

Friday, 1 December 2017

(10.00 am)

LADY SMITH: Good morning.

On this fourth day of evidence in this phase we now turn to the next witness, who I will ask Mr MacAulay to call shortly.

But before we do that, could I just remind everybody of what I have already said about the importance of respecting the anonymity of those who have asked to be anonymous, they are entitled to do that, and also respecting the anonymity of anyone who is mentioned as having allegedly been an abuser where that person has not been convicted of a crime.

I make no apologies for repeating this every day because it is so important. As you know, I gave the detailed explanation of why these directions are in place on Tuesday and that information is available in more detail on the website.

Mr MacAulay.

MR MacAULAY: Good morning my Lady. The next witness

I would like to call is George Quinn.

LADY SMITH: Thank you.

Good morning.

A. Good morning.

1 MR GEORGE QUINN (sworn)

2 Questions from MR MacAULAY

3 LADY SMITH: If you make sure you are using the microphone,
4 it makes it very easy to hear you. Mr MacAulay may
5 refer you to that red file, but you don't need to worry
6 about it at the moment.

7 Mr MacAulay, when you are ready.

8 MR MacAULAY: Good morning George; are you George Quinn?

9 A. I am.

10 Q. Is your date of birth [REDACTED] 1955?

11 A. It is.

12 Q. Can I say this at the beginning -- and I say this to all
13 the witnesses -- if I ask you a question and you don't
14 remember something, just tell me that.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Likewise, although you have provided the Inquiry with
17 a statement, if you have remembered something since you
18 gave your statement, then just let us know.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. You have the statement in front of you, in fact, in that
21 red folder. Can I ask you to turn to the last page.
22 I'm going to give the reference of the statement for the
23 transcript and that's at WIT.001.001.1879. But on the
24 last page, which is -- 1893 is where I want you to go.

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Can you confirm, George, that you have signed the
2 statement.

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. If you look at the last paragraph of the statement, do
5 you say there:

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

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. You also go on to say:

10 "I believe the facts stated in this witness
11 statement are true."

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Is that right?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Can I go back and look briefly at your life before you
16 went into care?

17 A. Yes.

18

[REDACTED]

19

[REDACTED]

20

[REDACTED]

21

[REDACTED]

22

[REDACTED]

23 Q. Before you went into care, did you live with your
24 parents and the other members of your family?

25 A. When I was younger I stayed in Pollok with my mother and

1 father, and then we moved from Pollok to Kinning Park.
2 My mother and father separated and I was staying with my
3 mother in Eaglestone Street in Kinning Park. [REDACTED]

4 [REDACTED]

5 [REDACTED]

6 [REDACTED]

7 Q. [REDACTED]

8 [REDACTED]

9 A. [REDACTED]

10 [REDACTED]

11 [REDACTED]

12 [REDACTED]

13 Q. [REDACTED]

14 A. [REDACTED]

15 Q. I understand from what you have said in your statement
16 that your family background was rather unhappy.

17 A. Yes, it wasn't -- my -- the way I described my father
18 was an old-fashioned man in those days in that he walked
19 in -- [REDACTED] had to go down to Paisley Road
20 Toll and go round the pubs to try and find my dad to get
21 money on a Friday to give my mother to feed us. My dad
22 would eventually give him maybe £5 to feed the whole
23 family. In those days my father would have spent £5 on
24 a round and probably thought nothing of it.

25 Then he would come home drunk and a lot of times he

1 would beat my mother up through the drink and so, as
2 I was saying, my mother and father separated. My mother
3 became quite ill. She became an alcoholic as well. She
4 was prone to having epileptic fits and she fell into a
5 fire when she took a fit and she had burns all down her
6 left side and so she was in constant pain for all of her
7 life. A lot of drink was to dull the pain, but she was
8 still an alcoholic at the time as well. She had
9 a really hard life, really.

10 Q. But I'm going to ask you about when you were taken into
11 care to Smyllum, but before that I think you had two
12 short episodes --

13 A. Before that, when I was living with my mother in
14 Eaglestone Street, we never had any electricity or any
15 gas. Any cooking and things had to be done on the coal
16 fire. And if we couldn't afford coal, we couldn't have
17 anything warm.

18 The house, as I remember it, was pretty grim. But
19 I was probably having a ball because I was -- I could do
20 whatever I wanted. Nobody was sort of supervising me or
21 schools or nurseries and things like that wasn't
22 involved. But obviously I wasn't getting fed right and
23 I believe I got took into care because I had
24 malnutrition and I had scabies and things like that and
25 I was put into two separate homes. I'm not sure where

1 these homes were. I was still quite young; this would
2 be before I was six.

3 The only thing I remember is being put in a cot for
4 the first time and I was bamboozled with this. It was
5 like a jail pen for me, I was just like a wee caged
6 animal. I climbed out and locked myself out.

7 I remember that at a very young age.

8 Q. After these two experiences did you go back to your
9 mother?

10 A. No, I never went back to my mother. [REDACTED]

11 [REDACTED]
12 [REDACTED]
13 [REDACTED]
14 [REDACTED]
15 [REDACTED]
16 [REDACTED]
17 [REDACTED]
18 [REDACTED]

19 Q. Indeed, going to Lanark is when you went to Smyllum?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. We know from the admission records for Smyllum that you
22 were admitted to Smyllum on [REDACTED] 1961.

23 A. Right. I thought it was 1960. Sorry, I got my dates
24 wrong.

25 Q. That sort of date would make you about aged 6. I think

1 you said you thought you were about 6 when you were
2 admitted.

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Just running ahead a little bit, according to the
5 records we have, you left Smyllum on [REDACTED] 1967, so
6 aged about 11; is that about right?

7 A. That would be about right, 11.

8 Q. So you were there over five years?

9 A. It was nearer six years.

10 Q. Can I take you to your first recollection of Smyllum,
11 George. Can you tell me what that is?

12 A. I remember the journey to Smyllum and it was in a car
13 and it was a long journey. I didn't know where I was
14 going, nobody told you where you were going, [REDACTED]
15 [REDACTED] So we
16 eventually got to Smyllum. As you drive into Smyllum
17 you see this big imposing building, it was like a castle
18 with turrets and things like that, so I was quite -- as
19 a wee kid, I was quite excited. I thought it was going
20 to be a lot of fun here, you could go out and play, play
21 knights or Robin Hood or something, that's just how kids
22 were thinking, that's just what goes through your head.

23 We arrived at Smyllum, and there were two big doors
24 and they took you out the car to the big doors and they
25 told me I had to go and sit -- I think it was the

1 left-hand side. I'm not really sure, but they told me
2 I had to go and sit and there was a bench across a wall
3 and I was to sit there and there was a nun sitting
4 across on another bench and I take it it was the social
5 workers went to speak to whoever they were speaking to
6 and that was my first introduction to Smyllum.

7 Q. Did something happen at that point between yourself and
8 the nun?

9 A. Yes, well, we were sitting there maybe five minutes, not
10 saying a word to me, and I says, I need the toilet, and
11 she says, what do you need? Forgive me for saying this,
12 but I says, "I need a shite", if you'll pardon that, and
13 the nun just came across and hit me across the face and
14 says, "You don't say that in here". I says, "What do
15 I say?" She says, "You need a number one or a number
16 two", and I says, "What's what?" Because you know
17 nobody had ever said anything like that to me. I found
18 out what number one and number two was and I never used
19 that word again.

20 Q. [REDACTED]

21 A. [REDACTED] when the nun hit me, it was
22 quite surreal because this was a nun, you know. You'd
23 see them in the streets in Glasgow and you would have
24 thought they were holy people and things like that, so
25 for somebody to hit you, that was quite --

- 1 Q. Were you taken aback?
- 2 A. Very, very much so. [REDACTED]
- 3 [REDACTED]
- 4 [REDACTED]
- 5 [REDACTED]
- 6 [REDACTED]
- 7 [REDACTED]
- 8 [REDACTED] I was
- 9 took away to where I was to go, to the dormitories.
- 10 Q. You were taken to a particular dormitory; is that
- 11 correct?
- 12 A. Yes.
- 13 Q. Did this area or the dormitory itself have a particular
- 14 name?
- 15 A. I'm sorry, if it did, I don't remember it. It was all
- 16 boys that was in the dormitory anyway.
- 17 Q. Was it a particular age group then? You were 6 at the
- 18 time.
- 19 A. I would say it was young. I would say it was from 8 to
- 20 maybe no more than 9, I don't think.
- 21 Q. So from about 6 to 9?
- 22 A. I would think so, yes.
- 23 Q. That first night in the dormitory, you do tell us
- 24 a little bit about that.
- 25 A. It was terrifying. It was very, very strange, very,

1 very frightened. You didn't know anybody. You weren't
2 allowed to talk because if you talked you were shouted
3 at and eventually you were getting hit. You were lying
4 there with the sheet over your head, sort of thing, and
5 then you would hear kids crying during night. I was
6 crying myself during that night. Somewhere through
7 night there was a big sort of noise or thing so you were
8 looking and the Sister has come out and she's shouting
9 and bawling at this one kid at a particular time and
10 shouting and bawling and dragged the kid out the bed
11 and, "You have wet the bed again, you know what happens
12 when you wet the bed", and they took the sheet off the
13 bed and put it over the kid's head and he was standing
14 at the end of the bed with the sheet and, "You'll stand
15 there until I decide when you can go back to bed". She
16 made enough noise that everybody in the dormitory knew
17 what was happening. Nobody run, nobody moved a muscle.

18 Q. That was during the night itself?

19 A. That would be during the night, I don't know what time
20 during night. It was terrifying. It is bad enough you
21 are sort of sleeping edgy sleep anyway, so to be woke up
22 like that was quite frightening.

23 Q. Was this particular boy you just mentioned, was he
24 struck by the Sister?

25 A. No, he was just crying the boy. He had obviously wet

1 the bed before so I think he knew what was going to
2 happen, so he was just standing there with this soaking
3 sheet over his head.

4 Q. Can I just look at the position generally with regard to
5 mornings then when the morning came. Including the
6 first morning and also mornings beyond that when you
7 were within this dormitory, what was the position with
8 regard to bed-wetting?

9 A. Well, the bed-wetting -- they used to make the boys
10 stand -- I don't know how long they stood for and then
11 they would come back in and say they could get back into
12 bed, so they would just put the kid back into the same
13 bed. The next morning, everybody got up and it was
14 early in the morning, I don't really know what time, but
15 the first thing they done was a bed inspection to see
16 who had wet them. There was more than one person who
17 had wet it and they had sort of wet the bed. The ones
18 who had wet the bed, they were dragged out of the bed.
19 Some of them were getting hit, some of them weren't,
20 they were told to rip off the sheets and put them at the
21 bottom of the bed.

22 After that everybody had to go and get washed. It
23 was a sort of communal wash place. You had to stand in
24 queue to get washed and brush your teeth.

25 Q. But in relation to the bed-wetters then, in relation to

1 the sheets, did anything happen about the sheets so far
2 as you can remember?

3 A. The sheets were usually ripped off and were at the
4 bottom of the bed. They were probably collected and
5 were washed or something like that. As I found out, my
6 actually sister worked in the laundry so maybe they went
7 to her and she was washing them.

8 Q. When you saw this bed-wetting process for the first
9 time --

10 A. Oof.

11 Q. -- and it was an ongoing process, what was your
12 thinking?

13 A. You were terrified in case you wet the bed. That's the
14 first thing. You were terrified to wet the bed and you
15 were terrified to get out of the bed and go to the
16 toilet in case the nun saw you because she would just
17 shout at you or something -- there was something very
18 scary about them. They grabbed -- as I say, I had seen
19 -- in those days the nuns used to have the big white hat
20 things and they came down over their face and then they
21 had the habit, so all you saw was their face.

22 So once I got to go to the toilet and the nun came
23 out and she never had this thing on and she had long
24 hair and I had the fright of my life; I thought all nuns
25 were baldy. And when I saw this, that scared me even

1 more, so I don't think I ever went to the toilet at
2 night again.

3 Q. Can I move on and look at other aspects of life at
4 Smyllum. Can I ask you about the food.

5 A. The food was disgusting. Absolutely -- the first time
6 we went -- that morning I think we got porridge and it
7 was porridge, lumpy porridge. It was just vile.

8 Q. Were you able to eat it?

9 A. You had to eat it, you didn't have a choice. If you
10 didn't eat it, as you were getting older, you would get
11 a bit flier with things, you would maybe got a cloth and
12 put it in your pocket and then you would get rid of it
13 when you went out, but then you had to eat it.

14 Q. When you say you had to eat it, can you explain why you
15 had to eat it?

16 A. Because the nuns made you eat it. People were starving
17 in the world and you are refusing your food, good
18 food --

19 Q. If you didn't eat it?

20 A. Well, you would have to eat it. There was no -- there
21 wasn't a choice. That happened to me a couple of times
22 at dinner times. A lot of the food I couldn't eat and
23 if I didn't eat it at that meal, it would be that meal
24 at suppertime, and they would try to make you eat it as
25 well. A lot of the time you were actually vomiting, it

1 was so disgusting. But I don't know how many times
2 I had food in my pocket and took it out of the -- I was
3 going to say restaurant, but out of the --

4 Q. Out of the dining hall?

5 A. The dining hall, yes.

6 Q. As far as dining was concerned, did the boys have their
7 own dining hall separate from the girls?

8 A. Yes, we hardly saw the girls. [REDACTED]

9 [REDACTED]

10 [REDACTED]

11 [REDACTED]

12 Q. And school? We understand there was a school --

13 A. There was a school.

14 Q. -- on the premises?

15 A. Yes, there was a school on the premises, so I take it
16 that would have been a primary school. I didn't realise
17 it but I'm dyslexic and a lot of the things I couldn't
18 understand and so the teacher would be -- sometimes it
19 be would a nun, sometimes it would be civilian teacher
20 or a helper, I take it to be, and I just wasn't picking
21 up a lot of things, my arithmetic, my spelling, my
22 writing was atrocious. But for some reason I could read
23 quite well but I don't understand how I could not do the
24 other three subjects very well but in these class I was
25 classed as the dunce. If you couldn't do it the teacher

1 would make you stand in the corner and just be there for
2 the lesson.

3 So what you would do, as time went on, you would
4 make a nuisance of yourself, be cheeky or something like
5 that and then they would put you out in the hall, where
6 at least you could sit on the floor in the hall rather
7 than stand in the corner all the time. That happened
8 most days.

9 Q. You tell us in your statement there was quite a lot of
10 religious instruction.

11 A. Religious -- although I was Catholic, I could not
12 honestly remember being at chapel when I was young. But
13 religious was foremost -- religious and then discipline.
14 If there was a hallowed obligation, you were at Mass
15 first thing in the morning before breakfast. Sunday you
16 were at Mass before breakfast. Benediction, whenever
17 there were any benedictions, you were going to that at
18 night. Just -- religion was the mainstay.

19 Q. You mention something in your statement about
20 something -- a gift that relatives in Canada had sent
21 you.

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. What was that about?

24 A. My dad, he came to see me maybe two or three teams in
25 all the time I was in. Nine times out of ten he would

1 have a drink in him and he would take you down the town
2 and spend money on you, buy you comics, toys and
3 sweeties. He told me that my Aunty [REDACTED] from Canada had
4 sent over silver dollars for birthdays and things like
5 that. He said the nuns should have them and they should
6 be in your possessions. But I didn't know what a silver
7 dollar was and so I never thought anything more of it.
8 It wasn't until I got out of the home and my dad said,
9 did you get your possessions when you left, and I said,
10 no, I got a wee suitcase with clothes and things,
11 I never got any money or anything like that. He says
12 there was quite a -- I put a pocket watch in for you as
13 well. I said I never seen that either.

14 Q. The things your father gave you when you went out with
15 him, what happened to these when you went back to
16 Smyllum?

17 A. Well, a lot of the time -- when I first went back, you
18 were given them and the nuns took them off you, the
19 sweets and that, and said we will share them out with
20 all the kids, which was okay, but I had my own wee
21 friends and I would have shared them out with them
22 rather than the other kids. Whether it was right or
23 wrong, I thought it was my stuff and I could do that.
24 But that wasn't happening, so whenever he came to see me
25 and gave me anything, I would plank it, and then

1 whatever sweeties I had I would share with my friends.

2 Q. Birthdays and Christmas, can you remember your birthdays
3 at Smyllum?

4 A. Nothing special. Maybe the kids would sing happy
5 birthday to you, but it was just another day really.
6 There was no fuss or anything.

7 As for Christmas, Christmas was and still is a very
8 sad time for me. It's just -- there was no love, there
9 was no affection. There was plenty of religion going to
10 chapel and things like that, which we quite enjoyed
11 because of the Nativity, and things like that. We would
12 do a pantomime thing and the kids would all get together
13 and rehearse pantomimes and things like that. So you
14 had wee things to do at Christmas, but Christmas Day
15 itself was just like a normal day, except maybe you got
16 to see the television a wee bit longer.

17 Q. I think there was some sort of arrangement whereby you
18 might go and stay with another family.

19 A. Sometimes, when I was a wee bit older, they would put
20 you out to families. I have no idea where they stayed,
21 but you would be there for a couple of days usually.
22 And that was really weird because you were put in
23 a family environment with the family that was there.
24 There would be maybe a boy and a girl or two boys and
25 a girl and the mother and father, and that was

1 completely alien to you because you are not used to it
2 so it was a very upsetting time. They were trying their
3 best to make you feel welcome, but you knew this wasn't
4 real and you were going to have to leave anyway and go
5 back to Smyllum, to reality sort of thing. So it played
6 with your head quite a bit.

7 Q. You have told us, I think, that your father did visit
8 you at Smyllum.

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. How regular was that?

11 A. If he visited four times in the six years, I would be
12 quite amazed if it was four times.

13 Q. And your mother, did she visit?

14 A. My mother came once, I remember, but she took ill and
15 they had to get a ambulance for my mother. I don't know
16 what happened after that. Nobody told me. I don't
17 think it was the drink this time because, as I say, she
18 had a lot of ill health.

19 Q. Do you remember if anyone that we might call like
20 a social worker came to see you?

21 A. No, no, I don't remember speaking to anybody.

22 Q. Can I ask you a little bit about bathing and what
23 happened at bath times, because you do tell us a little
24 bit about that in your statement.

