20      A. I would very much like the Inquiry to give people  
21      a voice. So for people who have gone through this just  
22      to know it's okay, you know, it wasn't your fault, and  
23      someone to acknowledge the fact that what happened to  
24      them was wrong, and if they want to do anything about  
25      it, to try and get help, that that help exists and that

1           help is available. I would love for, and I believe  
2           there's a number of changes already in place at the  
3           schools to prevent this happening again. That's very  
4           important and I'm reasonably confident that it won't.

5           I like the idea -- I've since gone through  
6           Gordonstoun's child protection procedures and I like the  
7           idea of the fact that there is a named person. I was  
8           not aware of that when I initially made my statement,  
9           but that fits in with one of the things I would like to  
10          see, someone outside of the disciplinary procedures of  
11          Gordonstoun, someone safe to talk to who you can bring  
12          to them any issues which you have, whether that be abuse  
13          or otherwise.

14          I don't necessarily know whether they've managed to  
15          do that because I believe the named person in their  
16          reports is someone who is in a position within the  
17          school and has disciplinary powers, so nothing's  
18          perfect, but if there was just someone that pupils could  
19          talk to and say, "I can talk to you, I trust you, you're  
20          not going to take this away and say that I've done  
21          something wrong", a safe space to talk. I didn't have  
22          that, my abuser took that away from me, and  
23          a recognition that that can happen would definitely help  
24          in the future.

25          And lastly, peace of mind. Again I have no ill-will

1           towards Gordonstoun at all. This happened on their  
2           watch and I'm sure they're very sorry about it, and when  
3           we finally get to the point where I can get some help to  
4           get me through this, other than trying not to think  
5           about it, that would be fantastic.

6       MR BROWN: Thank you very much indeed. I have no further  
7           questions for you, but is there anything else you would  
8           wish to tell us?

9       A. I -- I just hope that there's -- in this day and age,  
10          there's a place for people of my temperament when I was  
11          younger -- I've learned a lot of things in growing up,  
12          but I'd like there to be some way of recognising the  
13          various different personalities of young people as they  
14          go through schools so that they can get the best out of  
15          that experience, rather than if you do not fit the  
16          mould, you are -- it's a little brutal to say, but left  
17          to one side and, in my time, they focused on the people  
18          they could help. But I feel that I had a lot to give at  
19          that time which was unrecognised and I know from exams  
20          that I've done since that I'm a surprisingly intelligent  
21          and very apt individual, and if I'd had someone at the  
22          time who could have brought that out of me, I could be  
23          in an entirely different place. However, life is  
24          a journey not a destination and I've made it this far.

25       MR BROWN: Thank you.

1 LADY SMITH: Are there any outstanding applications for  
2 questions?

3 Thank you so much for coming here today to give your  
4 evidence in addition to the clear written evidence that  
5 we already have from you. It's of enormous value to me  
6 to hear it, to have heard you discuss it, to have been  
7 able to engage with you, and I hope you realise that  
8 that has a value separate and in addition to such value  
9 as you found from, as you say, having a voice, which is  
10 something we are doing here and will continue doing here  
11 for others who wish to come forward.

12 So I'm very grateful to you. You're probably now  
13 exhausted at the end of a long session and I hope you're  
14 able to have a restful evening after this session today.

15 I'm able to let you go with my thanks.

16 A. Thank you, my Lady.

17 (The witness withdrew)

18 LADY SMITH: Mr Brown.

19 MR BROWN: My Lady, I'm sure the shorthand writers would  
20 welcome a break.

21 LADY SMITH: Yes.

22 MR BROWN: As would we all. We have some further read-ins  
23 that we could continue with perhaps in 15 minutes?

24 LADY SMITH: That would be good. Let's have a short break  
25 and then get back to whatever reading-in we can achieve

1           this afternoon.

2       MR BROWN: Thank you very much.

3       (3.30 pm)

4                               (A short break)

5       (3.45 pm)

6       LADY SMITH: Ms Bennie.

7       MS BENNIE: Thank you, my Lady. We propose two read-ins  
8           this afternoon. The first of the two is a statement  
9           which bears the reference WIT-3-000000092. My Lady,  
10          this witness wishes to remain anonymous and has adopted  
11          the pseudonym of 'Christian'.

