

28 August 1992

Det Sgt John Ell
CIB
Christchurch

Dear John

Re: VIDEOTAPED INTERVIEWS WITH TOM
AND KATRINA

As requested, I have reviewed the videotapes of the Specialist Services interviews with Tom and Katrina with a view to determining the likely credibility of the information disclosed in them and matters arising from those interviews which might be useful to follow up.

1. Credibility and Risk of Parental Influence

Katrina's tapes were made in March while Tom's were not recorded until May and August. This makes all the more significant certain comments made by both children, particularly little things that may not have been known to parents. At the time Katrina was interviewed, my understanding is that parents generally were not considering the involvement of other adults nor speculating about nor questioning their children on what they believed to be characteristics of 'ritual' abuse, yet she makes reference in her last interview to other adults.

It is clear that Katrina's parents elicited disclosures of abuse by Peter ELLIS by highly leading questioning. Tom's brother and parents did the same. In Tom's case, the parents subjected him to intensive interrogation pertaining to 'ritual' abuse between the three August interviews which were on consecutive days. Tom would then disclose in the next interview with Sue Sidey the information elicited by his parents the previous night.

These facts could make it easy to dismiss the children's statements as having little probative value whether or not they might be accurate. It also makes the similarities between their statements extra important, particularly in matters unlikely to have been influenced by the parents.

Both children refer to the following:

- * being abused by PETER in the creche toilets
- * being afraid of PETER

- * PETER making threats regarding disclosure
- * being out of the Creche with PETER
- * being at a house they identify as PETER's
- * travelling in 'PETER's' car
- * other children being present when sexual things have happened, especially at places outside the Creche
- * other adults being present at 'PETER's' house and being involved in sexual behaviour with children
- * sexual abuse of themselves at 'PETER's' house
- * sexual abuse of themselves by one or more men other than PETER
- * PETER watching and laughing while they were abused
- * sometimes being in a different room from the other children while sexual things were being done to themselves or others
- * being at a house with a ladder/fire-escape (? belonging to one of Peter's friends)
- * reference to white clothes being worn

The first two of the above which are underlined are details which I think it unlikely that parents would have led. The next is something that would have been spontaneous at least at the time Katrina made the reference. The last item underlined was a minor comment made by Katrina during an interview which at that stage of the inquiry is extremely unlikely to have been led by a parent and probably not even known to her parents and therefore not a subject of conversation between adults.

2. Named Children

Both children have mentioned other children being involved, but they do not refer to the same children. Tom refers to Katrina. Katrina refers to 'Nxxxxxxx' (seeing Bxxxx and Nxxxxxxx suck PETER's penis at Creche), but I do not know whether this is Tom. This needs to be determined, perhaps from Katrina's mother.

Katrina refers to:

Bxxxx	
Nxxxxxxx	
Hxxxxx	
Sxxxxx	(touching her vagina)

Tom refers to: Katrina
Sxxxxx
Jxxxx
Dxxxxx
T'xxxx
?Fxxxx

I would suggest that all children mentioned by either Katrina or Tom have their videos/transcripts reviewed.

3. Named Adults

Both children named adults but the only consistency is their naming of Peter ELLIS. Other adults were referred to as being present or involved only outside the Creche.

Katrina named: JOSEPH (as abusing her)
JULIE
AMIE
JAMES

Tom named: PETER'S MOTHER

ROGER or ROBERT (a name possibly
influenced by parental questioning)
ANDREW

GAYE }
MARIE } Creche staff
JAN }

SPIKE ('not his real name')
BOULDERHEAD
Other unnamed friends of Peter's,
most male, some female

The last three are (or were) Creche teachers. Tom said at one point that ROBERT used to be a Creche teacher, but since he did not identify this abuser initially as being a Creche teacher and because of the evidence in the mother's notes of conversations with Tom, it is hard to know whether there might be two 'Roberts'. ANDREW was also said to have been a past Creche teacher

The following descriptions were given by Tom :

- * ROBERT as being older with grey hair and a beard but also,
as being a young person with a few whiskers,
darkish/blacky-brown hair and a bit bald
- * PETER'S MOTHER as having grey bushy hair with curls

4. Further Areas to Pursue

i) Cars

Tom mentions a 'greyish white' car belonging to Peter's friend who was 'older, with grey hair and a beard'. This person was later named ROGER/ROBERT.

Both children refer to a 'black' car. Katrina said it was Peter's. Tom said there was a 'flash black car' which belonged to GAYE and used to be parked around the corner from Creche. Tom also referred to black Toyota Corona with a furry grey interior, belonging to one of Peter's friends, SPIKE.