25 A. Well bath times were sort of -- I'm trying to think of

1 if it was once a week or something like that you would
2 get. But it is all boys together so we are all standing
3 just waiting to get in the bath. Sometimes it would be
4 two at a time. It all depends what time you got in, if
5 the water was going to be warm, it was going to be cold.
6 So it was just your luck what one you got, but it wasn't
7 a bath as such, it was just giving yourself a splash
8 about and out again and then you would get a towel and
9 just sharing the towels that were there.

10 Q. Let's focus a little bit more on what abuse you say that
11 you suffered at Smyllum.

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Can I just look at that generally. Can you give us
14 a general understanding as to what happened to you over
15 this period of time --

16 A. Well, the first --

17 Q. -- focusing on the nuns first?

18 A. Well, the first thing was -- the first time I was hit
19 was when I told you when I had come in the home. Then
20 seeing what happened to the wee boy the first night,
21 with wetting the bed, it was just a very, very
22 intimidating environment. Because if you didn't do
23 anything quick enough, if you didn't do anything the way
24 they wanted it, if you spoke out of turn, if you spoke
25 when you weren't supposed to speak, you would get a slap

1 round the head, you would get your ears pulled fairly
2 regular and dragged along to wherever they wanted you to
3 go.

4 Slaps and kicks were everyday things if you had done
5 anything wrong. You tried your best to stay out of the
6 road of them, which was near impossible to do, but
7 that's what we tried to do.

8 Q. Was anything used on you, any particular implement?

9 A. Yes. Nine times out of ten it would be a sort of
10 hairbrush and a bit of -- I would say just a bit of
11 wood, it was a big long ruler. They would just hit you.
12 The back of your legs was a favourite bit for hitting
13 you. If their hands weren't doing it, the brush would
14 hit you. They would hit you on the head, they would hit
15 you on the back because you were usually trying to run
16 away from it at the time.

17 I ran away from Smyllum a few times. The first time
18 I ran away I didn't get very far and I got caught, I got
19 quite a severe beating.

20 Q. Who from?

21 A. Pardon?

22 Q. Who gave you the severe beating?

23 A. The nun, but I couldn't tell you the nun -- there are
24 two nuns' names that stick in my head and, I'm sorry,
25 before I started this I should have stated that not all

1 the nuns were bad in this place and I have stated that
2 to everybody I have spoke to, but the ones that were bad
3 were really bad.

4 But the two nuns' names were Sister [REDACTED] and
5 Sister [REDACTED] EAC Those two nun's names are in my head,
6 but I can't honestly say if it was because they were
7 good to me or they bad to me. Those are the only two
8 nuns I can remember.

9 Q. You had moved on to tell us about the first time you ran
10 away.

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. When you were brought back or caught, what happened to
13 you?

14 A. Well, they took me into a sort of a -- it was like
15 a study. You were took into the study and, "What do you
16 think you were doing?" And you are still only a wee boy
17 at the time and you are scared and you say, I was just
18 wanting to go home. "You have not got a home, you have
19 not got a mum and dad, where were you going to?" I said
20 I was going home, going to my mum and dad's. "You have
21 not got a mum and dad, you are in here." And then they
22 would just start hitting you: "if you do this again, if
23 you try to run away, you will be getting a more severe
24 punishment". They never classed it as hitting, they
25 classed it as punishment.

1 Q. How many nuns were involved on this first occasion?

2 A. On this first occasion was just one.

3 Q. Hitting you -- what was involved in that; can you help?

4 A. That was with the brush. It was like a brush you would

5 brush your clothes with: a wooden brush on the one side

6 and a wooden handle and a hard back.

7 Q. Which part was being used on you?

8 A. The hard back, that was given.

9 Q. Where were you being hit?

10 A. Because I ran away.

11 Q. Where were you being hit?

12 A. The head, the back, anywhere they could hit me, because

13 I wasn't standing there getting hit, I was trying to

14 move all the time. She is grabbing you by the hair or

15 grabbing you by the ear, wherever she could hit you at

16 that time, that's where you got. You learned to try and

17 dodge blows quite a lot.

18 Q. What age were you at that time, on that first occasion.

19 A. I don't think any more than seven. I don't think I was

20 any more than seven.

21 Q. You ran away again; is that right?

22 A. I ran away a couple of times. I ran away a second time.

23 A couple of boys ran away with me. To this day I still

24 don't understand because my idea was if you ran away,

25 you went to the railway tracks, you followed the railway

1 tracks to take you to Glasgow. What I was going to do
2 when I got to Glasgow, I didn't know have a clue, but
3 that was my mindset, just to follow the railway tracks,
4 so we were heading for the railway.

5 We never made it to the railway the second time. We
6 were dragged back again and we were all beaten up. This
7 time I think there were two nuns involved in this one.
8 Again, I says, "It was me who ran away, it was me who
9 suggested it", so I get beaten up for that and the boys,
10 they get hit as well.

11 Q. Can you remember which nuns were involved in this?

12 A. Again I don't -- I apologise for this, but my
13 recognition of nuns' names is ridiculously bad.

14 Q. But what happened? Just looking at the beating that you
15 got on this occasion, what was done to you?

16 A. Well, the same again. They just hit you because you had
17 ran away, you had the cheek to try and escape. And as
18 I say, they didn't class this as hitting, this was
19 a punishment for doing that: "If you didn't run away,
20 you would not be getting punished". But you would have
21 been punished for something else anyway.

22 Q. Was there any implement being used on this occasion, do
23 you remember?

24 A. Very rarely -- if I had done something severe as that,
25 it was very rare you would get hit with a hand; it was

1 always with some sort of weapon or something in their
2 had.

3 The third time was the worst beating I got --

4 Q. Before I come to that, can I just ask you: on this
5 second occasion, why did you run away?

6 A. I hated the place. It was the food, the fear, not
7 seeing my sister, not -- there was no -- you could not
8 go to a nun and cry or try and get affection off of
9 them. I don't ever remember getting a hug or getting
10 any sort of response off a nun. Everything was
11 discipline or, "Do it now" or "Do it quicker" or "Don't
12 speak" or "Don't do this" and it was just to get away
13 from all that.

14 Q. Then, the third occasion then we were about to move on
15 to --

16 A. I think quite a few of us -- I think it was six or seven
17 of us -- went this time and we got quite far. We
18 followed the railway tracks and then the police came and
19 they stopped and they had searchlights on. We were all
20 hiding in bushes and eventually they caught us and took
21 us back in the police cars. But this time the Mother
22 Superior was there and we got really -- in front of the
23 police, we got quite chastised. We never got hit in
24 front of the police.

25 The police went away and then they took us to this

1 room again and there was very little said, it was just
2 a matter of hitting you. This was probably the worst
3 one I got off them for it.

4 Q. How many nuns were involved in this?

5 A. The two again, the Mother Superior was there when the
6 police came, but she was not involved in any of this
7 carry on.

8 Q. Can you remember the names of the nuns involved in this?

9 A. No, it was the same two nuns that had done the beating
10 for the second time.

11 Q. What happened then? Can you give me some information on
12 that?

13 A. They said, "You didn't learn a lesson, you are never
14 going to learn a lesson, we will teach you a lesson".
15 They started proceeding to hit you with the same thing
16 again. It was funny to say this then, because you are
17 running around this table and one is that end and one is
18 that end, and you are trying to dodge them and they are
19 trying to hit you with this brush. And eventually
20 they'd get you and they'd beat you as much as they
21 wanted to. You can't stop them.

22 Q. Was it just the brush that was being used? Anything
23 else?

24 A. No, they were kicking you as well. They would grab you
25 -- anything they could grab, because as I say you are

1 trying to run away and they are trying to stop you
2 running away. There was punches, kicks, but the brush
3 was the main thing for hitting you with.

4 Q. You do tell us in your statement that sometimes you were
5 sent to the priest if you had done something wrong.

6 A. Well, I got sent to the priest after the second time
7 I ran away. The priest was a terrifying -- they were
8 scared of the priest just because he was a father
9 figure, sort of thing. The priest would say, right --
10 he would call me George -- he would say, "Why are you
11 doing this, George, why are you running away?" and you
12 would try to explain to the priest the school things.
13 "I'm at school, Father, and I don't understand how I am
14 not doing well. They keep putting me in the dunce's
15 corner, I don't like that everybody laughs at you.
16 That's why I run away. The food is terrible." Just
17 everything. But the priest says, but you don't know how
18 lucky you are to be in here, you have got people to look
19 after you -- and I think he actually used the words
20 "love you" -- and you are sitting there saying to
21 yourself, no, they don't, and you would just listen to
22 the priest because you were really quite intimidated,
23 not because he was going to hit you or anything, just
24 for being the priest.

25 Q. Did a priest hit you at any point?

- 1 A. No.
- 2 Q. You tell us in your statement --
- 3 A. I tell a lie, the priest -- if he came to see you, he
4 would give you a kick in the bum or something like that,
5 but nothing like the nuns, just as a goodbye, he would
6 give you a kick, maybe it was his idea of a joke.
- 7 LADY SMITH: Where would he kick you on your body?
- 8 A. Just as he was going by --
- 9 LADY SMITH: No, where on your body --
- 10 A. Up the bum, just as a goodbye.
- 11 LADY SMITH: That is supposed to be a joke?
- 12 A. He would class it as a joke. It would keep you on your
13 toes I think, "Go faster".
- 14 LADY SMITH: Right.
- 15 MR MacAULAY: One thing you tell us in your statement,
16 although you have been telling us about what you call --
17 refer to as beatings from nuns, you never actually got
18 the belt.
- 19 A. No, I never saw a belt. This was the first time I seen
20 a belt was when I went to school outside of Smyllum.
- 21 Q. To be clear, the nuns' names that you can remember: you
22 mentioned Sister **EAC** what was the other name you
23 mentioned?
- 24 A. **[REDACTED]**, I believe.
- 25 Q. **BAA** ?

- 1 A. BAA .
- 2 Q. I think you tell us in your statement it is BAA
- 3 A. Sorry, I apologise.
- 4 Q. Leaving aside the running aways and what happened to you
5 then, just looking at life on a day-to-day basis during
6 your period of five or so years at Smyllum, were these
7 physical attacks, if I can call them that, a regular
8 occurrence for you?
- 9 A. Yes. If you woke up in the morning from the night
10 before you didn't know if somebody had wet the bed again
11 and you were going to go through all that carry-on.
12 Sometimes it was two or three people who wet the bed and
13 they were all made to stand and do that. That seemed to
14 be -- I don't know if it was trying to be a deterrent,
15 putting this sheet over the kids so that other kids
16 wouldn't do the same thing. Because we were all
17 terrified. Every one of us were terrified in there and
18 we were scared we were going to get pulled out for
19 something.
- 20 Q. But on a daily basis --
- 21 A. That was on a nightly basis. On a daily basis you would
22 wake up in the morning, you would have to go through
23 going to the bathroom, getting washed and things like
24 that. If you were not going to Mass, you would go to
25 breakfast. It wasn't something you looked forward to.

1 And then from breakfast you would get ready and go to
2 school, if there wasn't a Mass.

3 Then you would go to school and I had to go through
4 the same procedure with school with my learning
5 difficulties. No teacher took you aside and says,
6 "right, what seems to be the problem here?" And if they
7 did take me aside, I would try and explain it's just not
8 making any sense to me at all. At that time it wouldn't
9 have made any sense to the teachers, they'd probably
10 think I was just lazy or didn't want to learn. It was
11 neither; it was just I couldn't understand what was
12 required of me.

13 Q. You said a little while ago that when the priest spoke
14 to you he called you George.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. What about when the nuns spoke to you?

17 A. Sometimes they did. They didn't call you names at all,
18 it was usually -- if they called you, it would be
19 George, but the priest would speak to you as a father
20 would speak to his son like George. It was not harsh or
21 anything like that, but when the nuns used your name,
22 you would just go like that, it would just be fear and
23 "What have I done now?"

24 Q. Can I mention someone by the name of [REDACTED] BAC

25 I think you had some involvement with [REDACTED] BAC

1 during your time at Smyllum; is that right?

2 A. It galls me to mention the man's name. Yes, it did. It
3 was a horrible experience.

4 Q. Were you really in contact with him because you were
5 a good singer, because you tell us that, or was it
6 just --

7 A. He was the [REDACTED] in Smyllum. I think he was classed
8 as a [REDACTED] He was always about the place. We had
9 this sort of hall where we would rehearse for pantomimes
10 before Christmas and because I was supposed to be not
11 a bad singer they would give me a lead part or something
12 like that, so we would be in there rehearsing and that
13 was usually -- you would get away with maybe about half
14 an hour or 40 minutes before anybody would come in and
15 see. They were running about crazy. It was a carry on
16 and what have you.

17 So my father had brought me this radio. It was
18 a box radio and we had it on and I remember distinctly
19 Cliff Richard was on and we were all dancing and
20 carrying on and he came in, [REDACTED] BAC [REDACTED] what he was
21 doing there I don't know, unless he was there to maybe
22 fix some of the scenery or something like that. But he
23 just came in and turned the radio off and said, "That's
24 rubbish". I said, "Who is rubbish?" He says,
25 "Cliff Richard". I said, "Who do you like?" and he said

1 Andy Stewart and we all burst out laughing. I said,
2 "Andy Stewart? He's rubbish". He just flipped. He
3 just picked up my radio and he just smashed it and then
4 I don't know if I says or done something to him, but he
5 started laying into me with his fists and he gave me
6 a beating I have never had since off any man.

7 Q. What did he use?

8 A. He used his fists. He was dragging me about the place.
9 I don't remember trying to hit him because it would have
10 been a waste of time me trying to hurt a man that size.
11 But he dragged me down and eventually I fell on the
12 ground and then he started kicking me and I don't know
13 how long this went on for but I must have lost
14 consciousness because after that everything is
15 a complete and utter blur.

16 I woke up and in a sort of bed away from the other
17 kids. It was like a medical ward within the home which
18 I never knew existed. I was in there for -- it must
19 have been over a fortnight. I was bruised from top to
20 bottom. Nuns would come in and see you and they were
21 a wee bit nicer than usual and I just -- I was just
22 completely gobsmacked with that. I couldn't understand
23 it.

24 Q. The Mother Superior, I think, came to see you, did she?

25 A. Yes, I remember she came to see me and she was trying to

1 say stuff that I had antagonised -- they called him
2 [REDACTED] BAC -- I'll say [REDACTED] BAC, I don't want to speak it,
3 I detest using the man's name. But they said I had
4 antagonised him and I am too young and stupid to know
5 what the nun's actually saying. The nun started putting
6 words in my mouth and I may have agreed with her,
7 I might have said, yes, whatever, just to try and get it
8 finished with.

9 Q. What age were you at that time?

10 A. I think I would be about 8, maybe 9.

11 Q. So this was a grown man that had inflicted a sustained
12 attack on you?

13 A. Very much so. It was bad enough with the punches, but
14 when you are down and he is kicking you, and you are
15 just trying to go into a ball or something like that to
16 stop it. But in between these times, when I was in the
17 infirmary within the home, [REDACTED] came to see
18 me. [REDACTED] visited very regularly.

19 Q. [REDACTED]

20 A. [REDACTED]

21 [REDACTED] For him to come all the
22 way from Glasgow -- he was just a labourer, he didn't
23 have a lot of money -- he came at least three times,
24 four times a year to see me. So he came to see me and
25 the nuns says you can't see -- I didn't know this, [REDACTED]

1 told me this -- "You can't see George, he is not well".
2 ██████ said, "What's the matter?" They said -- I think
3 they said he had the measles or something like that so
4 you could not be in touch with him, so he said, "Okay,
5 can you tell George I was up to see him", and he left
6 some sweeties and that. I never knew about this until
7 it was a month later, maybe five weeks later, and we
8 were out playing and I had seen a guy walking up the
9 lane and I thought it was ██████ BAC ██████ again and
10 I actually went to run away to cry and hide. And I was
11 running away, ██████ was shouting at me, "George!
12 George!" and I recognised his voice and when I seen him,
13 I just burst out crying and he'd seen the bruises on me
14 and that's what happened and I told him, and he just
15 went ballistic.

16 He says, "Right, come on", and he took us right
17 round to the front doors where I was took in the first
18 day I arrived demanding to speak to the Sister Superior.
19 There was other nuns there and ██████ was very aggressive
20 and very angry and they eventually Sister Superior come
21 out and he says, "Why did you tell me ██████ was ill
22 when he wasn't, he had been beat up?" "You don't know
23 the facts Mr ██████ blah, blah, blah". ██████ was
24 getting angrier and angrier and she says, "If you don't
25 stop this, I'm going to phone the police". And ██████

1 said, "Please phone the police, get the police here,
2 I want this sorted, I want to see this guy who beat up
3 ██████████ . Whatever happened, ██████████ had to leave and
4 we never got the police involved.

5 Q. That was one of the questions I was going to ask you:
6 this was never reported to the police by anybody as far
7 as you know?

8 A. No. ██████████ never even reported it. ██████████ was actually
9 wanting to see the guy ██████████ BAC ██████████ and to sort it out
10 himself because he was so angry that he had done that ██████████

11 ██████████
12 Q. But in any event, did ██████████ BAC ██████████ ever hit you again
13 after that?

14 A. No. ██████████ BAC ██████████ -- I don't know if it was them that
15 made a point of it, but he stayed away from me as far as
16 possible. I saw him around but he never approached me,
17 he never spoke to me. I was terrified of him even then.

18 Q. Apart from the episode you have told us about involving
19 ██████████ BAC ██████████ when he did what you say he did to you,
20 had you been in contact with him before that?

21 A. I had seen him about but I had nothing to do with him.
22 There was something sinister and frightening about the
23 man, as were most of the people in there.

24 Being a kid in there you were very, very sceptical
25 of any adult because you didn't know if they were going

1 to be friendly or if they were going to be aggressive
2 towards you.

3 Q. As you got older then within Smyllum, what was the
4 position with regard to --

5 A. As you got older, they moved you out of the dormitory
6 into another sort of dormitory, but these dormitories
7 were then put into partitions. So you had a wee bit of
8 privacy.