12                            'Christian' (read)

13                "My name is Christian. I am 60 years old. I am not  
14                reporting any abuse but wish to help broaden the  
15                Inquiry's perspective on life at Gordonstoun. Many of  
16                the practices I experienced are no longer part of the  
17                school's regime, their having fallen into disfavour or  
18                perhaps even outlawed. Where relevant, I have expressed  
19                my own opinions of whether a particular part of school  
20                life should or should not have been allowed to continue.

21                I was a child of a British Naval Officer whose  
22                postings took him to various postings in Europe and the  
23                UK prior to 1968. A consequence of this was my parents'  
24                concern that this pattern would prevent me from having  
25                a consistent educational environment. In 1967 I was



1 sent to a preparatory boarding school in Surrey.  
2 I attended this school for four terms. This school was  
3 closed down following incidents involving sexual abuse  
4 perpetrated by the headmaster against the youngest child  
5 present. Corporal punishment and emotional  
6 psychological abuse, the latter of which I can attest to  
7 having suffered, also ran rampant. The headmaster in  
8 question was arrested, convicted, imprisoned and later  
9 committed suicide though the facts surrounding the case  
10 were not made public. Only through contact with one of  
11 the whistle-blowers did I learn the outcome. Thus it  
12 was a great relief that my experience at this school  
13 ended, and while far from ideal, the transition to  
14 Aberlour House was a relatively welcome change.

15 I attended the junior school, Aberlour House, from  
16 1968 until 1973 and then Gordonstoun from 1973 until  
17 1977.

18 Routines were fairly well set and not entirely  
19 inconsistent between the junior and senior schools.  
20 Timing of the classes and sports depended on the time of  
21 the year and available light.

22 Bedtimes were based on the children's age, roughly  
23 with the youngest at the junior school to bed at 7.30  
24 and the oldest at 8 pm. An hour was permitted for  
25 reading, but at 8.55 only Bibles were allowed to be

1       perused. Lights out at 9 pm. Windows were kept open  
2       all year round, often resulting in those whose bunks or  
3       beds were close to the windows waking up with snow on  
4       their covers first thing in the morning. Children were  
5       in dormitories of 8 to 14 per room, with zero privacy.  
6       Special dispensation for Saturday evenings existed for  
7       the older kids to stay up and watch American police  
8       shows broadcast around 8 to 9 o'clock and very popular  
9       in the day. At Gordonstoun, bedtimes ranged from 9.30  
10      until 10, again based on students' ages. The most  
11      senior students might have earned the opportunity or  
12      privilege for a single room in which to sleep, but again  
13      the majority were berthed in dormitories.

14             Sports included rugby and hockey in the winter  
15      months, with cricket and athletics in the summer,  
16      punctuated by cross-county running. Soccer or football  
17      was not considered suitable for anyone but the youngest  
18      children, that is under ten, perhaps as a result of some  
19      element of social snobbery: rugby union was the  
20      gentleman's game, soccer the oafs. Full contact sports  
21      have been shown to be potentially injurious to the  
22      young, so it is as well that soccer has now become much  
23      more popular. Bat and ball sports on the other hand do  
24      not suffer as much from this potential hazard.

25             Following afternoon activities, showers and dinner.

1       Dinner was served followed by prep. Swimming and  
2       life-saving training were also conducted at Gordonstoun,  
3       along with the individual sports opportunities such as  
4       squash and tennis. An indoor gym was used for circuit  
5       training and was beginning to be used for basketball,  
6       although the latter sport did not take off until after  
7       I had left.

8       Healthcare and welfare were under the auspices of  
9       the school staff. Heads of houses would be in charge of  
10      approximately 60 to 70 children. Illnesses, injuries,  
11      and other ailments were attended to by on-staff nursing  
12      sisters, senior qualified nurses, along with a visiting  
13      physician who conducted morning consultations a couple  
14      of times a week. In my day, a married couple of  
15      physicians worked together in this capacity. The male  
16      physician eliminated the practice of a nurse, which was  
17      to provide a codeine pill to anyone suffering any aches  
18      and pains. He should be credited for removing this  
19      foolish procedure. Said nurse was also reluctant to  
20      permit any child who was ill with a cold to avoid any of  
21      the sporting activities on his or her schedule. It is  
22      possible, to be fair, that she would recognise someone  
23      faking an illness, but when a child appears with  
24      a hoarse throat, severe cough and extreme malaise, it  
25      was hardly responsible to force them to continue as if

1           they were well.

