

**12 November 2024**

# Public apology to survivors of abuse in care

# Survivor contribution, Tu Chapman

[Te reo Māori]:

Kei aku rangatira, koutou o Te Whare Mōrehu nei rā tō rahi e tū whakahīhī, e tū whakaiti nei, e mōteatea e tangihakū tonu ki ngā pēhitanga kua pā nei ki te tuakiritanga o tō mātou nei āo. Kei ngā kāwai hekenga koutou ngā morehu – tēnei te reo rāhiri, tēnei te reo aroha tēnei te ira o te tangata hāere ake nei.

My name is Tu Chapman, I'm a survivor of abuse in State care, proud Māori, Totiū Te Tiriti. I stand here today resolved and in total admiration of our survivor community. I stand here in solidarity with our takatāpui community, puta noa i te motu, tēnā koutou katoa kei aku Rangatira.

Five minutes. That’s what each of us have been given, to speak on behalf of tens of thousands of survivors in response to today’s apologies.

Five minutes – for decades of abuse, neglect and torture – by those running State, church and faith-based organisations.

Five minutes is all this regime has afforded us to respond – to a Prime Minister’s apology we haven’t even heard yet!

I stand here today and join many others in calling for the abolishment of the Ministry of Children.

It is a clear signal of how important the voices of survivors really are to this Government. We should absolutely not be celebrating. This date and apology has been decades in the making. Kei hea te Pirimia? Where is the Prime Minister to sit here and listen to our kōrero today? That tells us something, does it not?

So, this is not survivors’ response. It’s our challenge, Prime Minister – as we count down the minutes to your speech.

Survivor voices’ is how we have been framed in the official programme but right now I feel alone and in utter despair at the way in which this Government has undertaken the task of acknowledging all survivors.

Once again – like our decades of fight – we are having to validate our care experiences and our existence. Prime Minister, since the tabling of Whanaketia in July and leading up to today, your Government has continued to divide us survivors by picking and choosing when you want our insights and when you don’t.

We fear too you will pick and choose recommendations from Whanaketia – when Commissioners and survivors are all calling for a full implementation. Whanaketia clearly and prominently tells your Government what you must do. Without delay. You owe us, right now.

We continue living with the decimation of our identities, the raping and pillaging of our cultures through incompetent decision making and the intentional moves to invalidate our experiences.

The clear and utter destruction of lives cannot be down played nor can it be swept under the carpet, as the State, churches and faith-based organisations have done for decades. You’ve caused significant intergenerational trauma and suffering, that continues to happen today.

We are done with you wasting our time tinkering around with policy, hui after hui, and cabinet papers that are not transformative.

We did not have the luxury of having to think it through, we didn’t have an option to have hui about it, for the sexual, physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual abuses we have and continue to suffer.

Prime Minister, in July, you said, “The State is now standing here beside you, accountable and ready to take action” What is the action? Stop the tinkering. Trust us. Trust our whānau and communities.

You want the economy and society to grow? Help us thrive. Give us what we need, so we can contribute. We the mōrehu have the answers. Prime Minister – put your money where your mouth is.

E te kawana! Whakamutua ēnei mahi tūkino. Stop continuing to abuse us.

To our future mokopuna, may you never have to suffer the pain and trauma we have had to endure for decades.

[Te reo Māori]:

No reira, kua huri te tai, kei konei mātou e whakakanohi i te kaupapa mō ake tonu atu, he kura manene, he kura tangata, he kura mōrehu – e rongo whakairihia ki runga, turuturu o whiti whakamaua kia tina. Hui e tāiki e.”

End of information: Public apology to survivors of abuse in care | Survivor contribution, Tu Chapman

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