9 Q. What age would you be when that move --

10 A. I think I would have been maybe nine, nine and a half
11 maybe. They were treated a wee bit -- a wee bit better.
12 You weren't getting hit as much, that's for sure. The
13 food and everything was just -- it was disgusting. The
14 discipline was still the same but for whatever reason,
15 as you got older, you weren't getting hit as much.
16 I don't know. Maybe it was because the they thought
17 maybe you would remember what was happening to you or
18 you were speaking back, I really don't know.

19 Q. If I take you back to your statement, George, can we
20 turn to page 10. The statement is in front of you. The
21 blacking-out is to protect people's identity.

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. In paragraph 57 what you tell us there is:

24 "That was what Smyllum was all about: the beatings,
25 religious education, and discipline. You had no freedom

1 to do what you wanted."

2 Is that your summary of your life at Smyllum?

3 A. Very much so. It was a horrible, horrible place to be.
4 You had no childhood as such. The only time you ever
5 had any fun is when you were out playing with other
6 kids, out in the fields, and you were yourselves. But
7 sometimes the helpers would be there. I think there
8 were novice nuns I think, that's what they would called,
9 and they would play football with you and have a laugh
10 and a carry on, but that was the only time you ever --
11 once you were back into the building of Smyllum, it was
12 like a big cloud was over you. It was just a horrible,
13 horrible place.

14 Q. You mention then in your statement about this little
15 boy, Sammy Carr or Samuel Carr.

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. You knew him at Smyllum?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Was he a friend of yours?

20 A. He was a friend of ours, we called him Wee Sammy because
21 he was always weer than us. He was just a very likeable
22 wee guy and we were sort of protective of him. **BAC**
23 seemed to take a wee interest in him and I didn't
24 understand that, with Sammy, when we were young.

25 Q. In what way did he take an interest?

1 A. He would take him away places and do -- no, just take
2 him away. We would be playing and he would come and
3 say, "Sammy, you come here", and he would go because he
4 was a lovely wee guy. He was just a wee totie guy.

5 Q. But did you learn at a point in time that Sammy had
6 died?

7 A. That was a shock. The nuns just came out one day, Sammy
8 was there, and the nun came the next day and we were all
9 together and she says, "Sammy died last night, he died
10 with playing with a rat". It was a farm so there was
11 rats and things about, so we never questioned that for
12 a second.

13 Q. Did you see Sammy playing with a rat?

14 A. We all played with rats; it was part of our games. We
15 were chasing each other with rats and things like that.

16 Q. Did you ever catch a rat?

17 A. Yes, you'd catch them by the tail and then throw it and
18 run away from it and things like that. It was just
19 a game, it was just something to entertain us. Nobody
20 told us before about the rats, not to do this with rats.
21 We knew they could bite you so we make sure we never got
22 bit. It was just boys being boys with rats.

23 Q. So when the nun told you that this was linked --

24 A. It seemed logical because the way she told us that Sammy
25 died with a rat, and she explained it was a disease you

1 get off the rat, don't play with rats any more, don't do
2 this any more. Well, at our age it was hard to
3 comprehend that Sammy was actually dead because that was
4 the first dealing with death I had ever had.

5 And then when we went to chapel and Sammy's coffin
6 was there, it was a white coffin. I was trying to get
7 my head round he was actually in the coffin. He was my
8 wee pal and I couldn't understand death, if you
9 understand what I'm trying to say.

10 Q. So there was a funeral though for Sammy at Smyllum?

11 A. Yes --

12 Q. A funeral service?

13 A. There was a funeral but we never got to -- we just seen
14 the coffin. There was a Mass for Sammy.

15 Q. Did you go to the Mass?

16 A. Yes, I think everybody turned out for the Mass, the boys
17 and girls. But after that, that has stuck in my head
18 all these years about the rat. I remember telling my
19 kids when they were young, don't ever play with rats,
20 a wee friend of mine died -- I think you can get --
21 I think it is Weiland's [sic] disease and all sorts of
22 disease, so if you see a rat, get as far as away from it
23 as possible.

24 I have told friends, I have told everybody, and it
25 was a story that stuck in my head all the time. The

1 only reason am here today is because I was watching STV
2 news and there was a gentleman getting going
3 interviewed, by David Cowan I think, the reporter for
4 STV. He was there and the gentleman's back was to the
5 television and I was having my dinner and my wife, [REDACTED]
6 and I heard the word "Smyllum", so your ear sort of
7 pricks up and then he says, "Yes, Sammy and I were
8 playing with matches and he set this rag on fire and
9 this nun came round and caught us and she started
10 beating Sammy really badly, kicking him round the body".

11 My ears pricked right up and I says, "That would be
12 Sammy Carr, that's Sammy". Then the guy says he put his
13 body across Sammy to try and get the nun to stop hitting
14 him he says, but he says after that Sammy was took away,
15 so this is what the guy was saying. I don't know what
16 happened to Sammy after that, but as soon as I heard
17 that I says, "That guy's scared to be to be seen, his
18 back is to the television, why is he scared, why has he
19 not come out and show who he is? I don't think he has
20 got any support". And that's when I says to [REDACTED] "I'm
21 going to have to do something here".

22 Because in all these years I have put Smyllum way,
23 way, way back in the back of my head. It is bad enough
24 I have got to deal with my demons with Smyllum without
25 my wife and my family having to go through it all.

- 1 Q. So that prompted you in any event to --
- 2 A. That is the only reason I am here today. I phoned the
3 reporter up, phoned up STV and found out who it was.
4 I mind that he came to the house with Sammy's [REDACTED].
5 I says because I have got photographs [REDACTED]
6 [REDACTED] and I'm 99.9% sure -- even then I was
7 doubtful if that was Sammy, just very, very slightly.
8 He came and a cameraman came and the [REDACTED] came and she
9 says, "I have never seen photographs of Sammy when he
10 was young, I couldn't tell you if that was Sammy or
11 not". I said, "Well, in my mind I'm 99% sure that's
12 Sammy".
- 13 So the guy took copies of the photographs, we spoke
14 to Sammy's [REDACTED], told him the different things and
15 then they went away and showed the photographs on STV
16 television. Another gentleman phoned up David Cowan,
17 and says, "That's Sammy Ross, I know Sammy, that's who
18 it was". I was glad because, as I say, I was 99% but
19 I wasn't 100% sure it was Sammy, although I knew it
20 myself.
- 21 Q. I think these are photographs you have brought with you
22 today.
- 23 A. I have brought them today.
- 24 Q. We are not going to see them just now but I think we may
25 take copies.

- 1 A. Yes, that's not a problem.
- 2 Q. Can I take you, George, to the time when you came to
3 leave Smyllum?
- 4 A. Yes, but before, can I finish that what I was saying
5 there?
- 6 Q. Yes.
- 7 A. When that happened to Sammy, the thing that went through
8 my head is -- the nuns made a big point of telling us
9 that Sammy died with a rat. They never said infection;
10 they just said with playing with a rat. And then this
11 guy has come out and gave his statement to Mr Cowan.
12 The police sent me the autopsy -- because I spoke to the
13 police and they said the autopsy showed -- I think it
14 was something to do with a brain haemorrhage that
15 happened to Sammy.
- 16 Why would they make up such a blatant lie to us?
17 Because we were kids we would have believed Sammy had
18 fallen and bumped his head, Sammy had done this,
19 whatever they told us.
- 20 To this day -- that's why I made a point of coming
21 out to be one of the survivors because that, to me, is
22 just a blatant lie.
- 23 Q. The Inquiry will be looking at all of this, George, in
24 due course. So you can rest assured about that.
- 25 But can I --

1 A. Sorry, about that.

2 Q. No, don't worry.

3 Can I take you to the time when you came to leave
4 Smyllum. I think we established earlier that you might
5 have been about 11 or so when you came to leave.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. What happened at that time?

8 A. Well it was quite weird because you never got any
9 forewarning that you were going -- [REDACTED]

10

11 [REDACTED] So you never -- they just came and told you you
12 were going to go [REDACTED] and I thought it was [REDACTED]

13 [REDACTED] I was going to, but it ended up it was

14 [REDACTED] I was going to stay with. Because

15 [REDACTED] had been trying for years to get custody of me to
16 get me out of the home but because he was a single guy
17 they would not let him take me out. But [REDACTED] was
18 married, so they took me out of the home.

19 It was just a suitcase and down the train station,
20 put on the train, and [REDACTED] would meet you at
21 then other end at Central station. It was bonkers
22 because that was a different world. When I got off at
23 Central station, it was like you were in New York --
24 because from such a wee village from Lanark to go to
25 Central station was, like, mindboggling.

1 Q. But you were met, I think, by [REDACTED]
2 [REDACTED] ?
3 A. No, [REDACTED].
4 Q. And you stayed with [REDACTED] ?
5 A. Yes.
6 Q. Did you go back to visit Smyllum?
7 A. You do. It is crazy, you sort of are institutionalised
8 because the one thing they taught you in Lanark was
9 manners and you had a Lanarkshire accent, so you are
10 quite a well-spoken wee boy and in Glasgow it was all
11 the Glasgow slang and things like that and to try and
12 adapt from where I was into Glasgow life was very, very
13 hard. So, I would get the train and just go back to
14 Lanark to see my friends.
15 I just done it the once. I went back and seen them
16 and it was great to see them but as soon as I got to
17 Lanark, as soon as I was walking down the long lane from
18 the bus station or the train station to Lanark -- it is
19 a horrible horrible feeling. It is just -- it is like
20 doom and gloom. It was great to see my friends but
21 I couldn't even stay long because I had to come out of
22 it and I never of went back until I got took through by
23 David Cowan and things like that to look at the place.
24 Q. You tell us also that for some time at least you never
25 discussed with anyone what had happened at Smyllum.

1 A. No. It is a weird thing to say. It is as if it is your
2 fault that you were put in there and that you were
3 getting beaten up because you probably deserved it. It
4 is a -- I have not got the words to say what it really
5 means. But all I would say is you are sort of
6 institutionalised and you just try and forget about it
7 as best you can.

8 You don't realise in later life how angry you are
9 with life in general. I got into trouble and it was
10 later on and things like that and it was just
11 an accumulation of things that got to me.

12 Q. You tell us in your statement, you are quite candid
13 about this, that you did get to trouble with the police.

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. I think you spent some time in borstal as well.

16 A. I ended up going to borstal when I was young, yes.

17 Q. But not long after you left borstal, you met your wife?

18 A. Yes. [REDACTED] was my saving grace. I don't tell her often
19 enough, but she was.

20 Q. You think you tell us that you were kept on the straight
21 and narrow and you were married at the age of 19,
22 I think.

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. But what about impact? Can you say what impact life at
25 Smyllum may have had on you then?

1 A. Well, you had no -- you had no childhood as such, as
2 other people say. That's why Christmas is very, very --
3 I have got six grandkids and I love Christmas, being
4 with them and all the rest of it, but I get very sad
5 moments myself. Not just for myself but when I think of
6 the kids that were in Smyllum, all those years and at
7 all those Christmases, and it is just so sad. It is
8 really sad when you think what they have had to go
9 through. The bottom line is these people were supposed
10 to be religious people to look after you.

11 Q. Okay.

12 Can I ask you to look at your statement again,
13 George. There is a paragraph I would quite like you to
14 read to the Inquiry. If you could turn to page 14. It
15 is paragraph 83, towards the bottom. Would you mind
16 reading that to the Inquiry. Its headed "Lessons to be
17 learned".

18 A. Yes:

19 "Before a child goes into care, there should be
20 checks carried out on the place they are going to.
21 A child going into care can make or break them. When
22 I was in Smyllum, there was no support and you were
23 broken down."

24 Q. Does that summarise your position?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Can I just put this to you, because some nuns who may
2 have been at Smyllum when you were there have been
3 spoken to by the Inquiry and their position is that
4 children were well cared for, there was kindness and no
5 physical abuse. What's your reaction to that?

6 A. Laughable. I mean -- I don't even think that is a true
7 statement. There were probably children who went
8 through Smyllum who probably didn't get anything done to
9 them. I'm hoping there were children who went through
10 Smyllum and never got anything done to them. But I seen
11 it happen, not just to myself but to so many other kids.
12 That statement, God forgive them, that's all I can say.
13 It is just a blatant, blatant lie.

14 MR MacAULAY: Well thank you, George. These are all the
15 questions I have for you.

16 I haven't received any written questions for George,
17 my Lady. I don't know if there are any questions for
18 him.

19 LADY SMITH: Could I just check whether there are any
20 outstanding applications for questions of this witness?
21 No? All shaking heads.

22 George, thank you so much for coming along this
23 morning to tell us about your experiences of Smyllum.
24 I'm now able to let you go with our thanks.

25 A. Thanks, my Lady.

1 (The witness withdrew)

2 LADY SMITH: Mr MacAulay.

3 MR MacAULAY: My Lady, there is another witness coming to
4 give evidence, probably not until about 11.45, but this
5 would be an opportunity to read in a statement and
6 I would invite my learned junior Ms MacLeod to do that.

7 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

8 So, Ms MacLeod, are we back to one of the earlier
9 readings that was planned for an earlier day this week?

10 MS MACLEOD: This reading was actually planned for today.

11 LADY SMITH: This is today's reading?

12 MS MACLEOD: Yes, it is.

13 LADY SMITH: We have done better than I thought.

14 MS MACLEOD: This is a reading of a witness who wishes to
15 remain anonymous and wishes to be known as "Jean".

16 The witness statement can be found at
17 WIT.001.001.2300.

18 Witness statement of "JEAN" (read)

19 MS MACLEOD: "My name is Jean and I was born in 1950. I'm
20 67 years old. My contact details are known to the
21 Inquiry.

22 "I was born in Stirlingshire. I was the eldest of
23 four children and have two sisters and a younger brother
24 who died [REDACTED]. I have two children [REDACTED]
25 [REDACTED]. I'm no longer married. I'm now retired having

1 previously worked. As a child I stayed opposite the art
2 galleries in Anderston with my mum and dad and brother
3 and sisters. Dad was a [REDACTED] and was on the
4 [REDACTED]. They were young when they got
5 married and he behaved as if it he wasn't married and
6 left the family when I was six. Mum always had various
7 cleaning and retail jobs. She went on to education and
8 gained her degree at Glasgow University.

9 "Prior to going into Bellvue, we had what I would
10 call a normal life. I went to Fortrose nursery and then
11 to Overnewton Primary School. Family life was ordinary
12 and I remember we had a reasonable amount of freedom,
13 especially in the local Kelvingrove Park.

14 "When I was 8 years old my mother ended up in
15 hospital after a massive breakdown and my granny took
16 care of my brother, while me and my sisters were sent to
17 Bellvue Children's Refuge in Rutherglen. I have been
18 led to believe that my aunt and my gran organised it via
19 contacts they had in the Catholic Church.

20 "My only real memory of being with my aunt was
21 visiting her when she worked in the undertakers.

22 I recall asking to go to the toilet and it was at the
23 end of this corridor that was filled with coffins.

24 "I don't actually remember being taken into Bellvue
25 nor do I recall being taken out 8 months later. We went

1 in in [REDACTED] 1958 and left in [REDACTED] that same year.
2 I only found this out when I recovered my school
3 records.

4 "The home was run by the Little Sisters of the Poor
5 of St Vincent de Paul, though they have since changed
6 their name to the Daughters of Charity. I recall that
7 they used to wear those big flyaway hats. I don't
8 recall the names of any of the nuns but for me as
9 an 8-year-old child they were very big and scary and
10 looked like aliens. It was like being in the scariest
11 episode of Dr Who as an 8-year-old child with an
12 8-year-old child's mind.

13 "I don't remember a routine. There obviously must
14 have been one but I just don't recall it. I was
15 immediately separated from my sisters and I very rarely
16 saw them throughout the 8 months I was there. This was
17 never explained to me.

18 "Eight to 10 children slept in dormitories in old
19 hospital type beds. I recall the place always being
20 cold. It was all girls in my dormitory. I have no
21 recollection of any boys being in the home, though there
22 may have been.

23 "I have no recollection of leisure time, though the
24 home had gardens that we may have played in. The
25 problem is that my memory is implicit and I think there

1 are parts of it that won't let me recall a lot of my
2 time in the home. I didn't make any friends while I was
3 in the home because I was more centred on looking after
4 myself and my sisters, though I do recollect plotting
5 with one of the older kids to run away.

6 "The thing I remember about the food was that the
7 nuns made this bread pudding, which was disgusting, and
8 I simply couldn't eat it. If you couldn't eat it, they
9 would put salt on it. The nuns would force you to eat
10 it and if you spat it out, they made you pick it up and
11 put it back in your mouth. I recall sitting for hours
12 with the bread pudding in front of me because I couldn't
13 eat it and wasn't allowed to leave the table.

14 "I went to school at St Columbkille in Rutherglen
15 but I have no memory of this or of any education we
16 received while in the home. The only reason I know
17 I went to that school is because I recovered some of my
18 records from the Mitchell Library. I think we probably
19 walked to school.

20 "The home was always cold. I don't think we wore
21 our own clothes but all I recall is that the wellington
22 boots left big welts at the back of our legs.

23 "I recall being taken round the town in Rutherglen
24 as a group by one of the nuns. They would take us into
25 businesses, more or less begging, and us basically being

1 touted so that the nuns could raise money.

2 "I think there were four or five kids there. I once
3 recall someone stopping us in the street and giving wee
4 poor orphans a box of Fry's Creams, but we never got any
5 of them. However, the more I have thought about that
6 incident, I realise that what actually happened was that
7 the nun took us into a cafe and spoke to the person
8 behind the counter and it was them that gave her the
9 sweets. It was humiliating.

10 "It was the same at Easter time when this giant
11 Easter egg was donated to the refuge. There was a big
12 brouhaha about it being donated but we never saw any of
13 it.

14 "I recall that during the school holidays we were
15 taken to Langbank, which was a similar place. It too
16 was run by nuns, though they were different from the
17 ones at Bellvue. I don't know if all the children went,
18 but I know that me and my sisters did. I remember that
19 the way of life there was easier than at Bellvue.
20 I don't know why and maybe it was just that it was
21 different people.

