

COMMISSION TO INQUIRE INTO CHILD ABUSE

HELD AT 145-151 CHURCH STREET, DUBLIN  
ON FRIDAY, 30TH JULY 2004 - DAY 15

BEFORE

MR. JUSTICE SEÁN RYAN

CHAIRPERSON OF THE INQUIRY

ORDINARY MEMBERS:

DR. IMELDA RYAN, Consultant Child and Adolescent  
Psychiatrist  
MR. FRED LOWE, Principal Child Psychologist

15

I hereby certify the  
following to be a true  
and accurate transcript  
of my shorthand notes in  
the above hearing.

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MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION PRESENT

REGISTRAR TO INVESTIGATION COMMITTEE: MR. BRENDAN REIDY

COUNSEL FOR THE COMMISSION: MR. NOEL McMAHON SC  
MR. FRANK CLARKE SC  
MS. KAREN FERGUS BL

Instructed by: MS. FEENA ROBINSON

FOR MS. CHRISTINE BUCKLEY: NO REPRESENTATION

FOR SALLY MULREADY: MS. K. FERGUS BL

FOR FATHER T. MURPHY: MR. C. MAGUIRE SC  
MR. C. O HOISIN BL

Instructed by: SHEEHAN & CO

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THE HEARING CONTINUED AS FOLLOWS ON FRIDAY,  
23RD JULY 2004:

MR. McMAHON: Good morning. We are starting this morning with 17: 29  
Ms. Christine Buckley of the Ashling Centre.

MS. CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, HAVING BEEN SWORN, WAS  
EXAMINED AS FOLLOWS BY MR. McMAHON:

CHAIRMAN: Ms. Buckley, before you start I think we want to avoid some confusion. You are here to give evidence and we are very pleased that you are here to give evidence. However, I think so as to avoid confusion, 17: 30  
we have to make it clear that the Ashling Centre is not represented and has not been given representation and you are not here on the basis of representation having been given to the Ashling Centre. I say this because there may be confusion with the 22 other 17: 31  
groups that represent victims, many of whose representatives we have had evidence of. None of them have been given representation. And just to make the position absolutely clear, that is the basis. You are giving evidence here but not on the 17: 31  
basis that Ashling has been given representation. But thank you very much. We are delighted that you are here to give evidence and are eager to hear what you have to say. I just wanted to make that clear



1 before we start.

2 MS. BUCKLEY: And may I respond?

3 CHAIRMAN: No, you may not respond,  
4 Ms. Buckley. I am not  
5 getting into an argument; I am announcing what is the 17:31  
6 position so I can give you an opportunity. If you  
7 are not happy to give evidence on that basis, so be  
8 it. I mean, we will accept that. But that is the  
9 position which was made clear to you yesterday and  
10 which you accepted yesterday. You knew that Ashling 17:32  
11 was not represented, was not going to be represented,  
12 and you accepted that entirely to our solicitor,  
13 Ms. Robinson. I don't want to embarrass you, but I  
14 don't want there to be any confusion. The reason I  
15 made that clear to begin with was in case there would 17:32  
16 be confusion. We haven't had confusion, we have had  
17 you announcing in the newspapers that you weren't  
18 going to appear before us and you weren't doing that  
19 because of not getting representation for Ashling.  
20 I am not debating it, I am announcing it, do you 17:32  
21 understand. But if you are not comfortable with  
22 that, Ms. Buckley?

23 MS. BUCKLEY: You don't know what I  
24 wanted to say, Judge.  
25 You haven't a clue what I wanted to say and I find 17:33  
26 that you are bullying me before I start.

27 CHAIRMAN: Could we get on with it,  
28 Mr. McMahon, please.  
29 Let us have Ms. Buckley's evidence without the



1 emergence of abuse... (INTERJECTION)  
2 MS. BUCKLEY: You know exactly why I am  
3 here. You got my fax last  
4 night, and please do not undermine my intelligence by  
5 telling me what I already stated in my fax to you at 17: 33  
6 10: 30 last night, Judge.  
7 CHAIRMAN: Ms. Buckley, let us get  
8 this clear. We don't want  
9 to be under any misapprehension. You sent us a fax  
10 last night which I will read. You said: 17: 33  
11 "Dear Mr. Justice Ryan,  
12 In view of the way in which the work of  
13 Ashling was misrepresented to the  
14 Commission by one of this week's  
15 witnesses, I feel that it is necessary  
16 to set the record straight. For this  
17 reason I feel obliged to give evidence  
18 to the Commission about the work of 17: 33  
19 Ashling despite the fact that the  
20 Commission will not allow Ashling's  
21 solicitor to assist me in dealing with  
22 the Commission's Senior and Junior  
23 legal Counsel or yourself. As agreed I  
24 will meet with your legal team tomorrow  
25 on my own at 9: 45am.  
26 Yours truly, Christine Buckley." 17: 34  
27  
28 Ms. Buckley, that is not the letter that you agreed  
29 to send us yesterday. You agreed yesterday that you  
would send us a letter acknowledging that Ashling had  
not been given representation and that you wanted to  
give evidence. That is what you did yesterday  
afternoon. Now, that is what you told Ms. Robinson,  
our solicitor, because you wanted to give evidence.  
Let us be blunt about it... (INTERJECTION).



1 MS. BUCKLEY: For those reasons.  
2 CHAIRMAN: Let us be blunt about it.  
3 MS. BUCKLEY: For those reasons.  
4 CHAIRMAN: Well, that is not what you  
5 said yesterday afternoon. 17:34  
6 Look, let us be clear about this. We have a  
7 statement from you. We are eager to have your  
8 evidence if you want to give it. There is no  
9 question of bullying. You are welcome here.  
10 We are pleased to have it. We would prefer to have 17:34  
11 your evidence rather than not have it, but equally we  
12 are not going to be bullied. We have decisions to  
13 make. We are not going to be pushed or pressured or  
14 bullied into doing it in a way which we don't want  
15 to. There is no question, we can only do it the way 17:35  
16 we see fit. We have decisions to make and we have to  
17 make them.  
18  
19 Now, let me come to your fax. That is not the fax  
20 that you agreed to send us. That is the first point. 17:35  
21 I don't want to make an issue about  
22 it... (INTERJECTION)  
23 MS. BUCKLEY: Nobody else was required to  
24 sign a statement, Judge,  
25 before they gave evidence. You discriminated against 17:35  
26 me.  
27 CHAIRMAN: Ms. Buckley, that is  
28 absurd. You are entitled  
29 to legal representation, full legal representation



1 just as the 1,700 other complainants before the  
2 Investigation Committee. Every other complainants or  
3 victims group, survivors group, every other such  
4 group who has given evidence has given evidence on  
5 the same basis. You are saying to us, no, you demand 17:35  
6 or request -- whatever it is -- you seek a different  
7 level of representation. In other words, on top of  
8 your own legal representation you are now seeking  
9 another layer of legal representation. If that is  
10 granted to Ashling, it follows that every one of the 17:36  
11 other 23 groups must also get legal representation as  
12 an extra layer.

13 MS. BUCKLEY: You are contradicting  
14 yourself, Justice.

15 CHAIRMAN: Just a minute. I am not 17:36  
16 arguing this, Ms. Buckley.

17 MS. BUCKLEY: No, it is all in your court  
18 and here we are, we are the  
19 silent people as usual.

20 CHAIRMAN: Ms. Buckley, I am not going 17:36  
21 to argue this with you.

22 MS. BUCKLEY: You did grant personal  
23 legal representation to  
24 Ashling and when I asked why you didn't give it to  
25 the other groups you said they didn't ask. 17:36

26 CHAIRMAN: You are making a mistake  
27 here. Ms. Buckley, that is  
28 simply not true. That is simply not true.

29 MS. BUCKLEY: That is what your senior





1 counsel stated yesterday to me.

2 CHAIRMAN: Please don't misrepresent  
3 the position. We have  
4 tried to be as accommodating as possible to  
5 everybody. Now, Ms. Buckley, let us get one thing 17:37  
6 straight. If you are here to give evidence about the  
7 issues that all the other groups have been asked  
8 about, you are welcome. I am sorry to say that if  
9 you are not prepared to give evidence on the basis on  
10 which you were invited, then we won't have your 17:37  
11 evidence.

12 MS. BUCKLEY: You brought the problem up,  
13 Justice, I didn't. I am  
14 here ready to talk about Ashling and you are  
15 preventing me. 17:37

16 CHAIRMAN: It is your choice,  
17 Ms. Buckley. There has  
18 been too much talk to the media. There has been too  
19 much misrepresentation. We have not been responding  
20 to that. We have not been jumping out to argue the 17:37  
21 point. But I want to make it absolutely clear,  
22 because, Ms. Buckley, the fear is this: Other groups  
23 seeing you give evidence this morning -- and I hasten  
24 to add that you are more than welcome -- might have  
25 the impression that Ashling had been given legal 17:38  
26 representation and that that was the basis on which  
27 you had come here. That is not the basis on which  
28 you have come here.

29 MS. BUCKLEY: I don't lie, I told the



1 media, and thank God we have the media because  
2 otherwise we would not be able to air our problems  
3 anywhere.

4 CHAIRMAN: We don't have a problem  
5 with the media,

17: 38

6 Ms. Buckley. Can we get on with it. Mr. McMahon,  
7 why don't you introduce the evidence of Ms. Buckley  
8 and we will get on with the work that we have to do.

9 1 Q. MR. McMAHON: Ms. Buckley, you have  
10 tendered a statement to the 17: 38

11 Committee. Perhaps you would like to begin by  
12 indicating who you are and your position in Ashling?

13 A. Well, obviously everybody knows after that that my  
14 name is Christine Buckley and I am the director of  
15 the Ashling Centre. I am here to deliver evidence 17: 39  
16 for the purposes of assisting this Commission into  
17 institutional abuse.

18 2 Q. I think you are here to respond to a letter which was  
19 written to you on 27th May 2004 which raised certain  
20 questions? 17: 39

21 A. That is correct.

22 3 Q. Would you like to deal with those questions,  
23 Ms. Buckley, perhaps in the order in which they were  
24 raised. The first question was to ask you to deal  
25 with the question of the timing and manner in which 17: 39  
26 allegations of and knowledge of abuse emerged as an  
27 issue in Ireland?

28 A. As I have stated in my response, Dr. Eoin O'Sullivan  
29 in his evidence highlighted the timing and the manner



1 in which allegations of abuse and knowledge of abuse  
2 emerged in Ireland. And he substantiated this  
3 evidence with historical documentation and he stated  
4 that knowledge of institutional abuse was known from  
5 1860 onwards. And despite this and [with] the  
6 continued concerns in relation to the system, more  
7 children were placed in industrial schools in the 26  
8 counties. They were placed in England, Scotland,  
9 Northern Ireland and Wales.

17: 40

10  
11 Then I also stated that I note from the book  
12 "Suffer the little children" that it recounts  
13 countless examples of institutional abuse and it  
14 explains in some detail what the Government and the  
15 Department officials knew about institutional abuse  
16 at that time. Furthermore, that same book speaks  
17 about courageous people including Fr. Flanagan and  
18 Fr. Moore and a civil servant at the Department of  
19 Education who tried in vein to raise the issue of  
20 institutional abuse.

17: 40

17: 40

17: 41

21  
22 And if I can refer to the former leader of the  
23 Progressive Democrats who stated that that civil  
24 servant was sent to the Gulags when she tried to  
25 alert people in her department about abuse.

17: 41

26  
27 Other people who have come here have spoken about the  
28 joint committees of women's societies, including  
29 Dr. Eoin O'Sullivan; the Commission on youth



1 unemployment which was chaired by the Arch Bishop of  
2 Dublin, John Charles McQuaid; and another survivor  
3 group spoke to you about the organisation for  
4 economic cooperation and development. And all of  
5 this was attempted was without success to address the 17: 41  
6 issues of child abuse.

7 CHAIRMAN: Perhaps you would like to  
8 tell us when Ashling was  
9 founded, Ms. Buckley, and take it on from there?

10 A. No, I think it is terribly important. I put a lot of 17: 42  
11 work into this.

12 CHAIRMAN: That is alright, I am just  
13 trying to help you. If  
14 there is something we have a problem  
15 with... (INTERJECTION) 17: 42

16 A. The whole thing is upsetting. Every single bit of it  
17 is upsetting.

18 CHAIRMAN: Take your own course,  
19 Ms. Buckley.

20 A. Many victims while incarcerated have tried 17: 43  
21 desperately to alert outside people into what was  
22 happening in institutions. Ashling is only too aware  
23 of what happened to children when they absconded.  
24 They were brought back by the police and each and  
25 every child had their hair shaved. They were 17: 43  
26 isolated and they were severely punished. If they  
27 spoke about the abuse to their families they were  
28 severely punished. Not alone were they punished but  
29 they were deprived of any visit from that parent.



1 Often the child watched that parent arrive and stood  
2 there and was jeered. These are the stories that we  
3 have heard over the last 20 years about this abuse.

4  
5 There was an annual summer holiday. Some children 17: 44  
6 were lucky to leave. Others weren't. And even the  
7 children that left -- and I can only relate to one  
8 institution in this regard -- were forced to do  
9 rosary beads during their holidays, which were  
10 collected each week. If a child went out to a family 17: 44  
11 who was not related and they told about the abuse,  
12 often that contact was severed forever. Children, I  
13 know so many who have told me the full outline of  
14 what a hospital was like and what the dispensaries  
15 were like. Because when the injuries were so 17: 45  
16 horrific they had to be brought there. And yet few,  
17 if any, questions were asked into the circumstances  
18 of these injuries.