2           Religious instruction took the form of compulsory  
3           attendance at morning chapel, assemblies and Sunday  
4           services. The only Gordonstoun pupils not required to  
5           attend the religious portions of these were of different  
6           faiths, but at the junior school no such respite was  
7           given, Jewish and Muslim children were stuck with  
8           attending. I strongly believe that there is no place  
9           for this kind of forced imposition of organised religion  
10          on anyone. It should be strictly voluntary. Arguably  
11          there is no place for it in schools at all (my American  
12          experience has convinced me that the separation of  
13          church and state, according to the nation's  
14          constitution, is central to freedom).

15          A word on this so-called Christian education. That  
16          the school chaplain in 1985, upon being told of a case  
17          of abuse by a teacher, did nothing to stop it is either  
18          a case of the perpetrator's right of confession to  
19          a member of the clergy without fear of repercussion or,  
20          more likely, one of denial and disbelief. How many  
21          children abused by clergy (or with a blind eye turned  
22          thereto) must reveal their stories before the teachers  
23          and priests are given the custodial sentences they  
24          deserve? The Roman Catholic world is rife with examples  
25          such as these, and the Church of England also appears to

1 fall into this category too. If this reflects  
2 a scholastic application of Christianity, one can only  
3 imagine the wrath of the Holy Trinity at its misuse.

4 Trips could encompass a number of different  
5 activities. Expeditions, usually involving camping on  
6 the west coast of Scotland, were designed to instill  
7 hardiness and a sense of living off the land. I have  
8 memories of hauling tents and sleeping bags through the  
9 wilderness, camping near a beach on the Isle of Skye and  
10 cooking mussels on a portable gas stove. In addition,  
11 for those of us musically inclined, we would often  
12 perform at community centres and on one occasion at  
13 a maximum security prison in Inverness.

14 Leisure time was fairly limited. Saturday  
15 afternoons, unless one were involved in a local sporting  
16 contest requiring the home school to cheer on its team,  
17 might include visits to the local town, that is Elgin,  
18 either by bicycle or thanks to a local friendly cabby  
19 whose fleet of Czech and Russian runabouts served to  
20 ferry groups of three or four children there and back.  
21 Sundays, at least after the aforementioned chapel, were  
22 our own time to do with what we wanted. Television was  
23 limited to a few programmes and a few hours per week,  
24 although the common room areas dictated a majority rule  
25 on what was viewed. Occasionally there would be school

1 lectures and/or films broadcast in assorted venues, The  
2 most accommodating being above the fire station. This  
3 site served also as the stage for various school plays  
4 and concerts.

5 My Christmas holidays were spent with family in  
6 various countries around the world. Birthdays were at  
7 school but I was uncomfortable with celebrating them and  
8 have remained so to this day. At Aberlour House  
9 birthday teas were offered to each qualifying child, who  
10 could invite a maximum of seven others to sit and enjoy  
11 cake, sweets and a small celebration in addition to the  
12 school meal. These occasions were essentially  
13 a manifestation of a popularity contest - children whose  
14 birthdays fell in school holidays appeared less likely  
15 to be invited to these birthday teas because there was  
16 no opportunity for reciprocation. At Gordonstoun,  
17 birthdays were essentially a private event.

18 On three occasions between 1971 and 1973 my parents  
19 visited the junior school for a weekend furlough whilst  
20 they were living in England. At no other times did  
21 I have any personal contact with them outside of school  
22 holidays. The only communications I had with them or  
23 any other family members until 1976 was through letters.  
24 During a few months in 1976 until my parents moved to  
25 the United States, I was able to make a handful of

1 telephone calls via the payphone outside my boarding  
2 house but that was the extent of any personal  
3 conversation I had with family during term time during  
4 the nine years.