22 "There was an annual taxi drivers' outing, taking
23 all the children to Troon, but it only happened once
24 during my time there and I wasn't allowed on the trip
25 because I was considered to be rebellious. I was often

1 excluded from participating in activities:

2 "I also recall being taken to the grotto at Carfin
3 and remember it being quite a bright place. Somebody
4 there told us about how the priests used to hide out
5 there and it seemed more like an adventure.

6 "I wasn't in the home at Christmas or on my
7 birthday.

8 "I never got any letters when in Bellvue. I don't
9 know if it was the case that I wasn't allowed visitors
10 or letters. There was one visitor I recall. I was told
11 I had a visitor and when I went into the parlour there
12 was a man there and I threw myself at him, though
13 I don't recall what happened after that. I have no idea
14 who the man was or why he was visiting me.

15 "My sister recalls getting taken out in a car and
16 the woman saying to whoever it was was with her, oh
17 I could just adopt this wee girl and run away with her.
18 My sister remembers thinking, but I have got a mummy, so
19 I really don't know how often children could be taken
20 out or by whom from that place.

21 "I recall getting a TB patch test during my time in
22 Bellvue. The only other medical or dental care
23 I remember was when I decided to run away. My plan was
24 to have a reason to go and see the doctor with
25 something. I thought that I would be able to run away.

1 I stuck a bit of plastic in my gum and they took me to
2 the doctor to get it out. I didn't manage to run away.

3 "Religion was a big thing with the nuns and we were
4 always getting told we would go to hell. We were forced
5 to go to sleep with our arms crossed over our chest and
6 got told if we didn't we would burn in Hell. The nuns
7 checked up on you when you were asleep. If you didn't
8 have your arms crossed over your chest, they would shout
9 at you. I remember waking up one night and seeing this
10 nun hovering over me with her hands up her sleeves. She
11 would also tell us stories about how the saints used to
12 suffer. They were really terrifying. I think we got
13 told these stories in nights. I thought they were like
14 horror films.

15 "There was one particular story about Our Lady of
16 Fatima who was said to have given a letter that was for
17 the Pope to three children, but the letter was not to be
18 opened. It was said the letter spoke of how the world
19 would end if everybody in Russia didn't convert.
20 I found this very upsetting and was crying, but then
21 just got told to get on with things and that my soul was
22 in peril. I didn't even know what a soul was.

23 "I didn't go to church when I was growing up at home
24 so I had no understanding of religion or what it was
25 about. I think I was punished simply because I didn't

1 understand the Catholic religion. I had been christened
2 in the protestant church so the Catholic religion was
3 alien to me.

4 "There was no interaction between the nuns and the
5 children unless you were bad. They weren't interested
6 in you as a human being. All they were interested in
7 was saving your soul. That was their prime objective.
8 I wasn't a Catholic. I was left-handed and deaf in one
9 year so I was already stigmatised when I entered the
10 place. There was no understanding from them of me being
11 there as a traumatised child. The atmosphere was sad.
12 It was like being in a prison.

13 "I wouldn't describe what the nuns did as care.
14 They fed you and that was about it. The place was
15 bleak. There was no emotion, no love or affection.
16 There was only sarcasm and they put you down at every
17 opportunity, telling you that you were hopeless. They
18 were always shouting orders at you rather than speaking
19 to you. Your feelings were completely ignored. You
20 weren't treated as an individual but as a soul to be
21 saved. I didn't understand their standoffishness, their
22 cruelty.

23 "If you answered back or asked questions you got
24 threatened with the cane. For an eight year old the
25 threatened punishment was the cane and the threat of

1 going to Hell. I don't think I ever actually got the
2 cane and didn't see anybody else get hit but the very
3 threat of it meant that the nuns didn't really have to
4 use it. I heard from other kids that they got the cane
5 but I didn't see this.

6 "Other kids also told me that if they found nits in
7 your hair that you would get a stroke of the cane for
8 each nit they found. I didn't even know what nits were.
9 Although I heard about this happening I didn't actually
10 see it and it never happened to me.

11 "I would get into trouble for asking questions like,
12 'Where is my mum? When is she coming for us? Where are
13 my sisters?' I don't think I was unruly. By asking all
14 these questions, however, I was being seen and heard
15 instead of seen but not heard, which is what the nuns
16 wanted.

17 "The punishment for the younger ones, like my
18 sister, was the shoe brush on the back of the hand.
19 Again, I didn't actually see anybody punished this way,
20 but the implied threat was enough to scare the kids into
21 behaving.

22 "I remember I was locked in a dark room several
23 times. This was a small, old Scout hut that I seem
24 recall was in the grounds. I was locked in there simply
25 because I didn't follow their rules. But I didn't know

1 either their rules nor did I understand the language
2 they used. I hadn't been brought up in a care home.

3 "There were two occasions in particular that I can
4 remember being locked in the dark room. One was on
5 Bonfire Night and the other was the day that the rest of
6 the kids went on the annual taxi outing. The fireworks
7 were a treat but being locked in the dark room I was
8 only able to see them out of the window. I don't recall
9 what I had done to be put in the room.

10 "There was there was really only one incident with
11 bed-wetting that I recall and it involved my sister who
12 was only five at the time. I think what happened was
13 that my other sister came into my dorm in a state and
14 told me that the nuns were going to hit my sister for
15 wetting the bed. I ran in and faced up to them and told
16 them they weren't going to hit my wee sister. They
17 didn't punish her, but I got hauled up in front of the
18 Mother Superior and a priest, though my only
19 recollection of that was the Mother Superior and the
20 priest laughed at me.

21 "Even though my sister was only five, she had had
22 the presence of mind to change her sheets in the middle
23 of the night. I think one of the other kids must have
24 told her where to get the fresh sheets.

25 "I think kids who wet their beds had to wash their

1 sheets and were pointed out as bed-wetters and
2 humiliated. The other kids told me about it. I have no
3 recollection of seeing anybody actually punished for
4 wetting their bed. I invoice had problems with
5 bed-wetting myself. I would not see physical
6 punishments as they would be carried out elsewhere, but
7 I did see children being humiliated for bed-wetting.

8 "My mother phoned them up when she was recovered and
9 said she had a place for us to stay. She said she was
10 coming to get us, which she did. There was no formal
11 checks done to see if she was actually my mother. There
12 was no social work involvement and my mum didn't even
13 speak to the Mother Superior. My mum has told me all
14 this.

15 "I don't remember going home or the journey. What
16 I do recall is that the first night we were all sitting
17 on the bed with my mum singing 'Happy Talk' to us. That
18 was just wonderful.

19 "My mum had managed to get a single-end flat. After
20 that we moved. That was just a room and kitchen and
21 then we moved to Easterhouse.

22 "I left school at 15, though I didn't go much after
23 I turned 13 because I was always playing truant. When
24 I went to secondary school, St Gregory's, I was put into
25 an E class which was for people who were not considered

1 to be academic. My brother and sisters were put into
2 high achiever classes. Basically they were preparing me
3 to do things like iron hankies, clean houses and learn
4 how to make toasted cheese.

5 "To me, this confirmed everything that the nuns had
6 said to me: that I was stupid and was never going to
7 amount to anything. This had a big impact on my
8 self-esteem.

9 "I got my first job in Easterhouse when I was 15.
10 I didn't really get on with work as I didn't understand
11 it and I ended up with lots and lots of jobs. I have
12 been a shop assistant, a conductress. I have worked in
13 factories, retail. Basically lots of jobs, but never
14 for very long in any of them.

15 "When I was 30, I went to Langside College and got
16 myself educated and realised that I did have a brain in
17 my head. I did this because my mother, who worked as
18 a volunteer with Citizens' Advice Bureau found out
19 I could get a mature student allowance, which is a lone
20 parent with two children. I could not have done it
21 otherwise.

22 "I managed to get O grades in English and modern
23 studies and then I went to night school and got my
24 Higher English. I then went to college where I got
25 a diploma in youth and community studies.

1 "I haven't reported the abuse at Bellvue because
2 I didn't know how to and my self-esteem was so low I did
3 not have the confidence and thought I would not be
4 believed.

5 "The impact on me has been low self-esteem. My time
6 in the home was dehumanising. It was Hell on earth and
7 it has affected me all my life. I suffer from
8 depression and anxiety. There was no love or
9 understanding and no nurturing. They just destroyed my
10 self-esteem in the 8 months I was in that place. There
11 was a fear every day that you would be caned or
12 humiliated. That fear has never left me. That all came
13 from the attitude of the people who should have been
14 looking after me.

15 "It caused me to underachieve at an early age.
16 I should have been able to get educated at school rather
17 than have to wait until I was 30 before I got
18 a qualification. This was because I was in
19 a low-achieving class. I blame this on my time at
20 Bellvue because they stole my confidence and made me
21 fearful.

22 "My aunty tells me that before I went in there I was
23 an intelligent and clever child who was curious about
24 things and asked questions. When I came out of Bellvue,
25 however, I was very withdrawn and uncommunicative with

1 anybody. This was because I could not express myself,
2 something the nuns never let us do. They had really
3 knocked out of me the ability to ask questions.

4 "To this day I cannot sleep without the light and
5 television on because I'm frightened to go to sleep.
6 I put this down to the nuns forcing me to sleep with my
7 arms across my chest so as to save my soul and stop me
8 going to Hell if I did die in my sleep. Logically,
9 I know it is a lot of rubbish, but it has just stuck
10 with me all my life.

11 "I find it difficult to stick up for myself and lack
12 the confidence to face any sort of conflict head on.
13 Instead, I tend not to confront and I am the one who
14 apologises and backs down instead of having the
15 confidence to stand up for myself. This was right
16 through my life right up to just recently when I had
17 conflict in my work.

18 "After I came out of Bellvue, my first treatment was
19 in the child guidance clinic, though I don't know how
20 long I attended there. Again, it was run by nuns.
21 I don't know if I was there because of my behaviour, but
22 I was always afraid the world was going to end like when
23 the Bay of Pigs was in the news. I was terrified
24 24 hours a day by that for months. I was always
25 overthinking things. I never explained how I felt to

1 anyone and so eventually became withdrawn.

2 "When I split up with my partner in the mid-1970s,
3 I was in a bad way. I lost a lot of weight and was
4 getting very anxious. One day I was changing buses and
5 couldn't move. I got a taxi to my mother's house. She
6 phoned the doctor. I said I was suicidal. I was told
7 'Don't be daft, mothers don't get suicidal'.

8 "They recommended I go to group therapy. I went to
9 the [REDACTED] but as there was a bullying
10 culture there I left. It was a day attendance system.
11 I can't remember if I saw any other counsellors. I was
12 prescribed antidepressants several times but they
13 weren't for me as they made me ill.

14 "I need to find my records to find out what happened
15 to me in that refuge and how my mum was able to simply
16 come and get us with no paperwork. Did anybody actually
17 visit me? Was I tended to by a doctor for my ear
18 condition? It's just basic things that I want to know."

19 "I started looking for my records in the 1980s but
20 it was sporadic. Once my granddaughter reached the age
21 that I was when I entered Bellvue I started looking for
22 the records more seriously. I had contacted the nuns'
23 headquarters in Mill Hill in London in the 1980s.

24 I called them again. At first they said they had
25 records back to 1948 and then they said they had them

1 only back to 1952.

2 "I then got told that there had been a fire and that
3 the records had been destroyed. I called the
4 safeguarder at St Columbkille's chapel and I got told
5 that there had been a flood which destroyed the records.
6 I called the Diocese of Motherwell, which covers the
7 Rutherglen area. They were enthusiastic at first. Then
8 they then turned round and said, 'Sorry, we can't help
9 you'. I phoned the Social Work and St Andrew's
10 Archives, basically everybody I could think of.
11 I emailed and phoned trying to find out more about these
12 records.

13 "I phoned and spoke to a sister who was the
14 safeguarder for Mill Hill. She said she would help me
15 in any way she could. I was getting nowhere, however,
16 and my aunt in London went to Mill Hill. She was shown,
17 but not allowed to touch, a book that was opened at
18 a certain page burnt round the edges. It showed minutes
19 of a meeting in 1948 and all the names had been blanked
20 out. All that was in them was a story about how nice
21 somebody had been to donate money and how nice Christmas
22 had been.

23 "I got back to the Sister and asked her a few
24 questions. Things like, 'Who had funded us? Are any of
25 the nuns still alive? Who took us in? Where are the

1 medical records and was there a punishment book?' she
2 said, 'I will certainly look out for that, Jean'. She
3 eventually sent me a letter that spelt both my name and
4 address wrongly. To me, that is disrespectful. She
5 said she couldn't help me and that she had done this and
6 that. It was misinformation. She repeated that there
7 had been a fire and a flood.

8 "I went to the Mitchell Library and discovered there
9 had indeed been a fire. The place had shut in 1961.
10 The fire had been in St Columbkille's chapel hall in
11 1974. I was told by Father Raymond Breslin, the
12 safeguarder in Motherwell, that there was no way such
13 records would have been stored in the chapel hall. In
14 fact he asked, 'Why would they be in the chapel hall?
15 And why would they be in there that length of time?'

16 "I also found out that the priest who had been in
17 that parish when I was in Bellvue was still alive.
18 I got [REDACTED] from INCSS, who has been a great
19 support to me, to write to Father Breslin to ask if
20 I could meet with this priest, Father Hayes, to ask him
21 about Bellvue. He said that he had nothing to do with
22 the Sisters of Charity and that they were in
23 an autonomous situation.

24 "I thought the Catholic Church was one big
25 organisation, but it turns out that it's more like

1 a franchise. Not so, however, with the Sisters of
2 Charity who are answerable to the Vincentian Priests and
3 to the motherhouse in Paris and ultimately Rome. So
4 they are not autonomous. I asked to meet Father Hayes
5 and I was told that there had been about 12 novitiates
6 at the time and that Father Hayes would not have had
7 anything to do with them, even though he was serving as
8 a priest at St Columbkille's for over ten years. He
9 more or less said, 'No, you cannae meet him'. That was
10 another barrier put up.

11 "According to the transcript of evidence from the
12 phase 1 hearings of the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry,
13 the nuns said that the priests came to say Mass every
14 day in that place, but I only recall seeing a priest
15 there on that one occasion when I was hauled up and they
16 were laughing at me. Every time you ask questions about
17 your time in care, they put barriers up in your way.
18 They are supposed to be co-operating and making life
19 easier for people to help them resolve issues and
20 feelings about having been in care. Looking for my
21 records has been a long drawn-out saga:

22 "I tried phoning Mill Hill again and was told that
23 the Sister I had previously spoken to was no longer
24 there. I contacted their archivist, who got a bit
25 irritated with me and told me I should speak to the new

1 safeguarder. I did but she said she had only been in
2 the job six weeks and though she had my details, she
3 never got back to me. That was about six months ago.

4 "The barriers that are put up are unbelievable to
5 me. There is no record of Bellvue ever existing in the
6 archives of the Catholic Church at St Andrew's House.
7 The whole thing is a great mystery to me and the
8 building is no longer there.

9 "I wanted my records because of the way I feel about
10 my life and how it could have panned out. As a teenager
11 you don't really care. When you've got kids, you're too
12 busy. It was really when my granddaughter reached the
13 age I was when I was put in Bellevue that it became more
14 important to me to find out. That's why I've been
15 dedicated to finding the records, to try and get answers
16 for me.

17 "I got interested in looking for my records in the
18 1980s. I was working in Easterhouse.

19 "I have read the Inquiry's evidence transcript from
20 the nuns and they said the name of the safeguarder at
21 Mill Hill but that is different from the name I have.
22 Also the name of the archivist they gave is different to
23 what I have. They also said that Mill Hill is just
24 a four-bedroomed house that they share with the
25 homeless. It's not. My aunt has been there and says it

1 is a mansion. They are trying to play down the wealth
2 of the Church, or at least the wealth of their Order.
3 Also, they changed their name from the Sisters of
4 charity to Daughters of Charity and they have only been
5 registered as a charity in Scotland for four years. Why
6 did they change their name? And why they have only
7 registered as a charity for the last four years? That
8 makes no sense to me.

9 "It's just inaccurate information and barriers going
10 up. I'm angry. I'm not resentful or wanting revenge,
11 I just want to know what happened to me. It is like
12 a jigsaw puzzle when I'm missing a couple of bits and
13 I need those bits to forget the whole picture.

14 71:

15 "I need to meet with the nun who is still living,
16 according to the transcript, and I need to meet with
17 Father Hayes to ask both their views of the whole thing
18 because the records are inaccurate. Yet the
19 Catholic Church are renowned for keeping very precise
20 records, particularly financial records. I find it
21 suspicious that they are putting barriers up in my way
22 of finding my records. There would certainly have been
23 financial records at Bellvue. Parents had to pay for
24 kids being there. My mother didn't pay for us, so who
25 did?

1 "The nuns said in their evidence that social workers
2 visited and that all the children were very happy.
3 I was one of those children and I wasn't very happy.
4 The social workers who visited were from the Catholic
5 Children's Society, rather than mainstream social
6 workers and I never had contact with them.

7 "I hope the Inquiry shines a very bright light on
8 this particular Order. They ran the Magdalene
9 laundries. The Order had the cheek to apply to run
10 a mother and baby hospital in Dublin this year. This
11 was shot down in flames because a petition went round.
12 They should be asked why they don't do child care any
13 more because it was a big part of their income. They
14 used to have lots of places for kids that they received
15 money for. I want them to stop telling lies and to
16 start being upfront and honest with people and to stop
17 putting barriers up.

18 "I don't want a witch hunt because I believe it's
19 the hierarchy in the organisation that is to blame.
20 Those that looked after me had no experience of children
21 and just found me an inconvenience. I would like the
22 two Sisters who have already given evidence to apologise
23 for the way they were treated and for them to say they
24 regret how children were treated.

25 "I don't want my mouth stuffed with gold. I want

1 the Church, a wealthy organisation, to pay fair and
2 equitable reparations to people whose lives have been
3 blighted by their experiences in care:

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

6 I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are
7 true."

8 My Lady, this statement was signed by Jean on
9 18 August 2017.

10 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much, Ms MacLeod.

11 That seems to be a convenient point at which we can
12 stop for the morning break.

13 MS MACLEOD: It does, my Lady.

14 LADY SMITH: We will stop now and sit again at about 11.45,
15 assuming that the next witness is ready by then. Thank
16 you.