19  
20 And back to the question of the timing and the 17: 45  
21 emergence of institutional abuse: I could honestly  
22 say that at least 99% of us knew on day one [but]  
23 we didn't term it as a use. We know that what was  
24 going on was so shocking, so horrible, and yet it  
25 would appear that nothing was done until the Kennedy 17: 46  
26 Report, which detailed the conditions in Dangan, and  
27 consequently Dangan was closed. And yet despite the  
28 introduction of new guidelines to protect children,  
29 revelations of institutional abuse continued.



1 These cases are well documented in the books of the  
 2 little children. While incarcerated in Golden Bridge  
 3 I recall three young women... (INTERJECTION).  
 4 CHAIRMAN: You better not get into  
 5 details, Ms. Buckley. 17: 47  
 6 Do you understand? We will come to specific  
 7 instances in our hearings into particular  
 8 institutions. We don't want to do that at this  
 9 stage. I appreciate that you may want to get into  
 10 individual cases, but we don't want to because that 17: 47  
 11 is not the purpose of this hearing. But there will  
 12 of course be an occasion when we investigate specific  
 13 instances.  
 14 4 Q. MR. McMAHON: Ms. Buckley, would you like  
 15 to continue? 17: 47  
 16 A. Yes.  
 17 5 Q. Perhaps if you can deal with knowledge which you've  
 18 acquired through Ashling. In a general sense you  
 19 might proceed in that way or alternatively it might  
 20 be appropriate, if you wish, to proceed to the 17: 48  
 21 founding of Ashling?  
 22 A. Well, no, as I stated, I put a lot of work into this  
 23 and I would like to continue with it. So I will take  
 24 up your first question, which was the work with  
 25 Ashling. 17: 48  
 26 6 Q. Yes?  
 27 A. Through that work I have met many survivors who told  
 28 me about their circumstances. They were under  
 29 psychiatric care for years and it was only through



1 counselling that most survivors were able to talk for  
2 the first time about what happened to them. Many  
3 survivors could not even disclose their abuse to  
4 their loved ones and they often had to fake names of  
5 the schools they were in because of the shame 17: 49  
6 attached to what had happened to them

7  
8 I don't think I am allowed to say the next bit about  
9 psychiatric hospitals, but I hope that all of this  
10 will be addressed in your report because I think it 17: 49  
11 is terribly important. I think being coloured myself  
12 I don't have any problem stating this: That I'm  
13 aware of the racial remarks. We all know that  
14 children were locked away in dormitories when the  
15 inspectors came and feasted in the parlour. Those 17: 50  
16 children were so marked they had to hide them away.  
17 The instruments that were used on children were  
18 horrific. They all saw it. This was all a sign that  
19 nothing was right. Doctors who attended these  
20 institutions knew about these abuses and they did 17: 51  
21 nothing. They asked the sisters to stop and that is  
22 as much as they did to protect innocent, vulnerable  
23 children.

24  
25 It was on all of these issues and a hell of a lot 17: 51  
26 more which I am not allowed to say at this  
27 Commission, that we received a provision of services  
28 to support fellow survivors. And survivors attend  
29 the centre for various reasons: For counselling,



1 therapeutic assistance, general assistance arising  
2 out of sexual, physical and emotional abuse. And of  
3 course a very important aspect in Ashling is  
4 education.

5 7 Q. I think you will have more to say about that in due 17: 52  
6 course?

7 A. Yes. As a result of the counselling, as I stated it  
8 gave survivors a voice. Many survivors decided to  
9 write their own story. I know you have heard of  
10 these books before but perhaps there are people in 17: 53  
11 the room who haven't. Some of those books were:  
12 "Fear of the collar" "The God Squad" "You can speak  
13 now" "Freedom of Angels" and "A view from  
14 Ballybereso".

15 17: 53  
16 It is clear from that book in particular, written by  
17 an ex-nun, that she knew what was going on in one  
18 institution. "I never worked in such an institution"  
19 she said, "I didn't want to tempt fate."

20 I think that speaks volumes. And indeed Davis 17: 54  
21 Arnold, author and journalist, wrote  
22 "Children: The Poor clerics" which outlined the  
23 shocking tragedy of where 37 children perished and  
24 one elderly woman at an industrial school in Cavan.

25 17: 54  
26 Coming up to the 1990's more survivors began to speak  
27 on radio about their abuses and documentaries were  
28 made: "Dear daughter" "Stolen Lives" and "States of  
29 Fear". I think that addresses that question,





1 Mr. McMahon.

2 8 Q. Would you like to move on to indicate how your group  
3 was formed?

4 A. As I stated here, a number of factors had taken place  
5 from 1984 in fact, but it was in 1986 that a small 17:55  
6 meeting was held in my home. And this came about for  
7 a number of reasons: I had commenced counselling and  
8 for the first time I realised that what had happened  
9 in that institution was never ever my fault. Whereas  
10 we were always told it was all our faults. I had 17:56  
11 found my birth mother.

12 9 Q. Would you like a short break, Ms. Buckley?

13 A. No.

14 10 Q. You were talking about events in 1984, leading  
15 ultimately to a meeting in 1986. Would you like to 17:57  
16 talk about that meeting?

17 MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC: Sorry, Justice, most of the  
18 people here are members of  
19 Ashling for the last six years. We do not like to  
20 see our Director put under such pressure emotionally 17:57  
21 so I would like to ask the Justice to have a recess.

22 CHAIRMAN: I think that makes a lot of  
23 sense. Ms. Buckley, can  
24 you concentrate on what I am saying for a moment.

25 MS. BUCKLEY: I am listening, Judge. 17:57

26 CHAIRMAN: If you would like a moment  
27 to compose yourself, there  
28 is no problem about that. But I absolutely agree;  
29 I think the gentlemen in the audience made perfect



1 sense. Nobody wants to see you under pressure.  
2 Nobody wants to see you distressed. Look, I think  
3 the sensible thing is to take a break and come back  
4 in ten minutes when you have composed yourself.

17:58

5  
6

SHORT ADJOURNMENT FOR 15 MINUTES

7  
8

THE HEARING THEN RESUMED AS FOLLOWS:

9  
10

CHAIRMAN: Are you feeling better?

18:21

11  
12

A. I am, thank you.

13  
14

11 Q. MR. McMAHON: I think Ms. Buckley, you  
had mentioned before the  
break that through counselling you had realised that  
what had happened was not your fault. And then you  
had gone on and spoken about a meeting in 1986 that  
took place?

18:21

15  
16  
17  
18

A. Yes.

19  
20

12 Q. Was this a meeting with others who had been through  
the institutional system?

18:22

21  
22

A. That's right.

23  
24

13 Q. Did you discuss amongst yourselves your experiences  
and what you needed arising out of those experiences?

25  
26

A. No, not at the first meeting. The first meeting was  
so shocking to see how fellow survivors had fared  
out in life. So we weren't at that level of healing  
to discuss anything concrete for the future. It had  
a profound effect on me. I think it was at that  
stage, because I had found my birth mother and

18:22

27  
28  
29



1 because I had children myself, that I felt -- without  
2 discussing it with the group -- with my own thoughts  
3 and with my counsellor that if I didn't speak about  
4 the atrocities that we as children witnessed and  
5 suffered that I wouldn't have any answers for my 18: 23  
6 children when they grow up. And if they were to turn  
7 to me and say 'Mum, you knew this happened and you  
8 didn't do anything about it'. That was a very  
9 compelling factor in this whole regard. And then the  
10 reunions grew bigger, certainly after I went to 18: 23  
11 Nigeria to find my father.

12 14 Q. When was that?  
13 A. 1988.

14 15 Q. Did you continue to meet with others who had  
15 been... (INTERJECTION) 18: 24  
16 A. Yes. It was all ad hoc at that stage. Just meeting  
17 to support, to comfort, to help, to befriend.  
18 You have to understand that we were not allowed to  
19 develop any type of friendships in these  
20 institutions. And I think the Minister has given 18: 24  
21 that in his evidence as to what happened to siblings  
22 when they were separated.

23 16 Q. Just in relation to these meetings, how did those who  
24 attended find one another. This was presumably  
25 before there was any formal structure. An 18: 24  
26 organisation hadn't been founded at this stage if I  
27 am correct?  
28 A. Well, I don't want to go into the specifics, except  
29 that I met with people who were in psychiatric care



1 during that time.

2 17 Q. Would it be reasonable to say that it was through  
3 counselling that you were attending that you came to  
4 meet others?

5 A. It would be fair to say that, yes, and also meeting 18:25  
6 survivors in psychiatric care.

7 18 Q. I see.

8 A. That would have had a huge effect on me. And to see  
9 the impact of the abuse and what it had done and how  
10 it had destroyed their lives. 18:25

11 19 Q. Did you continue to meet in the informal way which  
12 you have described over a period of years?

13 A. Yes, that's right. And during that time I was very  
14 conscious that survivors were trying to trace their  
15 parents, and particularly mothers. And because I had 18:26  
16 gone through that route, a very exhaustive and  
17 expensive route -- because as many survivors will  
18 tell you, a lot of misleading documentation was  
19 furnished about us. And in meeting my father in  
20 Nigeria and spending almost a month there, that was 18:26  
21 possibly the most healing aspect of my journey.

22 And it was agreed at that time that once I returned  
23 to Ireland I would go public about this. And the  
24 reason I couldn't go about public about that before  
25 was because I was absolutely terrified. And that 18:27  
26 terror was compounded because other survivors were to  
27 come with me on that programme, and due to the shame  
28 and the concern and the terror each and every one of  
29 them had to cry off. Following that the Sisters of



1            Mercy promised counselling.

2    20    Q.    If I can try and put some dates to it. You mentioned  
3            your father coming?

4            A.    In 1992.

5    21    Q.    In 1992 he came to Ireland? 18: 27

6            A.    To Ireland. It is on page 8.

7    22    Q.    Yes, I have that. And what happened after your  
8            father came to Ireland?

9            A.    Both of us did a radio programme. He described the  
10           problems that he endured while he was visiting that 18: 28  
11           institution where I was incarcerated. It is a  
12           dreadful thing to say but I think it was possibly  
13           because he was a psychiatrist that he was believed.  
14           But it is also dreadful to think that a psychiatrist  
15           would do that to any child, and I don't have any 18: 28  
16           problem speaking about that because I am talking  
17           about my own pain here.

18   23    Q.    After the radio interview in 1992 did you continue to  
19           meet?

20           A.    The meetings got bigger. The telephone calls 18: 29  
21           increased at a dramatic rate all day.

22   24    Q.    And these telephone calls were directed to whom?

23           A.    To my home. It was the first time that I realised  
24           the extent of this abuse. Up to that I didn't know  
25           about so many of these institutions. I just could 18: 29  
26           not believe that this pattern of systematic abuse was  
27           widespread.

28   25    Q.    So in the course of these calls and contacts which  
29           resulted from them, people were telling you their



1 stories?

2 A. Yes. And letters or calling to the door in a  
3 desperate state of despair and upset. The Sisters of  
4 Mercy were invited on that programme and they  
5 promised counselling. That counselling and that 18:30  
6 promise was never adhered to.

7 CHAIRMAN: I am a little concerned,  
8 Mr. McMahon. The Sisters  
9 of Mercy are not here.

10 MR. McMAHON: Yes, indeed. 18:30

11 CHAIRMAN: Do you understand,  
12 Ms. Buckley? The Sisters  
13 of Mercy are not here to answer that.

14 A. I don't know because I don't know who is here.  
15 I actually don't know. 18:30

16 CHAIRMAN: I understand. That isn't  
17 the structure of the  
18 hearings here.

19 26 Q. MR. McMAHON: At this time did you  
20 identify certain needs 18:30  
21 amongst those whom you were in contact with?

22 A. They wanted counselling. They wanted education.  
23 They wanted tracing. At that stage that is what  
24 people were desperately looking for.

25 27 Q. Did you continue to meet up with people on a regular 18:31  
26 basis or on an intermittent basis?

27 A. No, I would say that we met or we were often in daily  
28 contact. We would meet.

29 28 Q. In daily contact with individuals?