5 Discipline/punishment.

6 It is hard to define what these terms mean in the  
7 context of Gordonstoun and its junior school. The  
8 philosophies of the founder, Kurt Hahn, emphasised  
9 self-discipline in the form of an arcane checklist  
10 called a training plan, which was in large part policed  
11 by senior pupils. I personally found this practice to  
12 be silly on one level (for example, who cares if  
13 a person has to have a cold shower after a warm one and  
14 why two showers a day? Absolute nonsense). On  
15 a related subject, why should anyone have to shower in  
16 public anyway? Bathroom functions are supposed to be  
17 private - they are in any civilised family home, so why  
18 should a school pupil be forced into a public space for  
19 said ablutions? The aforementioned policing, as  
20 conducted by nothing more than older teenagers, some who  
21 had been awarded ranks commensurate with their level of  
22 seniority, seemed oddly misplaced, as if the lunatics  
23 were running the asylum. On occasion, some of these  
24 older boys would mete out discipline in the form of  
25 penalty drills for up to two hours for offences as

1       mundane as "cheek", the mildest form of rudeness and not  
2       even close to insolence.

3       As one fellow student once exclaimed, "Cheek to  
4       a teenager? You must be joking!"

5       Nevertheless, obedience was instilled lest worse  
6       outcomes occurred. Punishment delivered by staff  
7       members was reserved for more serious transgressions,  
8       ranging from the aforementioned penalty drills,  
9       consistent of running around school grounds for the set  
10      period, all the way to rustication or expulsion for  
11      various levels of mischief. Corporal punishment seemed  
12      to be on its way out in my day, thank goodness, but  
13      there still had been a few instances of caning at the  
14      junior school in the late 1960s, early 1970s.

15      A word about bullying. These days cyberbullying is  
16      more likely to be the driver of personal attacks. Not  
17      so in my day, when verbal and physical bullying was more  
18      the order of the day. Few, if any, escaped completely  
19      unscathed, but if there was one consistent feature it  
20      was that any effort to quell the practice resulted in  
21      far more severe, albeit clandestine retaliation by those  
22      perpetrating the cowardly act in the first place.

23      I was fortunate enough not to suffer too badly, and  
24      certainly did not engage in the practice myself, but  
25      I did witness a fair amount. Bullies will invariably



1 gang up on the weakest, and any attempt by the latter to  
2 fight back, either physically or through filing reports  
3 to staff, will result in the former closing ranks. It  
4 is perhaps a reflection on the failure of early  
5 education and/or parentage to instill the most important  
6 rule of all: never to do or say to another what is  
7 hateful unto oneself. If this message were to be the  
8 first one heard by every student at every school,  
9 perhaps the hypocrisy of bullying could be stamped out.

10 The standard of education provided.

11 This is hard to gauge. At Aberlour I did fairly  
12 well, at least in several subjects, with a particular  
13 enjoyment of mathematics, sciences and non-English  
14 languages but with little interest in English itself and  
15 humanities, such as history and geography. The teaching  
16 was generally very good. At Gordonstoun, where I had  
17 achieved a scholarship to help pay the fees, I found it  
18 hard to adjust, and while managing to obtain nine  
19 O-levels, my three A-levels in maths, physics and  
20 chemistry were at a fairly low grade, insufficient for  
21 any UK university at the time and certainly not good  
22 enough for any to which I had expressed an interest. In  
23 a way, this was a wasted couple of years and had it not  
24 been for a slice of luck taking me to the United States,  
25 my life might have turned out rather differently.

1           Whether the A-level system as implemented by the  
2           school was a reflection of the teaching or of the  
3           vagaries of single exams taken at the end of a two-year  
4           period of learning represented the standard achieved is  
5           not a debate for this statement, but I do feel that in  
6           the British system, children are forced to choose their  
7           paths too early and their post-school lives risk being  
8           inappropriately dictated by adherence to these metrics.  
9           These metrics may also not reflect a person's potential  
10          for success. Whilst there was plenty of emphasis placed  
11          on extracurricular activities, these often came at the  
12          expense of academic standards, at least in my day, and  
13          I will admit in some cases served as a distraction.

14          I left school as soon as possible after taking  
15          A-level exams and moved to the United States where I had  
16          a successful undergraduate education followed by a PhD  
17          in chemistry. My professional career has been very  
18          rewarding, including the discovery and development of  
19          cancer drugs.