17 (11.30 am)

18 (A short break)

19 (11.45 am)

20 LADY SMITH: Mr MacAulay.

21 MR MacAULAY: My Lady, the next witness, who is
22 an applicant, would like to be known by the title
23 "Sister Louise" in giving her evidence.

24 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

25

1 SISTER LOUISE (sworn)

2 Questions from MR MacAULAY

3 LADY SMITH: Please sit down and make yourself comfortable.

4 That microphone will help you to make yourself heard and
5 it is also helps the stenographers to pick up what you
6 are saying more clearly, if you can use it. Mr MacAulay
7 may refer you to that red file in a moment but you can
8 just wait and see when he gets there.

9 A. Thank you, and somebody will tell me if the microphone
10 isn't picking up?

11 LADY SMITH: Absolutely, we will. Thank you very much.

12 Mr MacAulay.

13 MR MacAULAY: My Lady.

14 Good afternoon, Sister. You are to be known
15 throughout your evidence as "Sister Louise".

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Can I tell you at the beginning that I will be asking
18 you questions. If I ask you a question in connection
19 with something that you don't remember, just say you
20 don't remember.

21 A. Okay.

22 Q. Likewise, if you do remember something today or since
23 you gave your statement, then feel free to tell us about
24 that; do you understand that?

25 A. Okay.

1 Q. The first thing I want to do actually is take you to
2 your statement. It is in that red folder in front of
3 you and I want to take you to the last page of your
4 statement.

5 I will just give the reference for the transcript,
6 WIT.001.001.2118. I'm looking at page 2131.

7 It is the very last page. Can you confirm, Sister,
8 that you have signed that statement?

9 A. I have.

10 Q. If I look to paragraph 74, the last paragraph, do you
11 tell us that:

12 "I have no objection to my witness statement being
13 published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry"?

14 A. That is correct.

15 Q. Also does it go on to say:

16 "I believe the facts stated in this witness
17 statement are true"?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. If I could just put the folder aside for a moment,
20 Sister. I want to just confirm with you that -- I don't
21 want the date of your birth, just the year of your birth
22 so I can get a time frame. Were you born in the year
23 1947?

24 A. I was.

25 Q. Can I just ask you a little bit about your life before

1 care because we are going to look at what happened to
2 you when you went into care. Were you staying with your
3 parents before you went into care?

4 A. I was.

5 Q. I think you have two younger brothers; is that correct?

6 A. I do.

7 Q. Were they also staying with you and your parents?

8 A. Yes. We were at home together.

9 Q. Did there come a point in time when your mother left?

10 A. My mother left when I was 9 and the boys were 3 and 4
11 respectively -- no, 3 and 5.

12 Q. After your mother left for a time, did your maternal
13 grandmother look after you?

14 A. She did.

15 Q. But in due course, were you and your brothers put into
16 care?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. That was into Bellvue in Rutherglen; is that right?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. We don't have admission records for Bellvue, unlike
21 Smyllum, where I think you ended up in. However,
22 I think you tell us in your statement you thought that
23 you were admitted to Bellvue in about 1957.

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. So, if you were born in 1947 then you must have been

1 around about 10 when you were admitted.

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Your younger brothers would have been much younger than

4 you?

5 A. Yes, [REDACTED] ABL [REDACTED] was primary one in school and [REDACTED] was

6 three and a half, going on 4.

7 Q. Do you remember your first day at Bellvue?

8 A. No.

9 Q. But you think, according to your statement, that your

10 father paid for your keep there?

11 A. He paid towards our keep but I only realised that in the

12 past couple of years. I thought -- I also learned that

13 Dumbarton Local Authority paid for our care. I think

14 when we were young we thought the Sisters took us in off

15 the streets.

16 Q. Do you know how it came to be that you were referred to

17 Bellvue at all?

18 A. Just to confirm what you said, my maternal grandmother

19 came, then we had a housekeeper for a short time and

20 then a local priest appeared in the house one night.

21 I think my father wasn't coping and called him in and

22 I believe he made the referral to Smyllum, which -- to

23 Bellvue, which I understand was a private place, you

24 know, it wasn't council run or state run, it was

25 private.

1 Q. Indeed, as you discovered, when you were there, it was
2 the Daughters of Charity that ran the home?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Can you describe the building to us because I don't
5 think we can access any photographs of it.

6 A. No, and it has been destroyed. As far as I remember it,
7 it was like a red country house, set up quite high off
8 the street. You know, the entry was up a few steps and
9 then a long slope with no steps and then along and up
10 again. It had a few additions to the building, that's
11 how I remember it.

12 Q. We will look at Smyllum later on in your evidence, but
13 comparing the two, would it be correct to say that
14 Bellvue was a smaller place?

15 A. Yes. Both in size of the house and number of children.

16 Q. When then you got there and you have some memory, what
17 is your first memory of being at Bellvue?

18 A. It is of -- going -- being enrolled in the local primary
19 school.

20 Q. Was that a local primary school then in that area in
21 Rutherglen?

22 A. Yes, St Columbkille.

23 Q. You tell us a little bit in your statement about
24 mealtimes. The boys and girls did eat together but
25 separately in the same room?

- 1 A. Yes, I think girls on one side and boys on the other.
- 2 Q. Did you see much of them on a daily basis?
- 3 A. No.
- 4 Q. When would you see them?
- 5 A. We were in separate groups. I don't remember where they
6 went to school, I don't seem to think they went to
7 St Columbkille. I know I did, but boys and girls were
8 separated and boys and girls were separated according to
9 age.
- 10 Q. So if we look at you then, and the age that you were at
11 the time, 9 or 10, you would be put into a dormitory
12 that catered for girls of that age?
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. What was the age range; can you remember?
- 15 A. I don't remember.
- 16 Q. But was there an older group than that group?
- 17 A. Yes.
- 18 Q. Because I think you probably moved into that group at
19 some point in time.
- 20 A. I think the boys weren't even in the same group because
21 [REDACTED] would have been a pre-schooler and [REDACTED] ABL had
22 already done -- is it all right for me to say their
23 names?
- 24 Q. They will be protected because they won't be published
25 outwith the hearing room.

1 A. Okay.

2 Q. It is probably easier for you than to --

3 A. Yes, to keep remembering not to say them.

4 Q. But you told us just a minute ago that you went to the

5 primary school in Rutherglen. Just running ahead

6 a little bit, you actually qualified to go to

7 a school -- a secondary school in [REDACTED]; is that

8 right?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. That was an all girls' school?

11 A. An all girls school.

12 Q. That was for secondary schooling?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. But that was also run by nuns?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Was that a different Order though to the Daughters of

17 Charity?

18 A. Yes, that was [REDACTED]

19 LADY SMITH: Sorry, which Order ran that school?

20 A. The [REDACTED]

21 LADY SMITH: The [REDACTED] ere running that school?

22 A. Yes.

23 MR MacAULAY: That would mean that you would have quite

24 a trek because you would have to go from Rutherglen to

25 [REDACTED] on a daily basis --

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. -- once you were in secondary school.
- 3 A. Yes. At that time it was called a senior secondary and
- 4 [REDACTED]
- 5 [REDACTED] I don't say that with any pride; it is just
- 6 a fact.
- 7 Q. Well you qualified -- you got the qualifications to go
- 8 there.
- 9 A. Yes.
- 10 Q. But of course that was something that did cause you
- 11 a little bit of trouble at Bellvue, that you were out at
- 12 this secondary school [REDACTED]
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. Can you perhaps tell me a little bit about that, how did
- 15 that happen?
- 16 A. Well, it meant I was on a different timetable to other
- 17 children and causing a nuisance, as it were, to the
- 18 staff, to the kitchen, to different arrangements having
- 19 to be made for me as I would be coming in late. But
- 20 school for me was one of my safe places away from both
- 21 Bellvue and Smyllum.
- 22 Q. So you continued your connection with [REDACTED] when you
- 23 went to Smyllum?
- 24 A. Yes, I stayed in the same school and I quite
- 25 deliberately joined [REDACTED] -- I played for the

1 school [REDACTED] and I [REDACTED] n the [REDACTED] and I was
2 in the [REDACTED] and all of that kind of the got
3 frustration out of me but it gave me an escape from
4 those places which --

5 Q. We will look at that a bit in a moment, at what you are
6 seeking to escape from. Can I just ask you this at this
7 point: what was the attitude of the Sisters at Bellvue
8 to the fact that you were going to [REDACTED] ?

9 A. Well, they often accused me of thinking I was smarter
10 than the other children. I don't remember myself as
11 being a cheeky child or a show-off child. But
12 I gathered -- I'm not sure how to say this -- some of
13 the Sisters who were looking after us were maybe not
14 that much older and hadn't had an opportunity themselves
15 of -- and I think that rankled and maybe I had smart
16 answers, I don't know.

17 Q. But what you tell us in your statement -- I think it is
18 on the screen in front of you actually -- at
19 paragraph 15 is that they used to say to me, "You think
20 you are cleverer than anyone else".

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. And then, "We will beat that out of you"; is that what
23 was said?

24 A. Yes and sometimes it was followed up by physicality.

25 Q. Can you describe the physicality?

1 A. I remember one time -- I keep going in and out of
2 Bellvue and some of the same Sisters were in both places
3 but this happened in Bellvue. My father would bring us
4 things, gifts, sweets, clothes and the Sisters
5 confiscated the stuff from us and one day the Sister in
6 charge told us that she had been given a box, or boxes
7 of chocolates and I said to one other girl, "It would
8 serve her right if somebody took that from her". I came
9 in from school and on the stairs she met me and she
10 said, "You stole bars of chocolate". And I said,
11 "I didn't, I have been out at school all day", and she
12 said, "Don't lie", and she smacked me across the face --
13 my face was stinging -- and, "Don't answer back. I know
14 you took it because of what you said" -- because of what
15 I had said to the girl.

16 She said she didn't believe me and I was going to be
17 punished and I said, "I'm going to tell my father on
18 you", so a brush appears from somewhere, brushes
19 appeared or canes or sticks. She hit me with the brush.
20 My father came on Friday and that Sister came and sat in
21 during the visit.

22 Q. So that made it difficult for you to report that to your
23 father?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. What age were you at that time when that happened?

1 A. I must have been 12, 13 because I was still in Bellvue
2 and I think I was 13, 14 when we moved to Smyllum. That
3 was definitely in Bellvue.

4 Q. Can I go back to the early days in Bellvue. You tell us
5 that there was a particular Sister who was in charge of
6 the group that you were in, so that was the ten year old
7 type group?

8 A. Mm.

9 Q. If you look at paragraph 13 of your statement, what you
10 tell us actually is that:

11 "There was a Sister and a lay member of staff for
12 each group, but I think that there was a shortage of
13 staff."

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. The Sister that looked after you, what was her name?

16 A. EAB .

17 Q. What you say here is:

18 "Sister EAB was what I would call our bully."

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Can you just elaborate upon that for me?

21 A. Well, it was she who hit me on that occasion, but on
22 another occasion -- it was a Friday night and for some
23 reason we went to bed early on Friday nights, maybe the
24 Sisters had a meeting, I don't know what, and one night
25 we had a pillow fight in the dormitory. And some

1 cushions disintegrated in the fight, the Sister came in
2 and shouted at us, at that time, but the following
3 morning we were got up at 5 o'clock -- and I remember it
4 was 5 o'clock because I had a watch and we were taken
5 down to a corridor, given buckets of cold water and
6 a scrubbing brush, you know, those old-fashioned
7 scrubbing brushes, down on our hands and knees, and we
8 had to scrub this long corridor. This was the
9 punishment -- disproportionate often was the punishment
10 to whatever the perceived crime was.

11 Q. But that was the punishment, but there was no physical
12 punishment then in connection with the so-called crime?

13 A. Well, we weren't allowed to talk and if you were caught
14 talking -- the Sister was there with the usual cane and
15 if you got caught talking she would whack whoever it was
16 talking.

17 Q. You also tell us about -- perhaps this is jumping around
18 a little bit -- a time when you got back from school
19 when you had your end of term report card --

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. -- and something happened on that occasion?

22 A. That was also Bellvue. I came back and it must have
23 been an evening when I was late so the children were in
24 the dining room and I was going in for my meal and
25 I handed over the report, sealed, I didn't know what was

1 in it and Sister [REDACTED] EAB -- she's serving soup and she
2 took the ladle out of the soup terrine and hit me.

3 Q. Did she look at the report card before she did --

4 A. No. But she said to me, "Here we are again", or words
5 to that effect, "You think your cleverer than other
6 children", and implied that I was showing off and she
7 chased me with the ladle, but as I told you before I was
8 in the [REDACTED] and the [REDACTED] --

9 Q. You could outrun her effectively?

10 A. I outran her.

11 Q. But in relation to hitting you with the ladle, where did
12 she hit you?

13 A. Wherever she could hit me. The first blow was on the
14 head and then I started running and she was after me and
15 it was wherever -- she was just (indicates).

16 Q. Wherever she could hit?

17 A. She was hitting out with the ladle.

18 Q. Well, we may come back to some other things that
19 happened. As far as birthdays and Christmas were
20 concerned, can you help me with that?

21 A. No, I have no recollection of that. I think maybe my
22 father took us home or took us out on our birthdays.
23 But I don't remember birthdays being celebrated or
24 Christmases being celebrated.

25 Q. But your father was a regular visitor at Bellvue?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. I think he visited every Friday; is that right?

3 A. It was a Friday he came and straight from work.

4 Q. Sometimes he would bring you some gifts?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. What would happen to the gifts?

7 A. They were taken from us when my father left.

8 Q. Do you know what happened to them?

9 A. Well, I don't know how much -- well, my brother
10 discovered where they were kept and he used to steal
11 them back. Some things he used to steal back.

12 Q. So they were stored somewhere by the Sisters?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Did you ask the Sisters about the gifts that had been
15 sent?

16 A. No.

17 Q. You tell us a little bit about personal hygiene also in
18 your statement and about the communal bathing areas.
19 Can you just explain what the position was in that
20 connection?

21 A. We used to go together at night to get washed and it
22 pains me to say this, but I think children are at their
23 most vulnerable then, you are in your underwear, and we
24 used to have these hairbrushes that were lacquered on
25 the back and you used to get it over the knuckles. The

1 Sister would say, "You haven't washed your face". Well,
2 you had washed your face, but -- do you know, violence
3 escalated all the time, Colin -- I'm not sure if I am
4 explaining it. The Sister would say, "Go back and wash
5 them", and you would say, "I washed them properly",
6 whack. "Don't answer back, go and do it." We would go
7 back, come back in the same state we had left and then
8 you would be okay. And it was just that; gratuitous
9 violence it seemed to be.

10 Q. And the whacking was that with the lacquered --

11 A. Canes and the lacquered brushes on your knuckles.

12 Q. And the cane, where was the cane?

13 A. Legs.

14 Q. I think you got wise to this, did you not, and you
15 played some tricks on the --

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. What tricks did you play.

18 A. Just like that, we would go somewhere else and not do
19 any more washing and come back and -- my brother, it was
20 that used to do a lot of the tricks.

21 Q. But did you do this as well?

22 A. Well, I knew about what the boys did, so I tried to
23 introduce it on the girls' side.

24 Q. But what you did was, having been told to go back to
25 wash, you didn't wash?

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. And then you are going back to the nuns?
- 3 A. And we used to move stuff, you know. So we knew where
4 the soap supplies were, so if you were sent to get a bar
5 of soap, we would come back and say there isn't any soap
6 there because we had hidden it previously. It was
7 childish stuff but it was our payback.
- 8 Q. Coming to the situation where you wouldn't wash again
9 and you were checked by the nuns and you were passed as
10 being okay.
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. So what conclusions --
- 13 A. It was all a kind of a game. Again, I think: why beat
14 children in their underwear for something they haven't
15 done? I could never understand it. Maybe I thought too
16 much about things, you know, even as a young girl.
- 17 Q. But that was your thinking even at the time?
- 18 A. Even then.
- 19 Q. And you went in there at the age of 10. Was this
20 behaviour on the part of the nuns something that really
21 was an ongoing process?
- 22 A. Yes, yes. I don't know if this is the place to say
23 this, Colin, but there was a collusion, I believe, among
24 the Sisters and with the staff members about this.
25 I mean, why didn't somebody speak out? I think the

1 colluding of that behaviour among themselves led to
2 a sanctioning of it among them and to me that's
3 systemic -- I don't know if I'm explaining it.

4 Q. No, you are. I think that is perfectly clear, actually.
5 Essentially what you are saying is there was a real
6 systemic problem --

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. -- relating to the way in which children were being
9 treated?

10 A. Yes. I think, again referring back to the age of the
11 Sisters -- and I think they had gone in very young, done
12 their novitiate training and not having done any further
13 qualifications -- they were sent to look after us
14 children as opposed to going into a profession. They
15 weren't trained and I think they just had to keep
16 control of us how they could. So in a sense I have got
17 a certain empathy with them, the dilemma that they were
18 in, but I don't in any way condone it. Is that making
19 any sense?

20 Q. It does make sense. One thing you do say in your
21 statement is that, at paragraph 18 of the statement --
22 we are now going back a bit because I don't want to lose
23 sight of this -- is that:

24 "I want to be fair and point out that there were
25 good people as well."

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. "The headteacher at Bellvue was Sister [REDACTED] EAA . She
3 was very good and kept a motherly eye on us."
4 When you call her the headteacher, did you mean --
5 was she the Mother Superior?
- 6 A. I think she was the Superior there and then when we went
7 to Smyllum she was head of the primary school, its own
8 school within the system. The boys went to that school.
9 I was already at secondary school.
- 10 Q. We have certainly heard other name in connection with
11 that. So it is the same Sister [REDACTED] EAA that went to
12 Smyllum?
- 13 A. Yes, she transferred with us.
- 14 Q. But what you are pointing out there is that there were
15 good people?
- 16 A. Yes. My other safe place in Smyllum was -- I used to go
17 and help a Sister who was in charge of the younger girls
18 and that was my other safe space away from the chaos
19 that was Sister [REDACTED] EAB and the older girls, but again
20 it would be, "What are you doing up there?"
- 21 Q. Can I then just focus a little bit more on what abuse
22 you say occurred at Bellvue. You have told us already
23 about the pillow fight episode and what happened with
24 that.
- 25 You also say at paragraph 24 there that:

1 "Any time you were beaten they used brush handles
2 and coat hangers to hit you."