- 1 A. Yes. My telephone bill would tell you that from that  
2 time. The meetings continued to get bigger and  
3 bigger, and again, they were in my home or another  
4 survivor's home.
- 5 29 Q. I think you were involved in a further documentary in 18:31  
6 1996?
- 7 A. Yes. That was the Louis Lentin "Dear Daughter"  
8 documentary, and Louis Lentin is here.
- 9 30 Q. Some services subsequently did become available?
- 10 A. Yes. The Sisters of Mercy and the Christian Brothers 18:32  
11 published apologies and then the Mercy Sisters set up  
12 a help line and a counselling service. And then that  
13 was extended in 1998 to include another 17  
14 organisations or congregations. So slowly very, very  
15 slowly things were beginning to move for survivors. 18:32
- 16 31 Q. From your group's point of view can you describe how  
17 things progressed?
- 18 A. Well, following the "Dear Daughter" programme two  
19 fellow survivors and myself decided to put an event  
20 on called "A Happy Day" and the reason for that was 18:33  
21 because survivors wanted to get in touch with fellow  
22 survivors and sadly survivors wanted to get in touch  
23 with their siblings with whom they had lost contact.
- 24 32 Q. Where was this event arranged?
- 25 A. It was arranged in the RDS in April 1996. 18:33
- 26 33 Q. Was it advertised and publicised?
- 27 A. Yes, it was.
- 28 34 Q. How was that done?
- 29 A. It was done through the radio stations and through



1 the newspapers. As I have stated, 550 attended  
2 because of insurance reasons but over 700 wished to  
3 attend. And in fact, the following week about 300  
4 turned up at the same venue due to a problem with  
5 literacy, which I will talk about later. And at that 18:34  
6 it was extremely clear that survivors wanted  
7 counselling, education and tracing service. Except  
8 this time they also wanted a tribunal, and this was  
9 the first time that an inquiry was asked for into  
10 what had happened to children. 18:34

11  
12 I think it is important at this juncture to say that  
13 we witnessed a husband and wife at that meeting who  
14 came separately, and over a course of 28 years  
15 marriage they had never discussed that either of them 18:35  
16 had been in an institution until that day. So to  
17 call it "A happy day" is really a misnomer. It was a  
18 memorable day but for all the wrong reasons,  
19 including that reason which I have stated.

20 18:35  
21 And this was additional proof to us that something  
22 needed to be done desperately. We spent a number of  
23 years from 1997, as I have documented, with various  
24 governments trying to be heard, trying to be believed  
25 and asking. What we asked for was a truth and 18:35  
26 reconciliation forum and nobody was interested.  
27 And as I have stated here, one Minister of State  
28 cancelled meetings 16 times.

29





1 I have to say that we did meet with a counselling  
2 service in 1997 and they did tell us that they were  
3 setting up a counselling service but they didn't know  
4 when. So that was some little ray of hope for us.  
5 But we didn't hear anything about that until 1999. 18: 36  
6 And then we met with the former Minister for  
7 Education in 1999. And that Minister was the first  
8 Minister who believed in us and believed that what we  
9 were saying was absolutely true. And from that  
10 meeting subsequent meetings followed both with the 18: 37  
11 former Minister and with the Taoiseach. In all I  
12 believe we had five meetings, and we were informed in  
13 advance about the apology.

14 35 Q. This is the Taoiseach's apology announced on 11th  
15 May 1999? 18: 38

16 A. That's right. And because of the lack of trust which  
17 obviously we have, we didn't believe it until  
18 five o'clock when it was announced. We should have  
19 enjoyed a nice glass of wine and instead we just  
20 cried. 18: 38

21 36 Q. I think other measures were also announced at that  
22 time?

23 A. Yes. A nationwide counselling service, a Commission  
24 to inquire into child abuse and what really shocked  
25 us was a compensation tribunal. We had never ever 18: 39  
26 asked for money. This was never about money. It  
27 will never be about money. We recognise that  
28 survivors should receive some compensation for the  
29 Trojan work they were forced to do, and I believe



1 that each and every one of us earned £293,000 over a  
2 ten-year period in any institution. And that is  
3 index linked and that is minimum wage today.

4 37 Q. When you say that it was never about money from your  
5 group's perspective... (INTERJECTION)? 18: 40

6 A. We never discussed money with anybody, never.  
7 We never ever discussed money. From 1986 I never  
8 heard one survivor asking for money.

9 38 Q. The priority was?

10 A. They wanted counselling. They wanted education. 18: 40  
11 They wanted tracing. And they wanted a tribunal.  
12 I might add that they wanted an apology first and  
13 foremost.

14 39 Q. Around what stage was it that Ashling was put  
15 together? 18: 41

16 A. 1999.

17 40 Q. Was that subsequent to or prior to the announcement  
18 by the Taoiseach?

19 A. No, it was post the apology.

20 41 Q. Is Ashling is a members-based group? 18: 41

21 A. Sorry, no, Ashling is not. We do not have a  
22 membership policy. It is accessible to all.

23 CHAIRMAN: I don't understand that,  
24 Ms. Buckley. Can you  
25 explain that to us please? 18: 42

26 A. I understand membership as people joining up to  
27 access services. Ashling has an open door policy.

28 CHAIRMAN: There would be a list of  
29 members. Do you have a



1 list of members?

2 A. No, we don't keep a list of members. We would only  
3 keep a list for one particular reason, and that is  
4 for fire and safety purposes. There are people who  
5 come to Ashling who may not want to even give their 18: 42  
6 name.

7 CHAIRMAN: But if you want to  
8 advertise a meeting let us  
9 say?

10 A. We don't advertise meetings. We don't have meetings. 18: 42  
11 We have all of our meetings in Ashling.

12 CHAIRMAN: How does somebody know that  
13 he or she is entitled to go  
14 to Ashling?

15 A. We would hope the media who have helped us in the 18: 42  
16 past. If we were making an announcement, if we were  
17 talking about abuse -- when issues like that come up  
18 then we have more people calling but we have never  
19 had a membership.

20 CHAIRMAN: So if you were speaking on 18: 43  
21 behalf of Ashling, who are  
22 you speaking for?

23 A. I am speaking for the 3,500 survivors that we have  
24 assisted.

25 MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC: I am a member of Ashling 18: 43  
26 and we can walk in at  
27 anytime, in any state, in any stress -- as we all did  
28 -- and we can come and go as we please. We can miss  
29 months, days, anytime. You are welcomed at anytime,



1 in any state and in any form.

2 CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

3 Is that the position?

4 A. That is the position.

5 CHAIRMAN: Anybody can come or go? 18: 43

6 A. Absolutely.

7 CHAIRMAN: Your best guess is that it

8 is over 3,000?

9 A. No, we keep a record privately ourselves. That is

10 how I have arrived at that figure. But we don't have 18: 43

11 a membership.

12 42 Q. MR. McMAHON: I understand. Ashling was

13 set up sometime after the

14 date of the Taoiseach's apology?

15 A. That's right. 18: 44

16 43 Q. At that stage was some structure acquired that

17 allowed the organisation to have a focus?

18 A. There was huge structure required.

19 44 Q. Was a premises acquired at that stage?

20 A. Yes. It necessitated us cleaning it for six weeks 18: 44

21 and then we had to look for teachers.

22 45 Q. We will go on to deal with that, but a premises was

23 acquired?

24 A. Yes.

25 46 Q. And was this a premises to which those who wished to 18: 44

26 make contact with Ashling could do so?

27 A. Absolutely. Or come to Ashling, yes. We had our

28 list from the "happy day" of people who were willing

29 to give their names at the "happy day".



1 We had that list.

2 47 Q. And people who wished to come in, could do so and now  
3 had a place where they could go?

4 A. Absolutely.

5 48 Q. And they would be spoken to there? 18: 45

6 A. Yes.

7 49 Q. And if assistance could be given, it could be  
8 directed from there?

9 A. Yes.

10 50 Q. Can you tell the Committee what sort of work has been 18: 45  
11 done from the premises where Ashling operates from  
12 since its formation?

13 A. Well, I would state that Ashling provides aids to  
14 promote healing. This is done through a variety of  
15 classes and activities. Counselling is our first 18: 45  
16 priority. The second one is education which is what  
17 we were campaigning for all of these years. In that  
18 education there are various aspects to it. I think I  
19 have given you an example of 16 modules which we do  
20 in Ashling. We would hope that the variety that we 18: 46  
21 offer will help each survivor in a different way.  
22 Because we have survivors who are now ready for  
23 education. We have survivors who are not yet ready  
24 due to traumatic past experiences. We have survivors  
25 who are very gifted in art. We have survivors who 18: 46  
26 are very good singers. And this is why I have stated  
27 the art therapy, the Ashling singers, the music  
28 therapy, the self development, creative writing,  
29 driving lessons, swimming lessons, financial advice



1 through MABS, computer literacy, one-to-one in music,  
2 aromatherapy, jewelry, drama and home skills.

3  
4 Looking at this from the outside it is hard perhaps  
5 for you to understand that these are educational 18: 47  
6 and they play a huge role in the confidence building  
7 for our people. And on top of the education services  
8 we also offer other services. I don't know if I'm  
9 allowed to talk about the probation services here,  
10 Justice, which is on page 12? 18: 48

11 51 Q. MR. McMAHON: Yes.

12 CHAIRMAN: I don't want to curtail  
13 you.

14 A. I think it is terribly important. I have waited  
15 58 years to explain what we do. 18: 48

16 CHAIRMAN: Ms. Buckley, at the same  
17 time I am conscious -- and  
18 I am sure you understand -- that we fitted you in  
19 this morning. I have other witnesses to hear. Some  
20 of them have constraints to get away to planes and 18: 48  
21 airports. So I have some limits. It is not that I  
22 want to stop you. There are some limits. Can I  
23 assure you though that one of the things we can do is  
24 to take the statement that you have furnished to us  
25 and we can receive it as your evidence. What I was 18: 48  
26 going to ask you was, is there anything particular  
27 that you want to emphasise that you think is most  
28 important or you think that we should be taking into  
29 account. We will take into account everything in



1 your evidence and in your statement. You may be  
2 assured of that. But is there any particular thing  
3 that you want to draw our attention to? Because, as  
4 I say, I am under constraints of pressure that are  
5 not of my making and you appreciate that we have done 18: 49  
6 our best to facilitate you?

7 A. I understand that you did accommodate me here this  
8 morning. I would have been here weeks ago except for  
9 issues. I have gone to an awful lot of bother and  
10 trouble in compiling an honest, accurate account of 18: 49  
11 the professional manner in which we deal in Ashling.  
12 I would like to have had the opportunity to say that  
13 this morning.

14 CHAIRMAN: It will be recorded on our  
15 web site in any case if you 18: 50  
16 want us to do that as your evidence. I am very happy  
17 to do that.

18 A. But there are people here who don't have computers  
19 and we do also have a literacy problem with  
20 survivors. I have no problem about coming back in 18: 50  
21 September to give my evidence if that would suit?  
22 But I would prefer... (INTERJECTION).

23 CHAIRMAN: I am afraid not because  
24 this phase finishes today,  
25 Ms. Buckley. We will have different work to do in 18: 50  
26 September.

27 A. I don't really know what the solution is there then.  
28 MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC: Sorry,  
29 Chair... (INTERJECTION)



1 CHAIRMAN: No, sorry, this isn't a  
2 public meeting. I am not  
3 taking general comments. I have a witness here.  
4 Mr. McMahon, there is a limit. Perhaps you can move  
5 through. I am going to have a difficulty in that I 18:51  
6 am not going to be able to accommodate another  
7 witness who has to fly out. It is as simple as that.

8 52 Q. MR. McMAHON: Perhaps if there were a  
9 number of the matters which  
10 you have mentioned already that you may like to 18:51  
11 highlight. The ones which occurred to me were  
12 perhaps the literacy group and literacy tuition that  
13 you have engaged in and are providing. Another area  
14 was perhaps the money advice and budgeting service.  
15 Perhaps you would like to pick those two items. 18:51  
16 And if there are other items that you feel you would  
17 like dwell on, I am sure the Committee will be able  
18 to... (INTERJECTION)

19 CHAIRMAN: We will take everything  
20 into account. There is 18:51  
21 though question of saying... (INTERJECTION)

22 A. That is my worry.

23 CHAIRMAN: There is to need to worry.  
24 A. It is nothing to do with you, it is just because we  
25 have a problem with trust as part of our abuse. 18:51  
26 I think you have to appreciate that.

27 CHAIRMAN: What I am saying,  
28 Ms. Buckley, is that we are  
29 happy to take everything in your statement into





1 account, which is the purpose of you being here to  
2 present this to us. We are happy to do that, but I  
3 think you should take up Mr. McMahon's suggestion.

4 A. We have nine teachers in Ashling and three other  
5 teachers who assist survivors due to inadequate 18: 52  
6 spacing up in the national office for victims of  
7 institutional abuse. I want to stress very clearly  
8 that Ashling is professionally run. I myself am a  
9 professional and I think we have done a huge, huge  
10 service for the State in what we have embarked upon 18: 52  
11 in Ashling.

12  
13 And as regards the literacy, I am not going to give  
14 figures as regards who didn't read when they arrived  
15 and who can read now. Suffice to say that the 18: 53  
16 difference in achievements in what people had when  
17 they came and what they have now is remarkable.  
18 We have the most outstanding and compassionate  
19 teachers who not only work with us in Ashling but  
20 will also visit survivors in hospital and in their 18: 53  
21 own homes if they are unwell. So it is a service  
22 that goes well beyond a teaching level into the  
23 therapeutic aspect. And as you can see, we have now  
24 arrived at a fetack.