20          After living and working for 30 years in the  
21          United States, I moved to Australia with my family and  
22          have lived there ever since, working as a semi-retired  
23          private consultant to the biotech and pharmaceutical  
24          industry. I have maintained very loose formal contact  
25          with the school out of interest, but with no more than

1       two or three contemporaneous alumni on any kind of  
2       personal level.

3             My recollections of Gordonstoun life, if I might be  
4       so bold as to invoke comparisons to the works of  
5       JK Rowling were far more of the Slytherin variety than  
6       those of Gryffindor. That said, it is my undying belief  
7       that boarding schools are inappropriate for any child  
8       under the age of 16 and only then in the instance that  
9       the child in question is a willing and keen volunteer  
10      for the experience. I will stipulate that schools of  
11      this nature are likely to be far less arduous than they  
12      were in the 1960s and 70s, particularly in light of the  
13      improved means of communication. Today, with video  
14      calling technologies, instant messaging and the like,  
15      children may no longer be forced to live in what  
16      amounted, 40 to 50 years ago, to a part-time orphanage.  
17      Children back then were effectively ripped from their  
18      families or even willingly surrendered by them out of  
19      some distorted sense of tradition rather than welfare or  
20      kindness and placed in institutions where they were  
21      forced into a spartan existence not too far removed from  
22      a military boot camp.

23             Concerns of privacy, health, affection and familiar  
24      surroundings were supplanted in many cases by stress,  
25      social displacement, bullying and the previously

1 referenced Christian education that was by its very  
2 nature hypocritical in the worst way. No child of seven  
3 or eight should be forced into such an environment.  
4 While some have gone into adulthood with minimally  
5 obvious ill-effects, many others have suffered lasting  
6 traumas, as manifested by their inability to form close  
7 relationships, substance abuse, depression and other  
8 struggles.

9 For me, I landed somewhere in the middle of this  
10 spectrum. While managing to avoid most, if not all of  
11 the above in every practical sense, my relationship with  
12 my blood family was forever distant, both geographically  
13 and in many ways emotionally. The school was in no  
14 position in those days to be able to combat these issues  
15 because they had perhaps not been contemplated. Whether  
16 or not it can now, thanks to the publicity surrounding  
17 the events of abuse suffered by those at the junior and  
18 senior schools, is a matter for the Inquiry to  
19 determine, but it would be remiss of me if I were to go  
20 to my grave without having stated my position on these  
21 matters.

22 I harbour no bitterness towards Gordonstoun itself,  
23 and consider the experience valuable in ways, but do not  
24 reflect back on the time spent there with any great  
25 pleasure.

1           I would like to end, however, in stating that on the  
2           two or three occasions I have visited the school on  
3           trips to the UK in the 40-plus years since leaving the  
4           country, I have gained the sense that the school is  
5           a kinder, gentler place. This is surely to do with the  
6           progressive thinking of the more recent headmasters and  
7           others in authority with the ability to discard some of  
8           the harsher practices associated with the 1960s and  
9           1970s boarding schools.

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

13           My Lady, this statement is signed by the witness and  
14           is dated 22 September 2020.

15           My Lady, in view of the time, would my Lady wish to  
16           conclude there or proceed?

17   LADY SMITH: I think actually, yes, I think we'll pause  
18           there for today. We should find spaces, I think, for  
19           the other read-ins --

20   MS BENNIE: Yes, we should, my Lady.

21   LADY SMITH: -- that we still have to complete.

22           So a quick reference to tomorrow morning, Mr Brown?  
23           Where does that take us?

24   MR BROWN: My Lady, tomorrow there should be a further three  
25           live witnesses, again one will be remote.

1       LADY SMITH: That's great. Thank you very much.  
2               I'll rise now and look forward to seeing you all at  
3       10 o'clock tomorrow morning.  
4       (4.05 pm)  
5       (The Inquiry adjourned until 10.00 am on Wednesday,  
6                               13 October 2021)  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

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

I N D E X

Mr John Findlay (sworn) .....	2
Questions from Mr Brown .....	3
Dr Mann (sworn) .....	54
Questions from Mr Brown .....	55
'Paul' (sworn) .....	94
Questions from Mr Brown .....	94
'Christian' (read) .....	149