In her last interview, in speaking of going to Sumner beach alone with PETER, Katrina speaks of going in a white car.

ii) Peter's Mother

I think it would be useful to interview Peter's mother to determine her contact with the Creche children. Did she ever go on outings with the children, babysit them either alone or with Peter, take them in a car? Has she and/or Peter taken photos of the children either at the Creche or elsewhere? Where does she live and in what places has Peter lived over the relevant period? Has she had Creche children in her own home? Is she aware of Peter taking children on outings either alone or with other staff members? If so, where to? Does Peter have a living Grandmother and, if so, has Peter ever taken children to her house? Does Peter have a camera? Has she seen him taking photos of any of the children? etc.

What are the names of friends Peter has had over the last few years?

Does she meet Tom's description (grey clothes and bushy hair with curls)?

iii) Tom's Family

It would be useful to interview Tom's parents to ascertain Tom's sexual knowledge and experiences. Prior to disclosures, what had they or his brothers taught him about sexual matters? What is parent's attitude towards sexual activity in front of their children? Has Tom ever seen them have sexual intercourse? Is there any chance he might have seen them making love without their knowledge? To their knowledge would he have observed any one in the family masturbate? to ejaculation?

I think each of the older sons should be interviewed separately and without them being able to communicate between interviews. They were actually the first to elicit a disclosure from Tom, but, more importantly one would want to ascertain whether there has ever been any sexual activity between them and Tom or whether he has observed either of them masturbate to ejaculation. Have they talked to him about (or shown him) anal intercourse?

When did the family live at Cxxxxxxxx Road?

iv) Tom's Teacher

It would be useful to interview Tom's current school teacher regarding his academic ability, behaviour, social adjustment. Of particular relevance would be to know her views of his creativity, imagination, story-telling/writing ability and whether he tells significant lies or makes up stories about people. Her views of his parents and any pressures she thinks the child might be under may also be helpful.

v) Katrina's Mother

What does Katrina call Tom ?

vi) Creche

Although I do not know what the Police may have on file from interviews with Creche staff, there appear to be some areas that warrant clarification. Since Tom has referred to MARY as being present when he has come back from abusive outings with Peter and since he has stated that she was not involved whereas he claims other female teachers were, she would be a good person to interview (?again).

Katrina said her favourite teachers were MARIE and DEBBIE, but MARIE has been implicated by Tom.

Areas of interest continue to centre round staff involvement with children outside the Creche during Creche hours, going in cars (whose?, where to?), the children's reactions/behaviours/demeanours when they have been out with Peter alone. Katrina claims that she told MARIE what Peter was doing to her and that MARIE did not believe her. Peter was there and said he did not do it - does she recall this? What children did Peter habitually care for and take on outings?

Also, enquiry as to the games the staff play with children at Creche. Do they play circle games eg Ring-a-rosie? Do they draw circles on the floor and get the children to stand inside them? Do they play guitars and sing while children dance in circles? Do they play any games that require children to stand still in the centre of a circle with the adults on the outside? Do they have the children take their clothes off in hot weather? (inside?) Do they have them play such games without clothes on?

Do they take photos of children at Creche? Has Peter ever taken photos of them with still or video cameras. Does he have a camera of his own?

Was there a staff member called Robert (or Roger) at some time? And was there an Andrew?

vii) Buildings

Both children have identified being at 'Peter's house', which does not, of course, mean that it is necessarily a house that Peter has lived in. It also seems they may have been taken to a number of different houses.

Tom distinguishes a 'building' from the house he called 'Peter's house' - a building with a 'library in it'. He does not identify this as the Library but this is not impossible. I think the children have had trips to the Canterbury Public Library with Creche staff. He said the 'library building' was grey and had a 'trapdoor' in it. He speaks of 'a trap that goes down' that they were made to stand on and tunnels with books like a maze. There is some confusion as to whether the building where sexual things took place is the same one the books were in.

The identification of the Masonic Lodge does not spring from any spontaneous disclosure from Tom but from his parents taking him to the building and asking if he had been there before. However, does the Masonic Lodge have a library in the basement? If one has access to the basement, does this allow access by internal stairs to rooms on the levels above? Tom apparently said when asked by his mother if he had been upstairs, 'Jill, I've been through the whole building'. His interviews refer to two-or-more storeyed buildings and activities taking place on different levels.

I trust these comments will be helpful. I certainly hope it does not sound as though I am trying to teach you to suck eggs! It is an extremely difficult inquiry with

such young children and it is most important that their statements are neither dismissed as fanciful nor accorded unwarranted weight primarily because of parental anxieties.

I would value the opportunity to discuss these and related matters with you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karen Zelas". The signature is fluid and somewhat stylized, with a large initial 'K' and a long, sweeping tail on the 's'.

Dr Karen Zelas