25 53 Q. What is a fetack? 18: 54

26 A. I can't think of the name of it just at this moment  
27 in time. It has slipped my memory. If somebody can  
28 help me out. It is for further education. It is  
29 done through the VEC. It would be similar to, say,



1 a Junior Certificate. What we do are modules in the  
2 centre and when one attains 16 modules in any of the  
3 given things that I have mentioned, they have then  
4 attained a Junior Certificate. And we have arrived  
5 at that this year. From that then they will do 18: 54  
6 another year of one-to-one and also support in  
7 Ashling. And after that they hopefully will feel  
8 comfortable enough to join mainstream education.  
9 That has always been the aim of Ashling. That we  
10 provide, we support and then when the survivor is 18: 55  
11 ready then the survivor themselves can move on with  
12 their education. But if they have any issues that  
13 are causing them problems, and invariably there are  
14 with this type of abuse, then Ashling is there to  
15 support them So that is our fetack and I have 18: 55  
16 mentioned all the courses that we do. We have three  
17 survivors who also teach on those courses. We would  
18 state that from our experience that survivors find it  
19 much easier to share pain with fellow survivors in a  
20 setting such as Ashling or any other centre that is 18: 56  
21 in operation. Because we can identify, we can see,  
22 we can understand. Most of us have been there and we  
23 can access the areas that they made may need.  
24 For example, if it is health issues because of my  
25 qualifications in that. And we do have a huge number 18: 56  
26 of health problems from past abuses.  
27  
28 Homelessness: We work in conjunction with NOVA and I  
29 am delighted to say that we have succeeded.



1 And NOVA I will have to say were excellent in this  
2 regard in organising survivors who find themselves in  
3 this position.

4 54 Q. With accommodation difficulties?

5 A. To stay in Bed & Breakfasts rather than in hostels. 18:57  
6 I think one of the witnesses stated yesterday about  
7 what they had in Cork and the Welcome House. And  
8 something of that nature should certainly be put in  
9 force. We would ask the Commission in that regard to  
10 do something for survivors to help them. After all, 18:57  
11 they put a huge valuable contribution into this  
12 country by way of working and slave labour.

13  
14 I have spoken here about our drug free regime and I  
15 think that Ashling was invaluable in helping that 18:58  
16 person to stay drug free. We have others on the  
17 methadone treatment. And again, it is nice for them  
18 to have a place where they can come to a safe place  
19 rather than the temptation of going back into that  
20 system of drug abuse again. 18:58

21  
22 The tracing services: We have reunited five clients  
23 with their birth fathers, siblings or step-siblings.  
24 It may seem a small amount. It was very, very  
25 difficult work. In fact, one finding was as far as 18:58  
26 Japan and one as far as Germany.

27  
28 I have mentioned about the prisoners, and I don't  
29 really want to go into that too much. Except that we



1 have an understanding with the probation services and  
2 it is one wonderful for prisoners to have a place to  
3 come out to who had been abused in the institutions.  
4 To feel a safety net for them Often they are on  
5 their own and they can come and they can start their 18: 59  
6 courses in Ashling and then when they finish their  
7 time in prison they have a place to come to.

8  
9 I suppose I am not allowed to say about compensation  
10 in this regard. Except to say that compensation will 18: 59  
11 never ever cure all the ills that were perpetrated on  
12 children. It is for this reason that Ashling would  
13 ask and perhaps even beg that services for survivors  
14 would be continued beyond the completion of this  
15 Commission or the completion of the Redress Board? 19: 00

16 55 Q. Is this a need which you would see projecting into  
17 the long-term future?

18 A. I think if you have people who have never spoken  
19 about their abuse and they are 50 and 60, and I can  
20 talk about it on a personal level: For each year of 19: 00  
21 abuse, a psychiatrist told me you need a year of  
22 counselling. And many have not even come into the  
23 counselling stream yet. They are not able. They are  
24 not ready. They cannot talk about their pain as yet.  
25 That is very hard because there are more and more 19: 01  
26 people coming forward. It is then through Ashling  
27 and through talking to other survivors in Ashling  
28 that they can help them and assist them to move on  
29 the counselling journey. It is for that reason as



1 well as all of the other reasons that centres are  
2 terribly important.

3 56 Q. You speak about various social activities which  
4 continue in Ashling?

5 A. Yes. 19: 01

6 CHAIRMAN: I think we can take that as  
7 read, Mr. McMahon.

8 I agree and I understand, Ms. Buckley, of  
9 course... (INTERJECTION).

10 A. It is vitally important particularly the birthdays. 19: 01  
11 I heard somebody saying here yesterday they were  
12 going off to celebrate their birthday and I commented  
13 to some fellow survivors and said 'Aren't they lucky.  
14 Many of our people don't even know when their  
15 birthday is.' They don't even have a birth 19: 02  
16 certificate.

17 CHAIRMAN: And you see the social  
18 activities and the  
19 birthdays obviously as part of the... (INTERJECTION)

20 A. Healing process. 19: 02

21 CHAIRMAN: And it is a part of getting  
22 people used to the idea of  
23 talking to others and the... (INTERJECTION)

24 A. The social aspect of it.

25 CHAIRMAN: That is what I am saying. 19: 02  
26 The social aspect you see  
27 as being important in that respect and it is also a  
28 way of introducing people presumably to the notion of  
29 counselling? Because if somebody else is finding



1 value in counselling, that is an encouragement to  
2 people who haven't been doing it?

3 A. That is right.

4 CHAIRMAN: If they are socialising and  
5 perhaps seeing the benefits 19: 02  
6 being spoken about, that is a part you see as an  
7 important function. I know the others such as  
8 education and so on. They are obvious. You see this  
9 as a less obvious but important feature of the work  
10 that you are doing? 19: 03

11 A. Absolutely. And I am delighted to say that we have  
12 one survivor who has done a Leaving Certificate this  
13 year and we have two survivors who are doing Inter  
14 Certificate this year. And as I say, we have a  
15 number who have graduated with fetack presentations. 19: 03  
16 I think this is important. I think it is extremely  
17 important that they are presented by the Department  
18 of Education, which they have been. And we also  
19 launched a book which is called "The Ashling Stories"  
20 which An Taoiseach launched for us. And we now hope 19: 03  
21 in the autumn to launch a play, again by one of our  
22 survivors. That same survivor won a top award in DCU  
23 for creative writing last year which was absolutely  
24 fantastic out of something in the region of 5,000.

25 CHAIRMAN: Your continuing future 19: 04  
26 projects, Ms. Buckley  
27 - could I summarise my understanding of them and tell  
28 me if I am wrong. As I see it, what you are seeing  
29 Ashling as doing is, first of all, supporting people?



1 A. Yes.

2 CHAIRMAN: Basic levels of support?

3 A. That's right.

4 CHAIRMAN: 'Look, other people  
5 suffered this' and involve 19:04  
6 them in that. Secondly, giving them a sympathetic  
7 environment where they have educational facilities.  
8 That is a huge focus of what you are trying to do?

9 A. Yes.

10 CHAIRMAN: And ideally what you are 19:04  
11 hoping for is that the  
12 person will get themselves sufficiently up the ladder  
13 -- and I am mixing my metaphors ridiculously -- to be  
14 launched off at that stage into the mainstream of  
15 activity? 19:05

16 A. Yes.

17 CHAIRMAN: But you see them as maybe  
18 needing those services.  
19 Now, obviously everybody is different and everybody  
20 needs different things, but that is the basic idea. 19:05  
21 Support, education and even if necessary literacy  
22 education and assistance to get the person to the  
23 level where they can compete in the mainstream?

24 A. And ongoing.

25 CHAIRMAN: And ongoing? 19:05

26 A. Ongoing.

27 CHAIRMAN: That is the other thing I  
28 understand. When the  
29 Commission reports and the Redress Board closes up



1 shop, you see a need for an ongoing level of support  
2 at some level?

3 A. I would say at this level. Because the tragedy is  
4 that the legacy of abuse has also passed in some  
5 instances to the children. And we are now seeing 19: 05  
6 that as well.

7 CHAIRMAN: And obviously we have to  
8 take account of other  
9 people as well. But you are saying that you cannot  
10 simply take those people who suffered abuse and were 19: 06  
11 disadvantaged in this way. You have to look further  
12 down the line?

13 A. You have to look at the impact on the children.

14 CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much,  
15 Ms. Buckley. Obviously I 19: 06  
16 know there is more in your statement. I think we  
17 have covered the essentials.

18 A. I just want to say something about the funding and it  
19 will only take a second.

20 CHAIRMAN: Yes. 19: 06

21 A. Because I think it is important to know exactly what  
22 monies have been paid so we can all be clear and  
23 honest. 1999: No funding. 2000: No funding until  
24 three days before Christmas. 2001: €41,000.  
25 2002: €64,000. 19: 07

26 57 Q. MR. McMAHON: 41,000 in 2001?

27 A. Yes.

28 58 Q. €64,000 in 2002?

29 A. Yes. 2003: €60,000. 2004: No funding until I went





1 to the Taoiseach last week.

2 59 Q. What was the position pre-1999?

3 CHAIRMAN: There was no Ashling before  
4 1999, Ms. Buckley, if I  
5 recall? 19:07

6 A. There was no Ashling but there was an awful lot of  
7 work.

8 CHAIRMAN: But there were people doing  
9 work.

10 A. Our own personal... (INTERJECTION) 19:07

11 CHAIRMAN: You were working from your  
12 own home with your  
13 telephone bills that you told us about?

14 A. Yes, the happy day loan.

15 60 Q. MR. McMAHON: How were they 19:08  
16 resourced or how were they  
17 funded?

18 A. My husband.

19 CHAIRMAN: You probably paid them  
20 yourself? 19:08

21 A. No, I didn't, my husband did. I didn't have the  
22 money.

23 CHAIRMAN: Ms. Buckley, thank you very  
24 much. We are delighted  
25 that you were able to come to give evidence and thank 19:08  
26 you very much for illuminating us in that way as to  
27 your involvement in the matters that we wanted to  
28 explore. Thank you very much.

29 A. I just wanted to ask you one question.



1 Will you be investigating the role that the ISPCC  
2 played in placing children in institutions?

3  
4 Secondly, will you be doing an investigation into the  
5 indemnity deal that took place between the religious 19:08  
6 and the State?

7  
8 The third one is, will there be any investigation  
9 into how children were sent through the court system  
10 under the 1908 legislation? We would really like in 19:09  
11 Ashling to know.

12 CHAIRMAN: The first and the third are  
13 related. That is the ISPCC  
14 and the court system. I don't want to say something,  
15 and if I can tell you why I am not saying something 19:09  
16 about that. Without notifying people, I don't want  
17 to announce things that we may not be able to deliver  
18 subsequently. What we said in our statement I think  
19 of 16th June, when we made a decision, and earlier in  
20 May was to make an announcement on what we intended 19:09  
21 and hoped to do, which did involve the courts.  
22 It did involve the question people had said to us.  
23 The question was, how children had got into the  
24 institutions.

25 19:10  
26 Now, obviously the method by which they got in is  
27 something we want to get into. But we said  
28 afterwards that because there might be some question  
29 about whether that was encompassed in our remit, we



1 would look at that and we would ask for clarification  
2 of that. Before that clarification I don't want to  
3 give too many promises. But, yes, it is something we  
4 are interested in.  
5  
6 The second question you asked was about the indemnity  
7 deal. The short answer to that is this: As to the  
8 sufficiency of any contribution, no, that is not our  
9 role as we see it. What we wanted to do was to ask  
10 people, including the State, how they had come to the 19:10  
11 conclusion that there should be (a) an apology; (b)  
12 a redress scheme; and (c) how they came to contribute  
13 to the redress fund. So it was the fact that people  
14 contributed to it rather than the amount they  
15 contributed. That was the view that we took. 19:11  
16 Thank you very much indeed.  
17 A. Finally I would just like to say -- and I don't want  
18 to go into an argument again -- that I find it  
19 shocking that the religious and the State were  
20 granted legal representation on behalf of alleged 19:11  
21 abusers and we, the survivors of institutional abuse,  
22 were denied it. Thank you.  
23 CHAIRMAN: Survivors were not denied  
24 representation, each  
25 survivor has representation. 19:12  
26 MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC: Sorry... (INTERJECTION)  
27 CHAIRMAN: Sorry, it is not a public  
28 meeting. I am just  
29 explaining something. It is not a debate.



1 It would be practically impossible and it would make  
2 the work of the Commission cumbersome, and completely  
3 unnecessarily so, if we were to do what was being  
4 asked. And we were only asked to do that by two  
5 groups and we said no because we had to say no 19: 12  
6 because the Commission's work would be impossible  
7 otherwise. But, however, it is not a matter of  
8 debate. I understand your position. We are not in  
9 agreement about this, Ms. Buckley. Let us agree to  
10 differ on it. We are delighted to see you here. 19: 12  
11 We are pleased to have your evidence. Alright, we  
12 are in disagreement about that. Thank you for  
13 coming. Let us acknowledge that disagreement and  
14 agree to differ on it. Obviously, as I say, we are  
15 pleased that you were able to come. 19: 13

16  
17 THE WITNESS THEN WITHDREW

18  
19 CHAIRMAN: The next witness,  
20 Ms. Fergus, please. 19: 13

21 MS. FERGUS: The next witness is  
22 Sally Mulready on behalf of  
23 London Womens Group.

24 CHAIRMAN: I know she is under  
25 pressure to get away. 19: 13

26  
27  
28  
29



1 MS. SALLY MULREADY, HAVING BEEN SWORN, WAS EXAMINED  
2 AS FOLLOWS BY MS. FERGUS:

3  
4 CHAIRMAN: Good morning,  
5 Ms. Mulready. 19:13

6 MS. MULREADY: Good morning. I am sorry,  
7 I don't know the names of  
8 the people?

9 CHAIRMAN: My name is Sean Ryan. I am  
10 the Chairperson of this 19:14  
11 Commission. I am a judge of the High Court.