3 You say:

4 "They also used brushes with the lacquered handles
5 to hit us over the knuckles."

6 You have told us a little bit about that already.
7 Can I just ask you this: how regular was this sort of
8 treatment?

9 A. Daily. I'm not saying it was always me. In a way,
10 Colin, one got used to one's beatings, but seeing other
11 children being beaten -- and, again, I don't know if it
12 is the place to say it, bruises disappear but what was
13 done to our psyche, our inner life, left scars. It
14 didn't disappear as easily as bruises. Now in my
15 case -- and I can see it there -- often with the
16 beatings it would end up -- as I say, the violence
17 escalated, but it would end up with, "No wonder your
18 mother left you. No wonder your father put you into
19 care". That then is guilt left with you and my whole
20 life, to this day, I carry a burden of my two younger
21 brothers: why couldn't I stay home and look after them?
22 Why didn't it dawn on me? I don't know if I would be
23 allowed but -- I kind of punish myself mentally and kind
24 of spiritually, could I have avoided that for them?

25 LADY SMITH: Can I just explore something that you have just

1 said again. You have explained it wasn't necessarily
2 you every day, but somebody every day was being beaten.
3 Am I to take it from what you said that the scars that
4 are left are not just from being the recipient of the
5 beatings, but having seen your fellow children, your
6 fellow inmates if you like, also being beaten?

7 A. Yes.

8 LADY SMITH: Both these things affected you in the
9 long-term?

10 A. All these things.

11 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

12 A. I saw children being knocked off chairs, you know. As
13 I say, once the abuse started, it escalated so a child
14 could be sitting on a chair in the dining room and was
15 corrected about something and if they answered back they
16 would be hit so hard they would fall off the chair. The
17 boys also learned to dive, a bit like footballers, so
18 when they saw the blow coming they would dive, but then
19 they would be kicked. I saw it. I know what I saw.
20 I felt what I felt at the time, I know what I know. Do
21 you know? There isn't any way you could make it up is
22 what I suppose I'm trying to say. Most of the time
23 I lived with it, but the Inquiry has brought up a lot --
24 I am dealing with it but I'm just saying I'm re-living
25 a lot of that that maybe was buried, but maybe it needs

1 to be dug up to get a decent burial, if you know what
2 I mean.

3 Q. But I think from what you are saying is that apart from
4 what happened to you, this was treatment that was being
5 meted out to other children --

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. -- of different ages?

8 A. It is one of the reasons I say that about the collusion
9 and the sanctioning: Sisters didn't hit us when we were
10 alone only; they did it in view.

11 Q. Of other children?

12 A. Of whoever was there: staff, other Sisters, children.

13 Q. So it would be well known throughout the home that this
14 behaviour was going on?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. One thing you do say in that paragraph 24 that I just
17 want to ask you about and that is that when these
18 punishments were being delivered, they were being
19 delivered with anger and rage.

20 A. Oh yes.

21 Q. Can you just tell me about that.

22 A. Well, what I was saying, you know, the child on the seat
23 and the Sister hits them and they fall or they dive.
24 She's not able then to slap them round the face, so the
25 kicking starts. I think the fact that they weren't able

1 to hit the first time made them angry and escalated
2 the ...

3 Q. The nuns with Irish accents you mentioned that.

4 A. Yes. That's a memory I have and I brought it up not
5 because I'm racist, far from it, but some of the time,
6 Colin, we didn't know what they were saying and so
7 sometimes we couldn't carry out what was kind of
8 required of us. How can I say this? The Daughters of
9 Charity had these big hats and Irish accents and we were
10 scared of the big hats, we couldn't understand the Irish
11 accent, and sometimes it just -- it was like manic, it
12 was like pandemonium. We tried to stick up for each
13 other when the violence was going on but it only -- that
14 also generated more violence.

15 Q. So far as the principal perpetrator would be concerned,
16 are you able to name any particular nuns then that were
17 involved so far as you could see?

18 A. Yes. On the boys' side there was a Sister **AFJ** and
19 a Sister **BAA** I have seen them hitting boys.
20 There was a kind of common play area, we could play
21 outside, sometimes we had film shows, and that's when
22 I would see the violence on the boys. But in the
23 ordinary day to day you didn't see it because we were in
24 separate groups but when the groups were together --

25 Q. You saw yourself some boys being hit?

1 A. Oh yes.

2 Q. And those are the two nuns that you would point to for
3 that. What about the girls' side?

4 A. I can't really remember the names. I think they were
5 **AFK** and **BAF** who were with the younger girls --

6 Q. You have mentioned Sister **EAB** of course.

7 A. She was ours, but I was a big girl by then.

8 Q. But you have described her as "your bully".

9 A. Yes, she was in charge of our group.

10 Q. If you look at page 6 of your statement, and
11 paragraph 28, what you say in there is:
12 "There were daily beatings by Sister **EAB** "

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Is that on you or --

15 A. In general. As I say there, often there didn't seem to
16 be much wrong, but I remember one day I had these shoes
17 to wear and (1) they didn't fit me and (2) they had been
18 donated and shoes that my mother had brought me were
19 taken from me and these shoes -- I was ashamed of them
20 and they didn't fit and I used to hide them in the
21 avenue and pick them up on the way home until one fine
22 day -- you know what I'm going to tell you, they weren't
23 there to be picked up, so that's a beating.

24 LADY SMITH: When you left your Bellvue shoes in the avenue,
25 are you saying you then put other shoes on, the shoes

1 your mother had given you?

2 A. No, they had been confiscated when she gave me them.

3 I had on my gym shoes.

4 LADY SMITH: The gym shoes you had for school?

5 A. And that was in Smyllum.

6 MR MacAULAY: That was in Smyllum.

7 A. Yes.

8 MR MacAULAY: You tell us in your statement -- this is

9 something you discovered from your brother, your

10 youngest brother -- this is at paragraph 26 of your

11 statement. You found out from him that he had been

12 beaten by a cane because he had the measles.

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. What did he tell you about that?

15 A. He told me that the nuns said the measles were a sign

16 that he was evil and this was God showing that he was

17 evil and that she was to help God beat it out of him,

18 which seems crazy, but that's what he told me.

19 Q. Coming back to the daily beatings by Sister EAB

20 are you saying that this persisted throughout your time

21 at Bellvue?

22 A. Oh yes.

23 Q. And the nature of the beatings, is it as you said

24 before, hit --

25 A. It was the hand, it was the feet, it was canes, brush

1 handles.

2 Q. What I haven't asked you as yet is: would you be crying
3 when these events took place?

4 A. No.

5 Q. Did you ever cry?

6 A. Yes, at night. Sobbing into my pillow.

7 Q. But when the beatings themselves took place you didn't?

8 A. No, I was too proud. I felt that was the way I could
9 get back by not showing how it was getting to me, but
10 I would cry myself to sleep at night and want to just --
11 we would tell my father, he didn't believe us and said,
12 "Priests and nuns didn't do that".

13 Q. He was a staunch Catholic?

14 A. He was a staunch Catholic, a [REDACTED] Catholic.

15 Q. And would Sister [REDACTED] EAB be saying anything to you in
16 the course of these regular beatings?

17 A. Well, the things she said to me I have said, you know,
18 "You think you are cleverer than the other children. No
19 wonder your mother left you. No wonder your father put
20 you into care". That was a constant.

21 Q. You mentioned earlier actually that one of the
22 implements that was used was -- would have been a coat
23 hanger or hangers.

24 A. Yes, whatever was at hand. So if you were in the
25 dormitory, it might be a coat hanger that was nearer to

1 her. If you were in the washing-up area, these
2 lacquered brushes or mops that we used to clean the
3 floor. It is whatever was handy. In the refectory it
4 was the ladle.

5 Q. Coat hangers come in different --

6 A. An implement --

7 Q. Coat hangers come in different materials these days.

8 A. Wooden. These were wooden coat hangers.

9 Q. Are you able to give the Inquiry an overview of the
10 atmosphere you had at Bellevue?

11 A. Fear. We were afraid. So we were afraid to talk to
12 people. We were afraid of getting caught, doing
13 anything that was deemed unacceptable. Fear was -- is
14 my pervading memory of both Bellvue and Smyllum.
15 Because often we had been asked, "Did we tell anybody?"
16 Who were you going to tell? Who was going to believe
17 you?

18 Q. And when you did tell your father he didn't?

19 A. He didn't believe me and later then, when I was at --
20 going out to secondary school every day again, [REDACTED]
21 [REDACTED] I wore
22 my being in care as a badge of shame and I didn't talk
23 about it.

24 Q. At all?

25 A. At all.

1 Q. But so far as wearing something would be concerned, you
2 would have the normal school uniform for [REDACTED]

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. To that extent there was no difference between you and
5 the other pupils?

6 A. No, and I don't remember anybody in [REDACTED] speaking to
7 me about that. Certainly no difference was made of me
8 but it did in Smyllum. Somebody I know from Smyllum
9 said, [REDACTED]

10 [REDACTED]

11 Q. There came a point in time during your time at Bellvue
12 when Bellvue had to close?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. And I think that was in 1961?

15 A. About 1961.

16 Q. When that happened, you, at least, and your brothers
17 were moved to Smyllum?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. We do have an admission date for when you were admitted
20 to Smyllum?

21 A. Yes, [REDACTED] or something 1961.

22 Q. You are almost there. The date in the register at least
23 is [REDACTED] 1961.

24 A. Well, I have an email from the Daughters of Charity,
25 because I wrote -- five years ago now, I was doing my

1 family history and it was [REDACTED].

2 Q. Well, it is -- I'm looking at the --

3 A. You have the actual thing.

4 Q. Is it [REDACTED] 1961?

5 A. Thank you.

6 Q. It is a couple of month's difference.

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. When you were at Smyllum, I think as you have said

9 already, it was a much bigger establishment than

10 Bellvue.

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Were there many more children there?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. But going then at that time you would be aged 13 or 14?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. When you went to Smyllum you had been at the secondary

17 school for about a year or so by then?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. You have told us already you continued going to the

20 secondary school after you got there.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. What about the dormitories then when you got to Smyllum?

23 What was the set up there?

24 A. From what I remember I was obviously, by that time, in

25 the oldest girls' rooms and we had cubicles with

1 curtains on the front so there was a bit of privacy as
2 opposed to the open dormitory.

3 Q. Was there a particular nun or nuns in charge of your
4 particular dormitory?

5 A. EAB .

6 Q. Was that this EAB that had been at Bellvue?

7 A. I believe so. I may be mistaken that she was in both
8 places but she was definitely in Smyllum.

9 Q. So when you say you maybe mistaken, are you suggesting
10 she may not have been in Bellvue?

11 A. No, I think she was.

12 Q. You have already told us that Sister EAA moved to
13 Smyllum.

14 A. Yes and I think the Sisters from Bellvue transferred but
15 they could have been sent to somewhere else.

16 Q. So far as mealtimes at Smyllum were concerned then, what
17 was the set-up there?

18 A. Again, Colin, I was out of the situation because I had
19 to leave Smyllum at 7 o'clock in the morning and walk
20 down to Lanark and get the train, so I was not part of
21 the daily regime if you like, and they would be eating
22 at 5 o'clock and often I wasn't back from school at that
23 time.

24 Q. At weekends you would be part --

25 A. At weekends I would be there, yes.

1 Q. I think what you tell us in your statement at least, at
2 paragraph 33, is that the food wasn't very nice. It
3 wasn't very nice, the food?

4 A. No. One famous meal we used to have was cabbage leaves
5 and bacon rind and we used to gag on it, you know.

6 Q. If you didn't eat, what was put in front of you then?
7 What would happen?

8 A. It would come back to you and I think my record as
9 I said there was three days with this bowl of porridge,
10 but a lot of that was stubbornness on my part. I just
11 didn't want to eat it.

12 Q. So for three days the same bowl came back?

13 A. Yes. Until I had to eat it eventually I was starving.

14 Q. Chores. You had some chores to do?

15 A. Yes. I don't remember us having cleaners. I remember
16 people being in the laundry and I remember people being
17 in the kitchen, but the actual cleaning of the house was
18 done by us children.

19 Q. That would be the floors and the toilets and so on?

20 A. Yes. And we also went to places like getting the eyes
21 out of the potatoes in the kitchen and helping out in
22 the laundry.

23 Q. As far as the laundry experience was concerned, you
24 didn't find that particularly pleasant?

25 A. No. Will I say it?

- 1 Q. You may if you wish?
- 2 A. It is a bit embarrassing, but the Sisters at that time
3 made their own sanitary protection if you like and it
4 used to come down in these oval wicker baskets and as
5 children we had to put those --
- 6 Q. Deal with those?
- 7 A. -- into the washing machine.
- 8 Q. One thing you do tell us that you did help out in
9 relation to younger children when nuns or staff might
10 have been on holiday.
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. And you were about 14, I think, when you started doing
13 that?
- 14 A. Yes.
- 15 Q. Can you tell me about that, what you found when you were
16 being given your induction course for that work?
- 17 A. Yes, I don't know how I came to be asked to do it, but
18 this was the wee boys, so they were between 5 and
19 8 years old and I was asked -- the Sister or the
20 layperson, I don't remember which, was going on holiday
21 and the boys were in a dormitory and a corner of it --
22 sorry?
- 23 Q. Just to interrupt, what age group are we talking about
24 here?
- 25 A. 5 to 8. So the corner of the dormitory was -- I'm

1 looking for the word -- sectioned off and the Sister or
2 layperson slept in there and I slept in there. Before
3 the Sister went off, she said to me, "Come in the
4 morning and I will show you what happens". So I went
5 and she got the children up; they obviously knew the
6 drill. They got out of bed, stood by the bed, and she
7 went round the beds and if a boy had wet the bed -- and
8 there was a lot of bed-wetting, these are traumatised
9 children and away from home and -- anyway, they had to
10 wear the sheets and then (indicates) --

11 Q. When you said that, you pulled your hands over your
12 head; are you saying over their heads?

13 A. Over their heads, yes, and then when she had gotten
14 round the dormitory, they had to go off to the wash area
15 and get into a bath of cold water themselves with the
16 sheets and wash the sheets.

17 Q. So what was your reaction to that?

18 A. And she said to me that that's what I was to do. That
19 was what was done and I just felt -- and I have said it
20 in my statement -- that that was brutal to wee boys to
21 be doing that and I felt this was -- whether
22 intentionally or not -- that was an attempt to brutalise
23 me or lead me into brutalising behaviour and I didn't do
24 it.

25 Q. What did you do when you were, as it were, in charge?

- 1 A. I sent the sheets to the laundry.
- 2 Q. And you didn't do the sheet over the head?
- 3 A. Oh, no.
- 4 Q. But of course I suppose the respite for the boys would
5 only be for as long as the Sister in charge was away.
- 6 A. Was away. One night, actually, when I was there a fire
7 broke out in the kitchen and I had to evacuate the wee
8 boys out into the courtyard.
- 9 Q. Birthdays and Christmas. What about birthdays and
10 Christmas at Smyllum. You have already told us about
11 Bellvue.
- 12 A. The same. I don't remember ever celebrating birthdays
13 or Christmases. I'm not saying they didn't happen
14 but -- or that they didn't happen after my time but in
15 my time I have no recollection.
- 16 Q. As before I think your father did come and visit you
17 from time to time?
- 18 A. Yes, he would come regularly. My mother came
19 sporadically.
- 20 Q. Indeed, I think you say your father would sometimes take
21 you home for weekends.
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. What about a social worker or someone of that sort? Did
24 anyone from the Social Work Department come and see you?
- 25 A. No. I think we might have spoken to a social worker is

- 1 why I'm saying that.
- 2 Q. Abuse at Smyllum. Let's look at one or two aspects of
- 3 that. Physical abuse. You are now a bit older from
- 4 what you have been telling us, you are 13/14, and
- 5 physical abuse was that still something that --
- 6 A. That carried on.
- 7 Q. Who would be responsible now?
- 8 A. **EAB** .
- 9 Q. Was it as regular as previously?
- 10 A. Yes. That pattern never changed because, as I said,
- 11 I think it was systemic, you know, like it was what
- 12 happened and was colluded with and almost sanctioned, if
- 13 you like. And it just went on. It wasn't always me,
- 14 I am not saying I was beaten every day, I wasn't. But
- 15 children were beaten.
- 16 Q. You saw that?
- 17 A. I saw that, yes. On many occasions.
- 18 Q. Children of different ages?
- 19 A. Yes. We used to try and sort of console each other in
- 20 as much as we could but ...
- 21 Q. Yes. You do tell us about an incident that involved
- 22 a lay member of staff -- this is in paragraphs 52 and 53
- 23 of your statement. Can you tell me a little bit about
- 24 what happened then?
- 25 A. This was in Smyllum and, as I said, we had the cubicles

1 and this lay staff member came to my cubicle one night.
2 It was after lights out and she said to me that
3 Sister [REDACTED] EAB had sent her to make sure that I had
4 a bra that fitted. This is going to sound really
5 stupid. She said to me how she was doing that was
6 fondling my breasts. Now, I didn't have a mother,
7 I didn't have a sister, and in this day and age I would
8 probably be streetwise, but I didn't know that's not how
9 you did it and that's what she did. But she came back
10 another occasion to make sure and when she came a third
11 time, always in the dark, and after lights out, I said
12 to her, "I'm going to tell my father I'm not
13 comfortable". I didn't go to Sister [REDACTED] EAB because
14 I didn't want a beating -- if indeed she is the one who
15 sent her, which I don't believe actually but that's what
16 she said and that stopped then.

17 Q. One thing you do tell us in your statement -- this is
18 paragraph 54, at the top of the page that we are looking
19 at -- is that when you were beaten there was always more
20 than one Sister present; is that the case?

21 A. I think that always would better be read as "often".

22 Q. You say this:

23 "I find it difficult to believe that the Sisters can
24 deny what took place as they were either present or took
25 part in the beatings."