12 On my right is Dr. Imelda Ryan who is a consultant  
13 child and adult psychiatrist. And on my left is  
14 Mr. Fred Lowe who is a principal clinical  
15 psychologist. 19:15

16 61 Q. MS. FERGUS: Ms. Mulready, perhaps you  
17 might tell us a little bit  
18 about yourself and your group, the London Women's  
19 Group?

20 A. My name is Sally Mulready. I work professionally at 19:15  
21 the London Irish Centre. I have been involved with  
22 the London Irish community for about 25 years.  
23 In November 1999 we set up the London Irish Women's  
24 Group. "We" being Irish women survivors. But there  
25 is a backdrop to it. 19:15

26 62 Q. Perhaps you might give us a little bit of an idea of  
27 that backdrop. How was that group formed, by whom  
28 and for what reasons. That perhaps might assist the  
29 Commission?



1           A.     Sorry, I am a bit nervous.

2     63   Q.     It is a bit difficult for Ms. Mulready when people  
3           are talking at the back.

4           CHAIRMAN:                    Could people sit down  
5    please.

6           MEMBER OF PUBLIC:            I just want to ask a  
7    question. There was  
8           supposed to be a meeting here on 26th and 28th, one  
9           in relation to Golden Bridge and the other on Artane.  
10          Is that on or off?

11          CHAIRMAN:                    No, they are not going  
12    ahead. Those meetings are  
13          not going ahead. Thank you for interrupting. I am  
14          sorry for not clarifying that. I should have  
15          clarified that earlier. Those meetings are not going  
16          ahead.

17          MEMBER OF PUBLIC:            Any reason why?

18          CHAIRMAN:                    We will announce those at a  
19    later stage. Is that  
20          alright?

21          MEMBER OF PUBLIC:            Okay, thank you.

22          CHAIRMAN:                    I am sorry you were  
23    distracted. And equally I  
24          am sorry because it is mostly our fault that we  
25          hadn't announced it. We had mentioned dates for  
26          events that weren't going to happen and I am sorry  
27          about that. You were going to give us the background  
28          to the setting up of the group of Irish women  
29          survivors in London?



1           A.    Thank you, Judge.  If I could just say that it is not  
2                    done in chronological order.  So if you will permit  
3                    me to give a background to it.  As I have said, I  
4                    have worked with the London Irish community for  
5                    25 years and in the course of that would have heard     19: 17  
6                    an awful lot of references, going back quite a  
7                    significant time, numbers of years, from people  
8                    within the Irish community about their experiences in  
9                    Irish institutions.  But it was never able to form or  
10                   gather any kind of collection of support or             19: 17  
11                   organisation behind it etc.  The kind of  
12                   conversations that would have taken place among  
13                   survivors would have been survivors from similar  
14                   institutions who maintained contact with each other  
15                   and who would have been in touch with each other by     19: 18  
16                   telephone and been writing to each other etc.

17    64   Q.    MS. FERGUS:                    This is in social settings?

18           A.    Yes, little clusters of survivors that lived in  
19                   various different parts of Britain.  I think when we  
20                   are looking at survivors in Britain, we are looking     19: 18  
21                   at people who would describe themselves as having  
22                   fled Ireland and having gone to Britain and having  
23                   lived a kind of anonymous sort of a life, a life that  
24                   made no references in many instances to their past.  
25                   It is a past that they wanted to forget and would     19: 18  
26                   only have talked about it among people who had  
27                   experienced a common, shared experience with each  
28                   other.  There was never any forum or anything for  
29                   them to raise it in.



1 The other difficulty that we had would have been  
2 around the fact of even accessing professional help.  
3 There were a lot of references here this morning and  
4 throughout the weeks to counselling. Survivors in  
5 Britain who had fled and lived this kind of anonymous 19: 19  
6 life would have also found it very difficult to  
7 access professional advice and professional support  
8 and help and even able to tell their story or to tell  
9 of their experiences because of cultural barriers.

10  
11 If I could just say - swanning into social services  
12 and saying 'I am having difficulties. I am suffering  
13 a lot of trauma. I was reared in an Irish  
14 institution run by congregations.' There just wasn't  
15 that kind of cultural awareness. There was limited 19: 19  
16 cultural awareness of the Irish as it was, but that  
17 was very special and very difficult for them to find  
18 opportunities to talk to anybody about. So many,  
19 many survivors for many decades prior to the  
20 Taoiseach's apology would have been talking to each 19: 19  
21 other but would have found no formal ways of  
22 expressing their difficulties and all the experiences  
23 that followed from being in Irish institutions.

24  
25 Moving on from that - the "States of Fear" programme 19: 20  
26 in particular had a great impact on survivors in  
27 Britain. The media coverage, Christine Buckley's own  
28 book and other literature that came out started to  
29 emerge in the Irish papers, through the Irish Post in





1 particular, an Irish community paper in Britain.  
2 Just very gradually there started to be a kind of  
3 dialog and conversation about the experiences.  
4 The "States of Fear" programme though really did make  
5 an impact and the survivors in Britain really felt 19: 20  
6 for the first time that the experiences that we have  
7 had were profiled in a way that dignified our  
8 suffering but also highlighted it in a very, very  
9 national way and a very significant and important  
10 way. The instant kind of reaction from people was 19: 21  
11 'Now they will believe us.' It gave us confidence.  
12 It gave us confidence not just to talk amongst  
13 ourselves but to start talking in the wider Irish  
14 community and in the wider community of Britain.

15  
16 I was at the time Secretary of the Federation of  
17 Irish Societies, and groups then started to lobby the  
18 Federation of Irish Societies, which is the national  
19 umbrella organisation for the Irish community in  
20 Britain. It started to lobby and say 'What about it. 19: 21  
21 The "States of Fear" programme highlighted this.'

22  
23 As I say, things weren't necessarily chronological.  
24 Lots of things happened very quickly after that:  
25 The State apology, the Commission etc. So it is in 19: 21  
26 that context that we moved to the group.

27 65 Q. I think you want to try and identify that there were  
28 a number of particular problems for Irish survivors  
29 living in the UK?



1 A. Yes. Apart from what I have just said in terms of  
2 their inability to access professional services, it  
3 wasn't that resources weren't there, it was for all  
4 the reasons I have just said. But the other issues  
5 for survivors in the UK was that they lived so 19: 22  
6 anonymously. Many, many never told their families.  
7 Many, many never told their spouses. And there were  
8 lots of comments like 'Well, if I had told him he  
9 never would have married me from my background.'  
10 19: 22  
11 The other really poignant one for all of us is the  
12 fact that we came from a variety of institutions  
13 located throughout Ireland, and a common kind of  
14 expression in Britain within the Irish community is  
15 'Where do you come from?' And although we came from 19: 22  
16 these various places where the institutions were,  
17 we didn't actually come from those place. You know,  
18 we couldn't identify ourselves with Boyle or Glenbay.  
19 So the identity, the lack of identity, the lack of  
20 being able to say 'I come from a town or village. 19: 23  
21 I associate with it. I am from it.' Even just a  
22 simple like supporting a County in a GAA game.  
23 The identity, the lack of identity was a huge factor  
24 for us. And in fact many of us submerged ourselves  
25 in the British identity and sort of parked, if you 19: 23  
26 like, and buried almost in some instances our Irish  
27 identity because it was too difficult to handle.  
28 66 Q. Has the formation of the group and the ability for  
29 people to join these groups, and your group



1 particularly, assisted that? What are your aims and  
2 objectives in the group to try and deal with these  
3 issues?

4 A. The formation of the groups - I would take the  
5 opportunity to pay tribute to Mick Waters from SOCA 19: 23  
6 UK who kind of did some very ground-breaking work up  
7 in Coventry with the Artane people and from that  
8 emerged SOCA UK. I was involved in SOCA UK at the  
9 beginning. The emergence of the women's group arose  
10 out of a desire of women survivors to meet with each 19: 24  
11 other, to talk to each other and to share experiences  
12 that were so deeply personal to women and to talk  
13 about women's experiences and the impact in terms of  
14 us as mothers, as grandmothers and as women our  
15 experiences in the institutions that were 19: 24  
16 particularly special to women. So there was a real  
17 kind of desire to set up the women's group, and that  
18 is how it emerged.

19

20 I have to say that it wasn't set up to rival or to be 19: 24  
21 in competition with other groups. In fact, many of  
22 the women today still attend the other groups. And  
23 don't forget, many of the women would have siblings,  
24 brothers, in the other groups. But the women's group  
25 was set up for that purpose. It was set up in 19: 25  
26 November 1999. It has a very positive agenda.  
27 It has an agenda that is wanting to move forward and  
28 do all kinds of things. But it is really a positive  
29 agenda, wanting to move on but sharing our



1 experiences in a very private way at our monthly  
2 meetings.

3 67 Q. How large is the group?  
4 A. We have a mailing list of 380. We are not terribly  
5 ambitious. Women are welcome to come. Anyone is 19: 25  
6 welcome to come. We are quite limited in terms of  
7 our resources. We don't actually receive funding.  
8 At our meetings, which are held at the London Irish  
9 Centre, we have between 60 and 70 people at the  
10 meetings. They would come from Greater London and 19: 25  
11 the southeast. They come from as far as  
12 Peterborough, Bristol and all down the southeast.  
13

14 In terms of our mailing - we mail out to any woman  
15 who wants information. The kind of mail out we do, 19: 26  
16 the content of that mail out basically is what we  
17 have said, what we have discussed, but it is almost  
18 entirely around the legislative activity of the  
19 Commission, around the Redress and all the relevant  
20 material relating to the issues for survivors. 19: 26

21 68 Q. I think you have some statistics in relation to the  
22 overall numbers of survivors and how many are  
23 represented by UK numbers?  
24 A. Our figures are based on the statistics produced by  
25 the Commission probably in its first or second report 19: 26  
26 and also based on figures produced by Mary Rafferty  
27 in her book "Suffer little children". We understand  
28 that probably 40% of all survivors who came through  
29 the institutions live in Britain. Now, that may seem



1 to be a very high number, but it is also borne out by  
2 the outreach services. One of the offshoots of the  
3 work we did following the State apology and the  
4 excellent commitment by the Taoiseach to offer  
5 support, to offer redress, to offer counselling 19: 27  
6 services and a whole package of services -- one of  
7 the things that we secured in Britain, which has been  
8 very, very effective, is that the Government gave the  
9 Department of Education the go-ahead to fund a whole  
10 series of professional outreach services to survivors 19: 27  
11 in Britain. They are in Manchester, Coventry, two in  
12 London and one in Sheffield. There is a total of ten  
13 staff. Through Irish Government funding they fund  
14 that whole package of services to survivors.  
15 And in addition to that they fund a whole package of 19: 28  
16 counselling services which are provided by  
17 counselling and psychotherapy known as ICAP.  
18 In terms of the question about funding to our group  
19 or this group or that group - the women's group  
20 certainly are of the view that the funding of the 19: 28  
21 outreach services and the way in which nearly 2000  
22 survivors have now been able to access those services  
23 -- and it is one-to-one support where they are  
24 provided with advice about all the legislation in  
25 relation to survivors issues but also are advised on 19: 28  
26 a whole range of other things. In Britain it would  
27 be about welfare rights, it would be about housing  
28 etc. We are quite positive about the way in which  
29 the funding stream has gone to the UK.



1 Although, like everybody else, we would like a bit of  
2 funding for the women's group, we are satisfied that  
3 at this stage in the process funding the outreach  
4 services is more important because it reaches so many  
5 survivors in the really positive way. 19: 29

6 69 Q. Is there anything else you would like to ask the  
7 Investigation Committee about. You have one or two  
8 matters you would like them to perhaps consider  
9 investigating?

10 A. Of course I have got my wish list like everybody 19: 29  
11 else. Judge, if I may, there are just a few that I  
12 would quite like to go through?

13 CHAIRMAN: Certainly.

14 A. I was here about six weeks ago and gave an interview 19: 29  
15 on the preparation of this to your offices. I said I  
16 would go back and ask the women's group in relation  
17 to the Commission's recommendations, its most recent  
18 recommendations about sampling and about the way  
19 forward and way it is going to proceed from here.  
20 I said at that time that I would go back and ask the 19: 30  
21 women's group what they thought of it. We had a very  
22 lengthy discussion about the Commission's new path  
23 if you like. There was very, very positive support  
24 for it. People felt they wanted this to happen; they  
25 wanted progress in the way in which it is now 19: 30  
26 proceeding. And most of all they want closure.  
27 They want closure on this chapter. They want to see  
28 an end to this chapter. They want to see that we can  
29 move on.



1           There are four additional points I would quite like  
2           to make. It is a passion of my own but it is shared  
3           by many, many women. It is shared by many survivors  
4           actually. It should be shared by Irish Society and  
5           I wish it was. We feel deeply, deeply saddened that 19: 30  
6           the Magdalen Laundry Women are out of the loop in  
7           terms of this. And I know it is not within your  
8           remit, Judge, but if it could be passed on to the  
9           relevant departments or government ministers.  
10          We feel very, very strongly about the Magdalen women. 19: 31  
11          Many of them are the mothers of survivors. We all  
12          know what happened there. We feel very, very  
13          saddened that the Magdalen Laundry Women are  
14          completely out of the loop and we would plead with  
15          you to try and facilitate some way in which we can 19: 31  
16          talk to the congregations about setting up a trust.  
17          We appreciate they are not in the scheme and we  
18          appreciate that because it is a children's Act the  
19          Magdalen Laundry Women were not included. But  
20          there must be some way in which we could be 19: 31  
21          facilitated to engage with the congregations who ran  
22          those laundries to set up some kind of a trust or  
23          some kind of acknowledgment about the Magdalen  
24          Laundry Women, about their suffering and their pain  
25          and that what they have been through is recognised. 19: 32  
26          That is one.  
27  
28          The other one again, Judge, I am sorry, is out of  
29          your remit. I have an opportunity to mention it so I



1 hope you don't mind if I do?

2 CHAIRMAN: No.

3 A. There are quite a few women in our group who were  
4 reared in the Nazareth Homes in Northern Ireland.  
5 Again, of course, they are out of the loop. 19:32  
6 Only this week we have had an approach from the  
7 Northern Ireland MPA members who have agreed to talk  
8 to us with a view to trying to look at a parallel  
9 scheme. There are not that many involved and many of  
10 them are very, very elderly. If there is any way in 19:32  
11 which you could support us towards those talks that  
12 would be very helpful.

13  
14 We would like to see the outreach services continue.  
15 We know that an independent assessor has just come in 19:32  
16 and made that recommendation; that the outreach  
17 services in Britain continue. We are very anxious  
18 that they don't just pull the plug when the Redress  
19 Board folds up because we feel that there is an  
20 aftermath. There is a very necessary aftermath post 19:33  
21 the Redress Board.

22  
23 The Education Trust - we just pay huge tribute to the  
24 Education Trust and the way in which it is running.  
25 It is really benefitting those who access it. But we 19:33  
26 have to say that the PR and the publicity around the  
27 Education Trust -- and I mean as Christine Buckley  
28 quite rightly said, it is all a healing process and  
29 education is a huge part of it. Those who are





1           benefitting include my own children who have  
2           benefited significantly from the education trust.  
3           We think it is the way forward but we would love to  
4           see a little bit promotion and publicity and support  
5           for the Education Trust. 19: 33

6  
7           Finally, one of the anguishes, if I could call it  
8           that, of many of the women, and I am sure it is  
9           shared by all survivors -- the State apologised to us  
10          for our suffering and we wholly appreciated the 19: 34  
11          gesture by Bertie Ahern and we felt it was very  
12          sincere, very wholesome. We have all felt very  
13          positive about that apology. He has followed it up  
14          with a whole series of legislation and action, as he  
15          promised to do, and we are all immensely appreciative 19: 34  
16          of that. But the mothers, the mothers whose babies  
17          were taken away still find it extremely painful.  
18          I know from my own personal experience that my mother  
19          is 84 and I couldn't talk to her today (witness gets  
20          upset and cannot continue). 19: 34

21          CHAIRMAN:                            Thank you very much indeed.  
22    That is most valuable,  
23          Ms. Mulready.    That you for your assistance.

24  
25          THE WITNESS THEN WITHDREW 19: 35

26  
27          MR. McMAHON:                        The next witness is Fr. Tom  
28    Murphy from the Oblate  
29          Community.



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1 FATHER TOM MURPHY, HAVING BEEN SWORN, WAS EXAMINED AS  
2 FOLLOWS BY MR. McMAHON:

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70 Q. MR. McMAHON: Fr. Murphy, I think you are  
a member of the Oblate 19: 36  
Community in Ireland?

A. Yes, I am.

71 Q. I think you are here to represent the community in  
response to a letter which was sent to the community  
for certain information? 19: 36

A. Yes, that is correct.

72 Q. I think prior to delving into the contents of that  
letter, you have some observations that you wish to  
make in relation to how your community came to be  
involved in running schools the question of child 19: 36  
care?

A. Yes, that is true. I would just like to talk through  
these opening pages here and then I am open for  
questions. We have two schools to consider: 19: 37  
St. Conlett's Reformatory, County Offaly which was  
closed in 1973 and Scoil Ard-Mhuire in Lusk, County  
Dublin, from which the Oblates withdrew in 1984.  
There are differences between these two institutions  
and those the Commission has been hearing up to this  
point. I would stress that the differences maybe are 19: 37  
three in general:

Firstly, the children were considerably older than  
those that have been considered. They would have



1           been 12 to 18 years. They were children who had been  
2           given a sentence by the courts and they were in the  
3           institution normally for a period of two years.

4  
5           I would like to sketch very briefly how the Oblates           19: 38  
6           became involved in this work. In 1858 the Committee  
7           of lay Catholics was formed to set up a Catholic boys  
8           reformatory in Ireland. The Committee acquired an  
9           lease on premises in Glencree from the Powerscourt  
10          Estate. The Committee approached the Oblates and           19: 38  
11          asked them to manage the reformatory. We Oblates had  
12          no prior experience in that specific work. We were  
13          approached because our work was specifically towards  
14          the poor. So we took on the project and the  
15          reformatory was called St. Kevin's.                           19: 39

16  
17          Some 12 years later in 1870, because of the large  
18          number of boys being admitted, a second reformatory  
19          was opened in Dangan called St. Conlett's. The  
20          premises supplied by the State for this project were           19: 39  
21          where the old barracks and prison were. The State  
22          leased these premises to the Oblates for periods of  
23          20 years at a time. And when it was first decided to  
24          take on management of the Glencree Reformatory in  
25          1858, the Oblate assigned to the task went to France           19: 39  
26          and Belgium to study methods there. And of the  
27          various models he studied, the most attractive was  
28          that at Metre in France. The main feature of this  
29          was the division of boys into small families, each



1 with its own living quarters. Unfortunately the hope  
2 of following this example, this model, could not be  
3 realised because of the nature of the buildings at  
4 Glencree and Dangan.

5  
6 I turn now to our Oblate experience in general:  
7 In its report in 1926/27 the Department of Education  
8 highlighted three special difficulties that beset the  
9 reformatories. The first was the huge illiteracy  
10 problem of pupils when they arrived in the school. 19: 40  
11 All the Department reports show that this continued  
12 to be a problem until the school closed.

13  
14 The second problem was that, because of the fact that  
15 these children were confined against their will for 19: 40  
16 two years, they were not open to training.

17  
18 And the third, and probably greatest difficulty, was  
19 that there was absolutely no process of assessment of  
20 the needs and problems of the boys prior to their 19: 41  
21 commitment in Dangan. So all boys who got into  
22 trouble were sent to Dangan irrespective of their  
23 needs or vulnerabilities. Some had serious  
24 educational, emotional and psychiatric problems and  
25 needs. Later on the need for change, especially in 19: 41  
26 the decade of the 1960's, and taking advantage of the  
27 new human and social sciences, a series of lectures  
28 was organised by the Oblates and given by  
29 Fr. Francis Forde in Dangan in 1964/65.



1                   And of course in addition there was the ever present  
2                   financial problem.

3     73   Q.     If I may stop you in relation to those lectures that  
4                   were given by Fr. Forde during 1964 and 1965. Who  
5                   were those lectures addressed to; who were they  
6                   focused towards? 19: 42

7                   A.     They were given actually in Dangan to interested  
8                   parties really, if my memory serves me correctly.  
9                   They were published in the local newspapers and also  
10                  some in the national newspapers. 19: 42

11     74   Q.     Are the lectures which were delivered at that time  
12                  available?

13                  A.     They are available, yes.

14     75   Q.     Where are they available?

15                  A.     They are available in our own records. If they are  
16                  not with you now, we will be only too pleased to send  
17                  them to you. 19: 42

18     76   Q.     That would be very helpful. I interrupted you, I am  
19                  sorry?

20                  A.     In addition there was the ever present financial  
21                  problem. 19: 43

22                  CHAIRMAN:                         Father, do you know what  
23   Fr. Forde was saying. If  
24                  you cannot remember it doesn't matter. We will all  
25                  be able to look at it. What was the theme generally. 19: 43  
26                  Was he suggesting changes?

27                  A.     He was suggesting changes. He was also highlighting  
28                  the fact of the improvement in social and  
29                  psychological science, you know, the science of



1 psychology, and sort of trying to bring forward a  
2 better method of assessment and of treatment of these  
3 boys rather than the punitive, repressive thing.  
4

5 The next problem was of course financial. The 19: 43  
6 Oblates were not wealthy patrons but they were  
7 dependent on the State for financial resources and  
8 they were also dependant on the State for the  
9 property where the school was conducted. The  
10 capitation grant for each pupil was intended to cover 19: 44  
11 all expenses including those of staff, medical needs,  
12 food, schooling, clothing, day-to-day maintenance of  
13 buildings, in fact everything. And obviously it was  
14 not sufficient for all of this. And we would  
15 maintain that despite all the difficulties, that our 19: 44  
16 management made the best use of available resources.  
17 The programme included remedial primary education and  
18 vocational training, a technical school where some  
19 boys took their Group Certificate. And it was as  
20 late as 1969 that the Department of Education 19: 44  
21 recognised the remedial school as a national school  
22 and was also prepared to pay teachers' salary.

23 77 Q. Prior to that, Father, prior to 1969 when recognition  
24 was given to the school as a national school, were  
25 teachers in the school and if so how were they paid? 19: 45

26 A. They were paid by the capitation grant which was  
27 given by the State. That was included. The staff  
28 were paid by that grant; it wasn't a separate  
29 payment.



- 1 78 Q. But in 1969, with recognition as a national school,  
2 payment for the teachers employed came in as a  
3 separate matter?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 79 Q. You mentioned the technical school. When did that 19: 45  
6 commence?
- 7 A. The technical school in a sense was always there from  
8 the point of view that brothers would have specific  
9 qualifications in woodwork or shoe making or whatever  
10 and they put their talents for the use of the boys. 19: 45  
11 So the technical school was set up.
- 12 80 Q. Did that take into account the national examination  
13 programme, the Group Certificate?
- 14 A. I can't answer that now at this point. I can let you  
15 know about that. 19: 46
- 16 81 Q. I see. Sorry, I interrupted you.
- 17 A. Management strove, without ceasing actually, to fund  
18 all these resources and in many cases without much  
19 success.
- 20 82 Q. Were there other sources of funding also available to 19: 46  
21 the community for the running of the schools?
- 22 A. We had the farm which in fact was a source of income.  
23 But in fact it only brought up the capitation grants  
24 to a level of subsistence, if you like, because the  
25 per capitation grants did not cover all expenses. 19: 47  
26 So the farm was another source of income. I might  
27 add, not as a huge profit-making venture because we  
28 just with the farm made ends meet really. Many  
29 Oblates and in particular brothers dedicated lengthy





1 periods of their lives to this work, living and  
2 working in conditions that required great sacrifices  
3 from them and those who were Oblates received no  
4 salaries. The training of staff in St. Conlett's  
5 until the closing years was unsophisticated and it 19: 47  
6 was really a question of the handing-on of a  
7 tradition within the group. Eventually it was in  
8 St. Conlett's that the groundwork was laid and the  
9 nucleus of a staff was trained for the eventual  
10 opening of a completely new and modern facility at 19: 48  
11 Oberstown in Lusk. Already in the early 1960s an  
12 Oblate priest gained a qualification in psychology  
13 which enabled him to assess new entrants  
14 psychologically.

15 83 Q. Fr. Murphy, when did Lusk open? 19: 48  
16 A. 1974.

17 84 Q. Is it up until that date that you are describing the  
18 training available to staff as being unsophisticated?  
19 A. Yes.

20 85 Q. Could you perhaps amplify somewhat on that and 19: 48  
21 describe what sort of training was there or what sort  
22 of training did staff have as a matter of fact. What  
23 did it qualify them for and what did it enable them  
24 to do with the qualifications?

25 A. The universe of the reformatory for the most part was 19: 49  
26 brothers. They were brothers, so in a sense they had  
27 no special qualifications in terms of psychology and  
28 in terms of any of the sciences. So they would have  
29 been really men of goodwill who were trying to do as



1 good a job as they possibly could.

2 86 Q. Would a fair summary of that be to say that such  
3 training as they had was the training they had  
4 received in the course of their vocation to be  
5 brothers? 19: 49

6 A. Yes.

7 87 Q. And otherwise none?

8 A. Very, very little.

9 88 Q. I think there were a few exceptions to that which you  
10 were going to go on and deal with? 19: 49

11 A. Yes. This is towards the end of St. Conlett's,  
12 towards the end of the time. Another priest was sent  
13 to the US for special studies relevant to child care  
14 at the end of the 1960s and another to Bristol  
15 University. And then when special courses were 19: 49  
16 developing in Kilkenny, Oblate staff were sent there  
17 and lay staff were given financial assistance by the  
18 Oblates to follow the courses.

19

20 Now, to the question of discipline: Discipline in 19: 50  
21 St. Conlett's was strict and firm because in a sense  
22 it was necessary. We weren't dealing with small  
23 children.

24 MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC: It wasn't necessary to flog  
25 people. You had them 19: 50  
26 behind walls. There was no problems. I was there.