1 A. Yes and that's referring back to the collusion. I'm
2 sorry to say this, the Daughters of Charity, whether
3 historically or whatever, they know. They know.
4 There's not a hundred of us got together and had
5 a conspiracy about it; they know. Even if they weren't
6 part of it -- and some of them weren't, I want to be
7 fair about that -- but they know. They have got to
8 know. Some of them were only a wee bit older than me
9 when I was in Smyllum. Like, I left there when I was
10 17. There could have been Sisters there in their early
11 20s, just having left the novitiate. I believe --
12 I don't know, but I believe there are Sisters still
13 alive, Daughters of Charity, who know. I can understand
14 why they don't want to say they know because that's
15 going to lead to something else, but I believe -- I want
16 them now to take my badge of shame and wear it
17 themselves and admit.

18 It might be going too far to expect an apology, but
19 I'm convinced that they know. I hope -- are you going
20 to get onto the Mill Hill thing later or shall I say it
21 now?

22 Q. I am.

23 A. Okay.

24 Q. Before I come to that, I want to lead to that by taking
25 you to the point when you left Smyllum and you applied

1 to college and you were successful and you went to
2 Notre Dame, Dowanhill.

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. What did you study -- that was part of the University of
5 Glasgow, I think, at that time.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. What did you study there?

8 A. Education and I was a bit dismayed, to say the least,
9 that the two teacher-training colleges at that time were
10 run by nuns.

11 Q. But a different Order to the Daughters of Charity?

12 A. Yes, but when you are 17 you don't know that. So I go
13 to college and, coming from the hell that I came from,
14 here are nuns that are talking about children and
15 educating them and holistically dealing with them. By
16 that I mean psychologically, spiritually, emotionally,
17 educationally, and I thought, wow. As time went on,
18 I was there three years, I began to think, I could do
19 this and then I thought I can do this as a Sister and
20 therein lies my redemption and my healing and a service
21 to children.

22 I'm not saying I had a divine inspiration; it was
23 a gradual coming to understand that or the opportunity
24 opening up for me to do that. I don't want to canonise
25 my order, I mean, but as a young woman that was a whole

1 turning point in my life.

2 Q. But what were you seeking to redeem?

3 A. All of us who were in this sinful situation.

4 Q. But you became a Sister then --

5 A. I became a Sister.

6 Q. -- having done your training?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. You did that, as you say in your statement, because you

9 hoped you could help to shape people lives.

10 A. Yes, particularly children.

11 Q. I just want to take you to that next paragraph,

12 paragraph 62 of your next statement sister where you are

13 talking about the [REDACTED] and the

14 Daughters of Charity. Can I just ask you to describe

15 what you are telling us there?

16 A. I have heard people say they lost their faith through

17 their experience with the Daughters of Charity and their

18 treatment in their establishments. I didn't lose my

19 faith. I lost my faith in the Daughters of Charity.

20 But I didn't -- I didn't leave the church, I didn't have

21 a big faith crisis. Am I explaining what you are asking

22 me?

23 Q. You are.

24 A. My problem is that they won't acknowledge.

25 Q. What happened?

- 1 A. What happened.
- 2 Q. And you go on to say:
- 3 "They had a duty to care for us when we were in the
4 homes. What they did to the children in the name of the
5 Catholic Church was unforgivable."
- 6 A. Yes. The Daughters of Charity were in loco parentis.
7 I never -- I swear to God, I know I'm under oath, but
8 I swear to God I never had any sense that they cared for
9 us, that they were substitute mothers or fathers.
10 Never. We just thought we were there to be minded, you
11 know, to use a Scotticism. We had no sense that it was
12 with love and care and affection or being listened to or
13 that you were in an individual. We were just a herd of
14 children that had to be controlled, disciplined and
15 beaten when not doing -- whatever their template was for
16 children's behaviour.
- 17 Q. You tell us that in your adult life you have worked in
18 South America; is that right?
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. Assisting with health, literacy and sacramental
21 preparation. How long did you spend in South America?
- 22 A. Ten years.
- 23 Q. Any particular part? Where were you?
- 24 A. I worked in Mexico and I was in Peru. We lived in Lima
25 in the shanty towns, no water, no electricity, no

1 schools, no nothing. So that was a bit of a challenge.
2 Before that I taught -- I taught in Liverpool and
3 I taught in Cumbernauld.

4 Q. And you have also worked with refugees in London?

5 A. I worked with refugees in London. [REDACTED]

6 [REDACTED] I actually
7 [REDACTED] with a priest friend of mine,
8 [REDACTED] and that became a [REDACTED] for [REDACTED]
9 [REDACTED] in London and the south east. Having got some
10 experience ourselves, we were then invited to go out to
11 parishes to help them and different groups asked us to
12 go and do day conferences, which leads me into
13 Mill Hill.

14 Q. I will come to that in a moment, but just before I do,
15 can I ask you about this because you tell us a little
16 bit about this in your statement, and that is really
17 what impact you think your experiences at Bellvue and
18 Smyllum may have had on you and your life.

19 A. Do you see, just before that, I then served a period as
20 [REDACTED] of our [REDACTED] in
21 [REDACTED].

22 Q. I see that, yes. I'm asking about impact.

23 A. To this day the word "lovable" I can't associate with
24 myself. I think we lost our self-worth, we carried
25 guilt that we were to blame for things that happened,

1 when that wasn't necessarily true. But once it is
2 implanted in a young mind -- and I was laughing at
3 myself yesterday. I had a letter from someone and
4 I thought, what have I done. I know it sounds trivial
5 but it is there.

6 Q. Although you say you lack confidence although in fact
7 you have never failed in what you have sought to do.

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. You have told us about this already but you say you feel
10 guilty about what happened to your brothers.

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Although in fact you couldn't really have done anything
13 for them, could you?

14 A. No, but I go back and I think I was 9, you know, maybe
15 I could have done the cooking, maybe I could have
16 offered to look after him. See, my father didn't speak
17 good English and he didn't often speak to us anyway, so
18 there was a whole communication -- he got stuck here
19 during the war, as it were, and ...

20 Q. Well, what you do tell us at paragraph 66 is that you do
21 try and find forgiveness for what happened to you and to
22 your brothers, but it is difficult.

23 A. Oh, yes. And I feel the Daughters of Charity have to be
24 accountable and responsible for what happened. It is
25 not for me to decide how that happens, but I think

1 natural justice suggests to me that there has to be
2 some, as I say, accountability and responsibility taken
3 on their part because -- I will just say it the way it
4 is. I was so infuriated to hear Sister Ellen Flynn say
5 on public television, "This is a mystery to us". You
6 know. It just infuriated -- I'm trying to moderate my
7 voice.

8 Q. But that's your sentiment, that's what you feel?

9 A. That's my sentiment. I know she would not have been
10 there at the time.

11 Q. I now want to take you to the conference you went to or
12 the workshop at Mill Hill in London in the late 1990s.
13 I think Mill Hill -- is that the headquarters of the
14 Daughters of Charity?

15 A. Yes, it is the provincialate of the Daughters of
16 Charity.

17 Q. You were invited there to this workshop?

18 A. Yes, we were doing the [REDACTED] and groups
19 were asking us to go and speak and the Sisters or the
20 Daughters of Charity asked us to go and do a day
21 conference for them in Mill Hill. Which we did, our
22 team. At lunchtime, one of the Sisters came up and she
23 said, "You are an old Smyllum girl, some of the Sisters
24 have recognised you", and I said, "That is right", and
25 she says, "Could I have a private conversation with

1 you", and I said, "Sure".

2 We went into the garden and she said to me, "Some
3 women are falsely accusing us of abuse in Smyllum and
4 I want to talk to you as a sister religious and be
5 a credible witness to the fact that that didn't happen",
6 and I said to her, "Sister, you need to pay attention to
7 what those women are saying", I said, "and it happened
8 to me too". She -- I am not suggesting there was
9 bribery or anything, but she walked away and left me
10 there saying over her shoulder, "All our Sisters were
11 trained in child care". I know they weren't at that
12 time and nobody ever after that got back to me to say,
13 "How do you feel about that or how did that impact your
14 life?"

15 Q. You have set out in paragraph 69 more or less what you
16 have told us about this particular episode.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. I don't think you knew the name of the Sister that spoke
19 to you.

20 A. No. She had to be someone in authority because
21 I wouldn't have thought the Sisters in general would
22 necessarily know about that, so I assumed at the time
23 she was either the Local Superior or the Provincial, the
24 Sister in charge.

25 Q. I think you are going to tell us -- you want --

1 LADY SMITH: You want something from your bag?

2 MR MacAULAY: We will get it for you, no doubt. While
3 that's happening, Sister, can I take you to your
4 statement. This is the last page of the statement and
5 it is paragraphs 72 and 73. Would you mind reading
6 these two paragraphs out for the Inquiry so we can get
7 them into the transcript?

8 A. "Children need someone who they can talk to and trust.
9 Children are individuals with individual needs. They
10 need to be understood and heard as individuals. There
11 is a need for more guidelines. There should be more
12 inspections of care homes for children. There should be
13 monitoring and safeguarding procedures in place. There
14 should be a more holistic approach towards the
15 children's needs and interests.

16 "There should be more staff at Smyllum and
17 Bellvue --"

18 I think that should maybe read "there should have
19 been":

20 "This might have helped. Also if there had been
21 more training in child care, this could also have
22 possibly helped."

23 Q. I know you have prepared something you want to read out.
24 Before I ask you to do that, can I just puts this to
25 you. The Inquiry has had the opportunity of speaking to

1 nuns who may have been present at Smyllum during the
2 time frame that you are talking about. The general
3 position seems to be that children were cared for, there
4 was kindness, and there was no physical abuse. What's
5 your response to that?

6 A. There were Sisters who were kind to us, there were
7 occasions when we experienced kindness from individuals;
8 the fact that there was no abuse is a lie. Sorry to be
9 so blunt.

10 Q. No nothing wrong with that.

11 You have prepared this little thing. It is
12 12.55 pm. We normally rise at 1 o'clock, would you
13 prefer to do that now or would you like to -- do it now?

14 A. No, this is just something I found. It is from a book
15 called "Benedictus" and the author is John O'Donohue and
16 it is a book of blessings for different occasions and
17 I found this and it is called "A blessing for someone
18 who did you wrong". It resonated with me and recently
19 when I went to re-visit Smyllum, I read it outside
20 there, I read it in the cemetery at Lanark, you know
21 where the graves are, and I wondered if I could read it
22 to the --

23 Q. I am sure there would be no objection to it.

24 LADY SMITH: Absolutely and you are happy to do that now
25 rather than come back at 2?

1 A. Yes.

2 LADY SMITH: Please do, I would like to hear it.

3 A. "Though its way is to strike in a dumb rhythm, stroke
4 upon stroke, as though the heart were an anvil, the
5 heart you sent had a mind of its own. Something in you
6 knew exactly how to shape it, to hit the target,
7 slipping into the heart, through some wound window left
8 open since childhood. While it struck outside, it
9 burrowed inside, laid tunnels through every ground of
10 confidence. For days it would lie still until a thought
11 would start it again. Meanwhile, you forgot, went on
12 with things, and never even knew how that perfect shape
13 of heart still continued to work.

14 "Now a new confidence seems to have entered time and
15 I can see how that hurt has schooled my heart in
16 a compassion I would otherwise have never learned.
17 Somehow now I have begun to glimpse the unexpected fruit
18 your dark gift had planted and I thank you for your
19 unknown work."

20 MR MacAULAY: Thank you for that, Sister.

21 My Lady, no written questions have been intimated
22 and I don't know if there are to be any questions.

23 LADY SMITH: Thank you. Are there any outstanding
24 applications for questions? No.

25 Sister, thank you very much and thank you for

1 bringing that piece with you to share with us; it is
2 very powerful. I'm now able to let you go.
3 A. May I thank you Lady Smith and Colin and the Inquiry --
4 I never had a chance to do this until I came. Just
5 a special word of thanks to my witness support
6 officer -- he knows who he is -- and to my friend
7 [REDACTED] who has been with me consistently through the
8 process. I have waited 50 years or more -- I have been
9 50 years a Sister this year and just the respect and the
10 dignity with which I was treated throughout my private
11 session, the review of the statement, today, I thank you
12 so much.

13 LADY SMITH: Thank you for that; it means a lot to hear it.
14 Thank you. We will rise now for the lunch break.

15 (1.00 pm)

16 (The luncheon adjournment)

17 (2.00 pm)

18 LADY SMITH: Yes. Good afternoon, Mr MacAulay.

19 MR MacAULAY: Good afternoon, my Lady.

20 The next witness is an applicant witness who wants
21 to remain anonymous and he wants to use the name
22 "Michael" while giving his evidence.

23 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

24 Good afternoon, Michael.

25

1 "MICHAEL" (sworn)

2 Questions from MR MacAULAY

3 LADY SMITH: Do sit down and make yourself comfortable.

4 That microphone should also help you to be heard and it
5 assists the stenographers with getting the recording
6 that they need to make the transcript.

7 A. Okay, thank you.

8 LADY SMITH: Mr MacAulay, when you are ready.

9 MR MacAULAY: My Lady.

10 Good afternoon, Michael.

11 A. Good afternoon.

12 Q. Before I start asking you questions, can I just say to
13 you that if there's something that I ask you about and
14 you can't remember, just say so; okay?

15 A. Okay, yes.

16 Q. Likewise, if there's something you now remember since
17 you gave us your statement, then again feel free to tell
18 us that.

19 A. Okay.

20 Q. The first thing I want to do is to look at your
21 statement. In the red folder in front of you, you have
22 copies of it. Could you turn to the very last page.
23 You may or may not be able to see, but you signed this
24 statement; is that right? Has it been blacked out?

25 A. Yes --

1 Q. Can you see your signature there?

2 A. I see my signature, it is blacked out. I can still read
3 it.

4 Q. But you can confirm you signed the statement?

5 A. Sorry, can you say that again?

6 Q. You can confirm that you signed the statement?

7 A. Yes, I did.

8 Q. While you have it there in front of you at that page,
9 can we read in the last paragraph that you say:

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

12 Is that correct?

13 A. Absolutely, yes.

14 Q. You go on to say:

15 "I believe the facts stated in this witness
16 statement are true."

17 A. Correct, yes.

18 Q. Thank you, that's fine. You can set that aside for the
19 moment, Michael.

20 I do not need your date of birth, but to get a time
21 frame I need the year of your birth and am I right in
22 saying you were born in 1951?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. I think it is also right for me to say that you have
25 an older sister and a younger brother.

- 1 A. That's also correct, yes.
- 2 Q. Touching briefly on your life before care, I think you
3 stayed with your siblings and your mother and your
4 father.
- 5 A. Yes.
- 6 Q. But didn't there come a point in time when your mother
7 went away?
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. For a period did your grandmother look after you?
- 10 A. Yes, my grandmother come down [REDACTED] My father
11 was a bricklayer at the time and he travelled away most
12 of the week working. My grandmother, I believe, within
13 a couple of weeks come down to Dumbarton and looked
14 after us, for how long a period I'm not too sure.
- 15 Q. Because there came an point in time when you were taken
16 into care and in particular you went to Bellvue.
- 17 A. Yes.
- 18 Q. That's in Rutherglen.
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. We don't actually have a natural date for your admission
21 to Bellvue, but I think you believe it was in 1957.
- 22 A. Yes, I was six years old -- that's the part I remember.
- 23 Q. So you would be six in about 1957.
- 24 A. Yes.
- 25 Q. You went there along with your older sister and your

- 1 younger brother?
- 2 A. Yes.
- 3 Q. Do you have an early recollection of being at Bellvue?
4 What's your first recollection?
- 5 A. My first recollection would be actually getting out of
6 my father's works van at the entrance to Smyllum,
7 holding a wee cardboard suitcase with all my worldly
8 goods at the time, and walking up the hill, up the
9 pathway to the front entrance to Bellvue.
- 10 Q. You actually remember your first day, in effect?
- 11 A. Absolutely, yes.
- 12 Q. At the age of 6, were you put into a particular part of
13 the building?
- 14 A. When we arrived and walked up the stone steps into the
15 building there was a nun there to greet us. My father
16 very quickly was leaving and we were left standing in
17 a strange building. I remember my sister being taken
18 away in one direction and we were taken away to another
19 part of the premises. The boys' bit was like an annex
20 to the main building --
- 21 Q. I see.
- 22 A. -- separate. It wasn't joined up in any way and that's
23 where we were taken to initially.
- 24 Q. Were you grouped in a particular way? Were you grouped
25 according to age?

1 A. Yes, there was -- on the boy's side at Bellvue there
2 were two groups: a younger group, I believe, were called
3 Sacred Hearts; and myself, being 6, that's where
4 I started and that whole group moved about for lunch.
5 All the things that had to be done, they were done as
6 a group.

7 Q. What would the age group be? You were six; what was the
8 range of ages?

9 A. Probably until about nine-ish to 10 years old.

10 Q. Then there was a separate group of ten years old and
11 beyond?

12 A. Yes, you moved up eventually to "the big boys" as they
13 called it; we were always "the wee boys" at that time.

14 Q. Did you have a separate dormitory then for the wee boys?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Were all the wee boys in the dormitory together?

17 A. Aye, yes.

18 Q. Can you give us a rough idea as to how many of you were
19 there in that particular grouping?

20 A. In this -- the wee boys, if we call it, I would reckon
21 about 20 in that particular group and possibly not so
22 many in the bigger boys within that group. We mixed
23 with the bigger boys all day long but there was the
24 dormitory side -- time to get washed, et cetera, we were
25 always referred to as "the wee boys" and we were given

- 1 a number and that number related to your clothes,
2 absolutely everything. I believe I was either [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]
3 as a number.
- 4 Q. So we know, Michael, that you moved into Smyllum in due
5 course. I think I'm right in saying that Smyllum was
6 a much bigger establishment than Bellvue.
- 7 A. Very much so. By that time I had moved from a six year
8 old to almost ten year old or round about ten year old.
- 9 Q. Had you actually got into the bigger boys' group at
10 Bellvue before you left?
- 11 A. Not that I specifically remember.
- 12 Q. Did you have any -- can I ask you this: what contact did
13 you have with your younger brother and sister once you
14 were in Bellvue?
- 15 A. Absolutely no contact with my sister. The only time
16 I really saw my sister at that time was when my father
17 came to visit for half an hour or so. During the course
18 of schools, meals, et cetera, I would never have seen my
19 sister.
- 20 Q. What about your younger brother then?
- 21 A. He was there in amongst -- he would always have been
22 a wee boy as well in that group, but I don't remember
23 spending any time with him.
- 24 Q. He was quite a bit younger than you?
- 25 A. About [REDACTED]

1 Q. Can I get some understanding of the routine? Let's take
2 the morning routine at Bellvue.

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. When you got up in the morning, what was the regime?