27 CHAIRMAN I have asked everybody to  
28 come here: The government,  
29 ministers, congregations, survivors and victims



1 groups. I have asked them all to come along and  
2 simply to outline what their position is. We are not  
3 here today to investigate particular claims.  
4 of course there will be people who say that any  
5 particular person's picture of what went on in the 19: 51  
6 institution is wrong or is inaccurate or is totally  
7 upside down. I appreciate that. We know here in the  
8 Commission. We have had a lot of complaints. We  
9 have complaints from people. We have responses from  
10 institutions and from individuals. I understand 19: 51  
11 that. All I am doing today is to say to people  
12 'What do you want to tell us about this.'  
13 Fr. Murphy is here. He doesn't have to be here.  
14 Witnesses here don't have to be here. At a later  
15 stage we will be in a position where we can say to 19: 52  
16 people 'You have to come along. You have no choice  
17 and if you don't we will get Orders from the High  
18 Court to make you come along and answer questions.'  
19 But at the moment witnesses don't have to come along.  
20 They don't even have to answer particular questions. 19: 52  
21 So the time for analysing, investigating, probing and  
22 for people to challenge is not at this time. What we  
23 really set out to do in these hearings was to say  
24 'How did we get to the stage that a Commission was  
25 set up and a Redress Board was set up and people paid 19: 52  
26 in money in compensation and people contributed to  
27 it. And we have asked people to do that. So can  
28 people please understand that. It is not that we are  
29 ignoring things, but equally I cannot allow a



1 free-for-all to develop. Is that okay?  
2 Now, Father, do you understand. I am trying to  
3 explain. I want to keep everybody informed, on side,  
4 understanding where we are going. The time when we  
5 have to say 'Yes, we believe that witness' or 19: 53  
6 'we don't believe that witness' is not this time.  
7 Which does not mean to say that I don't believe you  
8 or I don't want your evidence. I just want to be  
9 clear with everybody so they understand exactly what  
10 we are doing. 19: 53

11 89 Q. MR. McMAHON: Fr. Murphy, would you  
12 like to continue?  
13 CHAIRMAN: Fr. Murphy, you were  
14 telling us that the  
15 discipline was strict in St. Conlett's. 19: 53

16 A. This was so because there was a large population,  
17 We had limited staff and they were not young  
18 children, they were young men. As in most schools of  
19 the time, corporal punishment existed. Corporal  
20 punishment was abolished in 1969, which in fact was 19: 54  
21 13 years before it was abolished in secondary schools  
22 as a whole, which was in 1982. There were a number  
23 of privileges that could be withheld for  
24 misbehaviour: Cigarettes, cinema, holidays.  
25 Similarly there were rewards that could be given by 19: 54  
26 way of extras. In the closing years of the school a  
27 formal system of merit points was introduced when  
28 corporal punishment was abolished in 1969.

29 90 Q. MR. McMAHON: You mentioned, Father, that



1           there was a large population of boys in the school  
2           and that there was a limited staff. Are you in a  
3           position to amplify that to any extent at this point  
4           in time?

5           A. I would say the ratio of staff per pupil was 1;13 or 19:55  
6           1:15. In the 1950s the population would have been up  
7           to 200 and it decreased then in the 1960s to between  
8           100 and 200. So it was a huge population for a small  
9           under-staffed group because of the circumstances I  
10          have mentioned in the staff age group of the 19:55  
11          residents.

12          CHAIRMAN:                           The boys were between 12  
13   and 16?

14          A. 12 and 18.

15          CHAIRMAN:                           The brothers, what ages 19:55  
16   were they?

17          A. Mr. Chairman, in the 1940s and 1950s they would have  
18          been young, in their 40s generally with sprinkling of  
19          60 and 65.

20          CHAIRMAN:                           Were they young. Would 19:56  
21   there be brothers of say,  
22          18 or 19?

23          A. Not in my recollection. They would have been either  
24          late 20s and then there would be a little gap and I  
25          suppose 40s and then there would be the older men who 19:56  
26          worked.

27          CHAIRMAN:                           Where did they come from  
28   before they came to Dangan?  
29          Where were they before they were 28 or 29?



- 1 A. A lot of these men would have come in as maybe a  
2 little later vocation. They went to the bishop, they  
3 made vows and they were assigned. They could be  
4 assigned to one or the other house. They were  
5 assigned to Dangan. And many of them spent many 19:56  
6 years there.
- 7 CHAIRMAN: Was that the own Oblate  
8 institution in the State at  
9 the time. We had Dangan and then you had Lusk, but  
10 that was when Dangan closed? 19:57
- 11 A. Yes. In terms of reformatories, there was only those  
12 two.
- 13 MR. LOWE: Could you give me the  
14 numbers in the school  
15 again? 19:57
- 16 A. In the 1950s there would have been up to 200. And  
17 then they decreased in the 1960s, so I would be  
18 putting it in the 1960s varying between 100 and 200.  
19 But they wouldn't be at the top level as they were in  
20 the 1950s. 19:57
- 21 MR. McMAHON: I think in fact the actual  
22 figures have been surveyed  
23 and have been furnished to the Commission.
- 24 CHAIRMAN: I am sure they have but for  
25 the purpose of the record. 19:57
- 26 A. In terms of after care: On leaving the school many  
27 of the boys were placed in employment. Detailed  
28 statistics are given in the Department of Education  
29 reports. For social reasons this became increasingly



1 difficult in the 1960s. Society at that time did not  
2 provide many helps to the boys when they left. The  
3 school did try to keep in touch with the boys with  
4 varying degrees of success. There was sort of a  
5 stipulation or a requirement, if you like, that the 19: 58  
6 Resident Manager would be written to at intervals.  
7 The boys were also put in contact with the  
8 St. Vincent de Paul Society or other helpful persons  
9 in their locality. There was no help from the State  
10 in these areas. Scoil Ard-Mhuire, which was our 19: 58  
11 second school, if I could comment on that briefly.

12  
13 The Oblates continued their involvement with boys in  
14 difficulty at the new special school of Ard-Mhuire.  
15 Here there were better funding arrangements and for 19: 59  
16 the first time adequate purpose-built facilities.  
17 There was a broadly based board of management with  
18 representatives of the Department of Health,  
19 Education and Justice, of the Oblates, of the Arch  
20 Bishop of Dublin and of lay persons nominated by the 19: 59  
21 Oblates.

22  
23 Proper assessment facilities for children in  
24 difficulty had been developed in the State and  
25 criteria were laid down by the school in agreement 19: 59  
26 with the State for the acceptance of pupils. The  
27 Oblates withdrew their service from Scoil Ard-Mhuire  
28 in 1984 because of staff shortages and they also felt  
29 that they could not meet the needs of the children in



1 the manner that they would have desired or they would  
2 have liked.

3  
4 So concluding: The Oblates and myself today do not  
5 wish to give the impression that St. Conlett's, and 20:00  
6 St. Conlett's in particular because that was the more  
7 strict regime, in particular was a satisfactory  
8 institution. Its buildings were old and unsuitable  
9 and it lacked adequate facilities. And it is a sad  
10 fact that many boys went from the school to live sad 20:00  
11 and even tragic lives. It is also true that many did  
12 leave and went on to live good, happy and productive  
13 lives. And I suppose it is true to say that the  
14 State is still grappling with the whole problem of  
15 children in difficulty to this day. 20:00

16  
17 In this inquiry our concern, and our passionate  
18 concern, is to insure that the story of the  
19 reformatories is fully told and that under the  
20 procedures of the Inquiry truth and justice will be 20:01  
21 done, natural rights will be safeguard and it is to  
22 this Commission that we look for conclusion to this.

23 91 Q. MR. McMAHON: I think in responding to  
24 the question raised about  
25 whether a public apology was issued, I think you wish 20:01  
26 to draw attention to a press statement which was  
27 issued on 28th April 1999?

28 A. Yes. If I may just?

29 CHAIRMAN: Yes please.





1 A. As Mr. McMahon has just said, on 28th April 1999 the  
2 Oblates published a press statement. This was in  
3 fact in the nature of a deep concern after the  
4 documentary "States of Fear" in which one of their  
5 reformatories was mentioned. So in that statement we 20:02  
6 said:

7  
8 "We are asked to comment on the  
9 programme "States of Fear". We would  
10 firstly say that the abuse of young  
11 people is always abhorrent and abuse of  
12 young people in confinement is doubly  
13 so. The Oblates of Mary Immaculate 20:02  
14 deeply regret that any young man was  
15 mistreated while in their care and  
16 offer sincerest apologies.

17  
18 At the same time we cannot accept  
19 certain of the assertions made by the  
20 programme particularly in relation to  
21 funding. However, before commenting  
22 further, a more detailed study of the  
23 available records would be required. 20:02  
24 We are glad the point was made that  
25 many boys did experience kindness.  
26 This programme has lifted a veil on the  
27 way that disadvantaged children have  
28 been treated in Irish Society.  
29 Hopefully it will prove to be a step in  
30 a continuing work of research and  
31 healing."

20 20:03

21

22 92 Q. Perhaps I might come back to that in a little while,  
23 Fr. Murphy, if I may. You were asked to set out the  
24 reasons why the Oblate Community contributed to the  
25 Redress Fund. 20:03

26 A. Yes. Do you want me to comment on that now?

27 93 Q. Yes?

28 A. The reasons for participation: We felt that the  
29 redress procedure was best for the claimants and that



1 it was better that the money should go to them rather  
2 than for legal expenses. We also felt very strongly  
3 that this would be and should be and pastoral  
4 reaction, a pastoral action if you like, in relation  
5 to the whole question of abuse. We also saw a 20: 04  
6 certain value in being one in solidarity with other  
7 religious congregations who were supporting the  
8 contribution. It would also save surviving members,  
9 now elderly, and staff members from the trauma of  
10 maybe long, litigious lawsuits. And it would also 20: 04  
11 sort of avoid any excessively adversarial modes of  
12 civil courts which would give rise to further  
13 alienation of claimants. In addition we hope that it  
14 would speed up and facilitate a process of closure  
15 around this whole question. We also needed to 20: 05  
16 justify pledging funds that we held for our mission  
17 for this special purpose of contributing, and after  
18 legal advice which we felt we had to have, we made  
19 the contribution.

20 94 Q. In making the decision to contribute, was there any 20: 05  
21 sense or was it a factor that what the complainants  
22 were saying might have been true?

23 A. I would say no. We were making it as an ex gratia  
24 contribution without admission of liability.

25 95 Q. Would you like to deal with the question in relation 20: 05  
26 to the manner in which the allegations of child abuse  
27 emerged insofar as they touched on the institutions  
28 under the Oblates' control and regulation?

29 A. Our records really show the following occasional



1 complaints that occurred in the lifetime of the  
2 schools. I would divide this into two parts as to  
3 what we found on our records and how it has emerged  
4 as a current issue in recent times.

5 96 Q. When this statement of 28th April 1999 was issued it 20:06  
6 highlighted a need for further research?

7 A. Yes.

8 97 Q. It called for a more detailed study of available  
9 records?

10 A. Yes. 20:06

11 98 Q. Were such studies carried out?

12 A. Yes.

13 99 Q. And is that leading us to the evidence that you are  
14 now in a position to give?

15 A. Exactly. As you know, our records are in the hands 20:07  
16 of the Department of Education. We have been given  
17 copies of them that go back to 1963. We also have  
18 our own management files and these are the records I  
19 now refer to. And we only find in the records one  
20 complaint of sexual abuse. It was brought to the 20:07  
21 attention of the Gardai. It was investigated by them  
22 and found to have no grounds.

23

24 There were six incidents of complaints of excessive  
25 corporal punishment and of bullying. They were all 20:07  
26 dealt with by the Resident Manager interviewing the  
27 persons involved. We don't have a record of the  
28 interviewing process by the manager. We just have an  
29 account. These were complaints actually made



1 probably by mothers and the Resident Manager would  
2 write to the mothers and ask to see them and take  
3 their complaint. And then he would talk to the  
4 respective man who was accused of this physical  
5 punishment.

20:08

6 100 Q. So what do the records disclose?

7 A. The records would not disclose the actual interview,  
8 they would disclose the complaint and the manager's  
9 reply and the setting up of the interview. We had no  
10 record of the actual interviewing itself. There were 20:08  
11 also some newspaper reports of complaints of physical  
12 abuse and also the usual department neglect of  
13 reformatories, especially buildings. The Kennedy  
14 Report in 1970 mentioned St. Conlett's. They  
15 highlighted two things in that report: The state of 20:09  
16 the buildings and the clothing of the children.

17  
18 The emergence of allegations of abuse as a current  
19 issue began with a single complaint in 1966. There  
20 is a little table there and I don't know whether you 20:09  
21 would be interested in going through it. In 1996  
22 there was one complaint. In 1997 there was one  
23 complaint. In 1998 there were five complaints.  
24 In 1999 there were 20 complaints. From January 2001  
25 to June 2001 there were 97. From June 2001 to 20:10  
26 6th November 2001 there were 58 complaints.  
27 And from 7th November to end of 2002 there were 143  
28 complaints.

29 101 Q. I think that brings the total to 322 complaints in



1 all?

2 A. Yes.

3 102 Q. Can you indicate what the community's reaction has  
4 been to the complaints made and the number of the  
5 complaints made?

20: 10

6 A. Particularly in relation to surviving members of  
7 staff there was deep shock I suppose and deep  
8 disbelief because they would say there was never any  
9 excessive physical or sexual abuse. They were  
10 shocked at the growing numbers coming forward of  
11 claimants claiming sexual or physical abuse.

20: 10

12 103 Q. Were attempts made in the community to find out what  
13 the position was?

14 A. Absolutely.

15 104 Q. What were those?

20: 11

16 A. I think the Commission may have this information  
17 already. There were interviews done with all  
18 surviving staff members. There was research done  
19 into our records. And what we came up with is what  
20 we have just shown there from the records. But all  
21 surviving staff members would insist that they had no  
22 knowledge of abuse on that scale at all/at all or on  
23 any scale actually. I think it points up to the need  
24 in a sense when looking at this Commission, that if  
25 truth and justice is to be established, the work of  
26 this Commission be geared towards the finding of  
27 truth and justice.

20: 11

20: 12

28 105 Q. Were steps taken to speak to those who were making  
29 the complaints in order to assess perhaps the



1 validity of the complaints being made?  
2 A. Those who approached us before they went to any  
3 commission or any body were seen personally. All  
4 complainants were seen personally. We also had our  
5 historical research and the interviews. 20: 12  
6 106 Q. What was the findings of the people who spoke to  
7 those who were spoken to personally?  
8 A. The findings of the interviews was, as I have said,  
9 that the interviewees said they had no  
10 recollection... (INTERJECTION). 20: 13  
11 107 Q. You did say that in relation to members of the  
12 community who were interviewed. I intended to ask  
13 the question in relation to those who were making  
14 complaints. You said that those who made the  
15 complaints were also interviewed up to a certain 20: 13  
16 point in time. My question is, what was the findings  
17 of the people who interviewed those?  
18 A. Most of the complaints came entirely through  
19 solicitors and through the Commission to Inquire into  
20 Child Abuse and the Residential Institutional 20: 13  
21 Redress Board. Most of the complaints came through  
22 that. There were a few, who before proceeding began,  
23 were seen personally. Now, you are asking me what  
24 are the... (INTERJECTION)  
25 CHAIRMAN: Did you believe them I 20: 14  
26 think is really what he was  
27 really saying in polite language when they came.  
28 Before anybody came to the Commission or solicitors  
29 or anybody else, people came back complaining.





1 reasons that you helpfully explained were different  
2 from other institutions, they were older, they were  
3 thought to have been more difficulty because they  
4 were under sentence of some kind

5 A. Yes. 20: 16

6 111 Q. CHAIRMAN: They may have had learning  
7 difficulties and they  
8 wouldn't have been assessed, equally we know that  
9 there was inadequacy of emotional back up and  
10 support, I am sure you would go along with that? 20: 16

11 A. Yes.

12 112 Q. CHAIRMAN: That is the -- they are the  
13 boys. If we look at the  
14 teachers, they had no training, I mean they were  
15 trained to be brothers but they had no training for 20: 16  
16 the job they were doing. There were not very many of  
17 them and they didn't have a whole lot of money and  
18 they had pretty poor buildings, that is the  
19 impression I am getting. Was that not a situation  
20 where it would be difficult for discipline to be 20: 17  
21 maintained without going over the top, was it not a  
22 recipe for something of a hothouse or a pressure  
23 cooker atmosphere that would explain would be  
24 conducive? Is that not the point? I am reading into  
25 what you are saying, look here you have to bear these 20: 17  
26 thing in mind and if you get to sort of blaming or  
27 moral things you have to, that is what I am  
28 understanding. Am i right in understanding that this  
29 is saying equally, let us get real here, is that what





1           you are saying to us in coded form?

2           A.    I think we have to make a distinction.

3 113 Q.    CHAIRMAN:                    Tell me, I am not pushing  
4    you, you don't have to  
5           answer that you don't want to.    But that is the    20: 17  
6           impression I am getting from ... (INTERJECTION)

7           A.    I would say that that these institutions were, in a  
8           sense, conducive to a boiler situation absolutely no  
9           doubt about that.    But I also think that given the  
10          times and the context, I think we cannot forget the    20: 18  
11          context, we cannot forget that, of the times and of  
12          the customs of the times, it wasn't unduly punitive,  
13          that it was not over the top as you would say  
14          yourself in terms of discipline.

15 114 Q.    CHAIRMAN:                    That somehow they managed    20: 18  
16    to surmount all these  
17          difficulties, most the time at least, that is what  
18          you are saying?

19          A.    Yes.

20 115 Q.    CHAIRMAN:                    Obviously we haven't heard    20: 18  
21    anything specific, we  
22          haven't gone into any of that, and I was explaining  
23          to a gentleman a legal while ago that that is not the  
24          purpose of it, I just thought in general arising out  
25          what you were saying, were you sort of implicitly    20: 19  
26          saying on the other hand?

27          A.    I think the best was done in very difficult  
28          circumstances.    I would be -- I would say that.    The  
29          best that could be done, and very extremely difficult



1 circumstances. I mean I would reiterate what I said  
2 earlier on and I would look forward to your  
3 commission finding -- coming to a conclusion in  
4 relation to all of this.

5 CHAIRMAN: I understand. 20: 19

6 116 Q. MR. McMAHON: Fr. Murphy, I think you  
7 were -- before I took that  
8 detour, you were going to deal with examples of how  
9 particular complaints, we were at page 7 of your  
10 statement? 20: 20

11 A. Yes. The following are complaints of a former pupil  
12 in 1997, the Gardai conducted an investigation into  
13 Scoil Ard-Mhuire and later a former employee of Scoil  
14 Ard-Mhuire, a careworker was convicted of sexual  
15 abuse. And the Oblates were notified of a Garda 20: 20  
16 inquiry into St. Conlett's in 1999 and the Garda  
17 inquiry did not lead to any prosecution. So I would  
18 be saying looking at our records that we don't really  
19 have any evidence of sexual abuse but these two  
20 cases, we have no evidence of severe, except for 20: 20  
21 those six complaints of excessive abuse and that is  
22 in our records and research and interviews of  
23 surviving staff members.

24 117 Q. Those records are available to the commission?

25 A. Yes. 20: 21

26 118 Q. I think you were asked if you give a brief account of  
27 the protocols or procedures which were in place  
28 within the body which were designed to prevent  
29 investigator deal with allegations of child abuse?



1 A. Well, in fact we don't have any documentary evidence  
2 or record of any protocol. We have no written  
3 protocol. But as was said above, when complaints  
4 were made it was the practice of the resident manager  
5 to deal with them by interviewing the persons 20: 21  
6 concerned. The action taken by the resident manager  
7 in one complaint of sexual abuse recorded in 1967 to  
8 have the allegations investigated by external  
9 authorities, his evidence of the procedure followed.  
10 He did ask the Gardai and the relevant authorities to 20: 21  
11 investigate that.

12 119 Q. Can I ask you, whilst there might no evidence of  
13 written protocols, how you were rules passed on or  
14 how were rules known? Were there rules and if so how  
15 were they known? 20: 22

16 A. There were rules and basically they were passed on  
17 from person to person within the body. So in a sense  
18 it became a tradition, if you like, of rules and  
19 regulations within the reformatory itself. Now,  
20 there were ... (INTERJECTION). 20: 22

21 120 Q. CHAIRMAN: What were they like, what  
22 sort of rules?

23 A. Basically there was a prefect in charge and he was  
24 the only one who could inflict corporal punishment  
25 for serious offences. Serious offences were theft or 20: 22  
26 violence and he was the one who was responsible for  
27 that. The other brothers had the permission, had the  
28 right or permission, to inflict punishment on the  
29 hands only. So it was sort of a tradition, if you





1 A. Yes.

2 126 Q. What other punishment that the prefect would  
3 administer or impose?

4 A. Usually that punishment is sort of -- was for  
5 absconders, it was cutting of the hair short and 20:24  
6 there was also for the other serious offences there  
7 was punishment on the buttocks, that was reserved to  
8 the prefect. The one surviving member of staff who  
9 was in at that position has said that he always  
10 delivered that punishment in his office during the 20:25  
11 day.

12 127 Q. MR. LOWE: Can I ask why cutting the  
13 hair short was a  
14 punishment?

15 A. Well I suppose because they would be recognised, 20:25  
16 especially absconders, I suppose.

17 128 Q. MR. LOWE: Within the school?

18 A. Within the school.

19 129 Q. MR. LOWE: Rather than in the  
20 community if they ran away 20:25  
21 again?

22 A. If they ran away they would be recognised promptly.

23 130 Q. MR. LOWE: So it was to mark them?

24 A. Yes.

25 131 Q. MR. McMAHON: We were dealing with 20:26  
26 protocols and procedures.  
27 I think you had dealt with the protocols and  
28 procedures such as may have existed St. Conlett's and  
29 Dangan?



- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 132 Q. On the middle of page 7, I think that with the  
3 opening of Scoil Ard-Mhuire?
- 4 A. There were protocols and procedures covering a wide  
5 variety of areas of the pupils' life, including 20:26  
6 access to outside busy professionals. There were no  
7 protocols for child abuse maybe that was because it  
8 was not seen to be a problem or because it was not a  
9 problem. There one incident of complaint of physical  
10 abuse recorded was dealt with by report to the 20:26  
11 resident manager, that is included in the six  
12 incidents there.
- 13 133 Q. Was the resident manager different to the person whom  
14 you referred to already, the prefect?
- 15 A. Oh, yes. The resident manager was always a priest. 20:27  
16 The priest would have a brother who was given  
17 actually very big responsibility because he had  
18 overall responsibility in the school. But the actual  
19 manager was a priest, an Oblate priest always. He  
20 oversaw the whole running of the school. Now our 20:27  
21 current position as regards the Oblates we have  
22 adopted a protocol of our own which is called Ethical  
23 Guidelines for Pastoral Ministry, we made it out in  
24 2002. We obviously follow the guidelines strictly.
- 25 134 Q. I think you probably have dealt with the further 20:28  
26 questions which were asked to the extent to which the  
27 body made enquiries as to how?
- 28 A. In relation to that, actually we are not aware of any  
29 such enquiries that were made to other bodies.



1 135 Q. DR. RYAN: Could I just ask in  
2 relation to the six  
3 complaints, the six contemporaneous complaints of  
4 physical punishment, you say that the records show  
5 that interviews were conducted but you don't know the 20:28  
6 nature of the interview; is that correct?  
7 A. We have no record.

8 136 Q. DR. RYAN: Is there anything on the  
9 record to show that there  
10 was any disciplinary action taken against the member 20:28  
11 complained of?  
12 A. We have no record of that.

13 137 Q. MR. LOWE: I have just one question.  
14 Quoting from the press  
15 statement which you read out earlier, "This programme 20:29  
16 has lifted a veil on the way that disadvantaged  
17 children have been treated in Irish society." I am  
18 intrigued by that statement because first of all it  
19 says there was a veil there and secondly that  
20 disadvantaged children were treated in some different 20:29  
21 way in Ireland, could you explain the thinking behind  
22 making that statement?  
23 A. I would say insofar as it -- there was a veil, we  
24 were saying that if there is a veil, it has been  
25 lifted now and we welcome that. Secondly as regards 20:29  
26 disadvantaged children in Ireland, I would say that I  
27 think that this is a universal phenomenon, that  
28 disadvantaged children are treated differently. I  
29 would -- from my own experience as a priest I would



1 see that as a member of the congregation and we work  
2 specifically with the very poor in general, that it  
3 is a worldwide universal phenomenon.

4 138 Q. MR. LOWE: Particularly with your  
5 experience of working with 20:30  
6 the poor that I was interested to find out why you  
7 felt the disadvantage were treated differently? In  
8 what way were they treated differently?

9 A. I suppose the whole social structure fabric of the  
10 time facilitated those with better education, better 20:30  
11 food with better nutrition. It has been proved that  
12 even IQ tests, if your nutrition is good well then  
13 your IQ is going to be higher. Naturally with low  
14 nutritional levels your IQ is lower and also your  
15 self-esteem is lower and it goes into the whole 20:30  
16 question of vulnerability really, I suppose, and  
17 being vulnerable.

18 MR. LOWE: Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much, Fr.  
20 Murphy 20:31

21 A. Before I go, I would like to say it is my deep desire  
22 that the work of this commission is successful. We  
23 have cooperated fully with the commission and we will  
24 continue to do so. If there is anything you need  
25 from us please ask us. I think the work of this 20:31  
26 commission is centred on truth and justice for all.  
27 I think if this can be achieved the road to  
28 reconciliation which you so ardently desire yourself,  
29 if that can be done for you, by you Mr. Chairman,





1 then the road is open to the objective of  
2 reconciliation.

3 CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

4

5 THE WITNESS THEN WITHDREW

20:32

6

7 CHAIRMAN: That concludes our hearings  
8 in this phase of the

9 inquiry which we have called the Emergence of Child  
10 Abuse as an Issue in Ireland. Our next hearings will 20:32

11 begin in early September and are concerned with  
12 specific institutions, St. Joseph's, Fairymore in

13 Clonmel. That part of the Inquiry will be conducted  
14 by Mr. Lowe here on my left and myself. Dr. Imelda

15 Ryan on my right is going back to full-time practice 20:32  
16 as a consultant child and adolescent psychiatrist. I

17 want to take this opportunity to thank her for all  
18 the work she has done for the Commission in the five

19 years she has served with it in its pre-statutory and  
20 statutory forms. We will miss her very much. But 20:32

21 she leaves with our very best wishes and deep thanks.  
22 We won't be losing her services all together, because

23 happily she has agreed to continue to be available to  
24 assist us generally in a consultative role. A

25 replacement for Dr. Ryan will in due course be 20:33  
26 announced. Our session is now adjourned. Thank you

27 very much.  
28

29 THE HEARING THEN CONCLUDED



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