5 A. The day started by either one of the nuns or one of the
6 lay staff that would come into the dormitory and shout,
7 "Right, up", something along those lines and you
8 literally leapt out of bed and stood beside your bed.
9 Then, the nun would walk by all the boys and check for
10 bed-wetting. That was an everyday occurrence because
11 some of the wee boys would have been a bit more excited,
12 shall we say, and there was no freedom to get up and go
13 to the bathroom in the middle of the night. I'm not
14 saying you couldn't, but I don't remember being told, if
15 you need the bathroom just get up and go. So the first
16 thing they looked for was anybody who had wet the bed.

17 Q. And if there were children who had wet the bed, then
18 what was the procedure?

19 A. Well, I had the first bed as you walked through the door
20 and the wee boy in the bed next to me wet the bed
21 frequently. He cried a lot and he knew it wasn't going
22 to be pleasant. As soon as the nun spotted him she
23 ordered him to take the sheet, stand still beside the
24 bed and put it over his head like a ghost, I would best
25 describe it, and he was left to stand there. Once she

1 had examined all the beds, the next instruction was the
2 wash room. So we all left to go to the wash room, get
3 washed, brush our teeth, and then come back to your bed
4 to put your clothes on, and the wee boy would still be
5 standing there.

6 Q. Do you know what would happen next so far as the
7 bed-wetter would be concerned?

8 A. I believe that sometimes the sheet would be put back on
9 the bed, other times it would be taken away. I don't
10 know what happened to the wee boy, but it wasn't unusual
11 for the wee boys who wet the bed to get a skelp round
12 the ear type of thing for wetting the bed.

13 Later life teaches you it is not going to cure
14 bed-wetting, getting a skelp round the ear and it never
15 did.

16 The wee boy next to me wouldn't be alone in the
17 dormitory. There were probably two or three or four wee
18 boys who always unfortunately wet the bed.

19 Q. Then in the morning did we have the same sort of process
20 when that was the position?

21 A. It was the same every day. Every morning was the same.

22 Q. What was the reaction of the wee boys who were made
23 to --

24 A. He cried a lot. I can remember coming back into the
25 dormitory and he would still be stood under the sheet

1 and whimpering, not out and out crying, but whimpering.
2 But the wee boy next to me was younger than me, so
3 I would imagine about a five year old-ish and that was
4 the normal: he stood there until such time as he was
5 told to remove the sheet and then go and get washed.

6 Q. What about breakfast? Would the boys who had wet the
7 bed go down for breakfast in due course?

8 A. I believe so. It was very regimented the way everything
9 was done, so you were almost in the same line every
10 morning for everything: for turning up at school, for
11 going for meals, getting washed, any of the tasks that
12 had to be done, which invariably the boys had to do, the
13 cleaning, the dusting, et cetera. It was almost by
14 number.

15 So I believe the wee boy who wet the bed, once he
16 got washed, he joined in with everybody else for the
17 rest of the day.

18 Q. What about the making of the beds?

19 A. That was -- you made your own bed.

20 Q. Was there a particular procedure involved in that?

21 A. Yes. If you got it wrong, you could expect a skited ear
22 for getting it wrong.

23 Q. Who would do that to you?

24 A. That would be the nuns. The lay staff never at any
25 point, as I understand it, disciplined the children by

1 hitting them. The only hitting and beatings that I ever
2 seen was carried out by nuns.

3 Q. When you talk about getting a skelp or a slap for not
4 making the bed properly, what would that consist of?

5 A. We were taught -- if you can imagine an army-type bed,
6 steel frame, that was the beds we had, single beds. It
7 consisted of a rubber undersheet above the mattress and
8 a lower sheet, a top sheet, and what I would call
9 an army blanket, a brown blanket, and a pillow. The
10 secret of making a bed properly was to make sure the
11 corners were exactly in a straight line, tucked in,
12 et cetera.

13 If it wasn't, you could expect two things: the bed
14 would be ripped off and flung on the floor and told to
15 start again, or in between that possibly picking up the
16 blankets and the sheets, you were wary because you knew
17 what could be coming.

18 Q. What would that be?

19 A. A skite on the ear. That was the normal -- if there was
20 a normal -- getting not so much a slap -- a slap is
21 an open-handed thing as I understand it, but it would be
22 a clenched fist across your ear and that could knock you
23 down onto the floor at times.

24 Q. Was that by a nun?

25 A. Oh yes, yes.

- 1 Q. So far as your own experience as an individual is
2 concerned, did this happen to you?
- 3 A. Frequently. Yes.
- 4 Q. Did it happen to others?
- 5 A. Sorry?
- 6 Q. Did this happen to other children?
- 7 A. It did happen to others, yes. It wasn't a hidden thing.
8 I could get a skite around the ear and a couple of
9 minutes later the nuns over there hit somebody else.
10 All the boys would have been witness to what was going
11 on in the dormitory or at other times as regards the
12 violent side of it.
- 13 Q. So far as the mornings were concerned then, there were
14 perhaps two things happening, there's the bed-wetting
15 process but there's also the bed-making process --
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. -- where discipline, if I can call it that for the
18 moment, was being meted out?
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. Can I just ask you a little bit about later on the day
21 when you went to wash? Did that cause some problems?
- 22 A. It caused a lot of problems to me in particular. The
23 morning washing was basically wash your face, brush your
24 teeth, and come back and get dressed, although nobody
25 ever took long. The evening time washing was the bit

1 that I always had a problem with. When the time came
2 and we were sent to the wash room, on return from the
3 wash room, we had to go through a ritual which I'm happy
4 to demonstrate.

5 The nun would sit in front of us on a chair and we
6 would stand in front of the nun and went through
7 a process where we put our hands out and they inspected
8 your hands were washed, then the palms of your hand,
9 then your elbows, then your ear, then your ear. The
10 number of times that on the second ear I would just
11 close my eyes because I knew what was coming. I would
12 get a clenched fist skite that could sometimes knock me
13 onto the ground and be told get back to the wash room
14 and get washed properly.

15 But even at that age we played wee games, we would
16 go back up to the wash rooms, sometimes in tears, and
17 sit on the stone steps, but not get washed again. Then
18 we would go back down to the nun, go through the same
19 ritual, inspect your ears, and they would say every
20 time, "If you had done that the first time you wouldn't
21 have got a skite", or you wouldn't have got hit or you
22 wouldn't have got punished. That taught me that we were
23 getting hit for nothing.

24 Q. You have given your own experience, but was this
25 an experience that other children also experienced?

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. Was this a regular occurrence?
- 3 A. Very regular.
- 4 Q. Throughout your time at Bellvue was this ongoing?
- 5 A. It was ongoing for myself and by the time I got to the
6 wash room, there would be another two or three boys that
7 also had a skite either before or after. We used to sit
8 on the top stone steps outside the wash room and have
9 a wee cry to ourselves, but we never got washed again.
10 That would -- I would expect in a five-day week to be
11 hit about three times at that point. That was something
12 I knew was coming and it left a lot of mental scars.
- 13 Q. Was there a particular nun that you can identify who
14 indulged in this behaviour?
- 15 A. I can remember nuns' names in Smyllum, but at Bellvue,
16 I can't remember a specific name. I can sort of picture
17 the nun. She was [REDACTED] (indicates).
18 She seemed to enjoy the violence part of it.
- 19 Q. Was she the nun in charge of your group?
- 20 A. Yes, she was in charge of the Sacred Heart boys, if
21 that's what we were called at the time, or "the wee
22 boys" as we were mostly referred to.
- 23 Q. You tell us -- it is actually on the screen -- about
24 something that happened to you about a year or so after
25 you were there in the upstairs wash room. This is

1 paragraph 32 of your statement where you say:

2 "Another thing they done, which to me was cruelty,
3 was a year or so later in the upstairs wash room in the
4 main bit, not the dormitory wash rooms."

5 Do you see that? Do you remember this episode.

6 A. Sorry, could I pick up on that again?

7 Q. If you look at your statement -- it is --it is on the
8 screen in front of you, actually, if you look at the
9 screen. I'm looking at paragraph 32. You are telling
10 us about an episode where a particular nun called you
11 over.

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Can you explain to me what happened there?

14 A. Yes. That was the same nun who --

15 Q. The one in charge?

16 A. She seemed to take great delight in picking on me. In
17 those days everybody had short hair and she would pick
18 me up by the sides of the ear, which is very painful,
19 and lift you until your toes left the ground and you
20 would scream with the pain of it. It was a simple thing
21 but that would be another regular occurrence by the same
22 nun.

23 Q. On you?

24 A. On me, yes.

25 Q. Did you see that happening to other children?

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. What was the reason behind that?
- 3 A. There didn't have to be a reason. There was times when
4 you were in the wrong place at the wrong time or
5 a particular nun would pick on, as I understand it, me
6 and one or two others and that was -- it was for no
7 reason. We weren't cheeky or anything like that and it
8 invariably happened on what we called the second
9 landing. There was a landing at that end of the
10 dormitory, a landing at this end of the dormitory
11 (indicates), and you would be walking up the stairs,
12 going to bed, and all of a sudden, "Come here", and
13 they'd lift you up. It was painful.
- 14 Q. So this is something that happened at the end of the
15 day, as it were?
- 16 A. Invariably the end of the day, yes.
- 17 Q. I think you tell us that you got the feeling as you were
18 being picked up, you could see the delight in her face.
- 19 A. That was something I can clearly remember a lot of the
20 times I was being punished or hit.
- 21 The worse the beating -- and there's other times in
22 my statement where I had a broom -- brush broken over
23 me.
- 24 Q. I will come to that.
- 25 A. At that time her face was visibly twisted, you know.

1 Almost venomous. Determined that whatever she got out
2 of it, we were the ones getting punished and she got the
3 satisfaction of doing the punishing. That's something
4 I look back on and I can still see that particular nun's
5 face on more than one occasion, twisted in -- took a lot
6 of satisfaction out of it.

7 Q. Can I ask you about the food at Bellvue. I think the
8 children at Bellvue all ate in the same dining hall, but
9 boys and girls were separate; is that the way you
10 remember it?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. The food itself, how did you find it?

13 A. It is difficult to say because in Bellvue in Rutherglen,
14 what was put down in front of you was your food. There
15 was certain things that to this day I just can't eat.
16 For example, fat on meat -- raw carrots is another one.
17 Sour milk was my favourite.

18 But the way it worked the meal that was put down in
19 front of you, or you went and collected, if you couldn't
20 eat it all, it was put in the pantry on the same plate,
21 what was left, and that was your next meal. You had
22 a wee number, number on the plate, and when the next
23 meal came back -- it could be the following day -- and
24 the plate would be put back down in front of you and you
25 wouldn't get anything else until you had eaten what you

1 couldn't eat yesterday.

2 Q. Would you have to eat it?

3 A. Sorry?

4 Q. Would you have to eat it then?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. You mentioned sour milk.

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Were you given sour milk?

9 A. I was purposefully given sour milk. I had an aversion
10 to sour milk, why I don't know. In the summer months
11 where we played outside, the nuns would put five or six
12 small -- the wee sort of pint bottles you used to get --
13 and leave them in the sun all day long and then they
14 would call you over -- I think there was two or three of
15 us -- with a silver cap on it and you were to drink
16 a bottle of sour milk. Often it would make me actually
17 vomit. The next thing you know I have got another skite
18 and I'm lying on the ground where we had vomited because
19 of forcing me to drink sour milk.

20 Q. Why was this inflicted upon you, do you know?

21 A. My own theory is nuns got satisfaction out of that.
22 Once they had discovered an item like that, that
23 particularly I couldn't handle, their wee game was to
24 make sour milk, which is never done, and then make you
25 eat it or drink it. The fact that I couldn't, it gave

1 them an excuse to hit me because I never drank the milk.

2 Q. How regular was this particular practice followed?

3 A. I think it was a summertime thing when the sun was out.

4 But probably on a weekly basis. If I remember right we
5 were all given a wee bottle of milk in the morning, but
6 they would not give me a bottle of milk; mine was put on
7 the windowsill in the sun, outside in the sun, knowing
8 that come the afternoon I had to drink it.

9 Q. The schooling. Where did you go for your schooling when
10 you were at Bellvue?

11 A. At Bellvue it was quite simple, as I remember it. Down
12 the hill, away from the main building, there was
13 wooden -- what you would probably call scout huts, that
14 type of building. I believe there were two classrooms
15 there and as a primary school boy, that's where we went
16 for school.

17 Q. Who were the teachers? Were they laypeople or nuns?

18 A. The teachers were nuns.

19 Q. Do you have any particular memories of your schooling at
20 Bellvue?

21 A. Not particularly, they closed that internal school down
22 maybe a year or so after we arrived there and the
23 buildings became derelict and we walked another couple
24 of yards beyond that to St Columbkille's.

25 Q. Was that the local primary?

- 1 A. That was the local primary, yes.
- 2 Q. One thing you do say in your statement, Michael, at
3 paragraph 41 in relation to the chores that you were
4 required to do, that the cleaners were the children
5 themselves.
- 6 A. Yes, all the time. There were very few lay staff.
7 There were lay staff who come in in the mornings and the
8 afternoon for the cooking, but all the tasks like
9 cleaning the wash rooms, sweeping, polishing, dusting,
10 cleaning the windows, that was all the children all of
11 the time.
- 12 Q. So you as a young boy would be doing that sort of work?
- 13 A. Oh yeah. We'd get moved about from task to task. For
14 example -- I believe it would be a Friday morning or
15 a Saturday morning -- in the long dormitory, all the
16 beds were moved to one side, and it was teams of four
17 boys, down on your knees, with this pink floor polish,
18 rubbed all that in. As you moved down, there was
19 another four boys with what we called dummies -- it is
20 like a big polishing item, heavy. They would take the
21 worst of the polish back to a shine. When they moved
22 forward again, four or five boys were given a cloth to
23 go down on their knees and polish the floor. The beds
24 were then moved over to that side and the same thing
25 happened on that side.

1 Q. How long would that take --

2 A. It was quite a big job --

3 Q. -- that sort of job?

4 A. That was a big task. Hard to put times on it but the

5 room would have been possibly not much shorter than this

6 room. We had done one half and then we moved all the

7 beds and done the other half. It was then inspected and

8 we put the beds back where they should be. I seem to

9 think it was a Saturday morning when there was no school

10 and it would certainly take an hour or so easily.

11 Q. Can I ask you about birthdays and Christmas. So far as

12 birthdays are concerned were birthdays celebrated?

13 A. No.

14 Q. What about Christmas?

15 A. In those days they had what they called feast days and

16 you probably got an extra couple of potatoes for your

17 lunch.

18 There was no particular Christmas dinner or -- they

19 celebrated Mass and it was three Masses, one after the

20 other. You had more time in the chapel than you were

21 anywhere else at that time. But there were no presents.

22 I don't remember things like Christmas trees or

23 decorations.

24 My father would always come and visit us at

25 Christmas. He would bring not presents but fruit,

- 1 chocolate, that kind of thing.
- 2 Q. I was going to ask you about your father's visits next
3 actually. I think he was a regular visitor.
- 4 A. Difficult to put -- I would say at least once
5 a fortnight my father would try and come to see us on
6 a Friday at Bellvue --
- 7 Q. How did you find these visits?
- 8 A. My father was a very strict [REDACTED] Catholic, very much
9 leaning towards priests and nuns could do no wrong.
10 I would repeatedly tell my father that I keep getting
11 beaten up and there was no way in this world he was
12 going to believe a word of it. It was totally
13 dismissed, absolutely.
- 14 Q. Your mother, she visited you on the odd occasion?
- 15 A. If it was, it was a very odd occasion.
- 16 Q. You tell us in your statement -- this is at
17 paragraph 49 -- that visits were -- you describe them as
18 being a bad memory.
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. Can you explain that?
- 21 A. Yes, this is again something that happened quite often.
22 When my father came to visit us at Bellvue, as you went
23 into the main building, the first room on the right-hand
24 side was what they called the parlour. Big long tables,
25 highly polished stuffed birds in glass cages, a parlour.

1 Quite significant. We would be taken in there and my
2 father would either be there or he would be brought in
3 and we would have, as I recall -- maybe half an hour my
4 father was there and then one of the nuns would come in
5 and say, Mr [name redacted], it is time for you to go.
6 They would walk with us, the children, to the front door
7 and say to my dad, "What lovely children you have got,
8 they are a credit to you, thanks very much for coming,
9 bye-bye", and close the door. The number of times
10 within no time at all, whack, I would get hit.

11 Q. Why?

12 A. The words that were usually spoken were, "Why are you
13 allowed to have", I use the word loosely, "freends?"
14 It's a Lanark word for "friends". "Why should you get
15 friends when anybody else can?" And anything we were
16 given by my father -- oranges, chocolate -- was taken
17 off us there and then never to be seen again.

18 But there was a resentment, the fact -- they were so
19 false -- the two-facedness to my father, "Bye-bye
20 [name redacted]", et cetera. You could almost go like
21 that (indicates) because you know what was coming.

22 Q. Was this a regular reaction?

23 A. Yes. Not every time because sometimes we had escaped
24 before the nuns actually closed the door on my father.

25 Q. When you say "we", your sister and younger brother would

- 1 be with you?
- 2 A. My younger brother would be there and my sister would be
3 there, yes.
- 4 Q. You talk about getting struck. How were you struck?
- 5 A. Again the normal, to myself, was a -- the inside of
6 a closed fist across your ear. There was other times
7 when it got out of hand and the nun lost it together and
8 they would kick and punch anyway they could.
- 9 Generally a lot of the hittings were single and that
10 was you.
- 11 Q. Could that knock you down, that sort of --
- 12 A. Oh, it would have, yes. Again, I'm only ten years old
13 at the time, 11 years old, 12 years old. And if you hit
14 anybody, even a grown-up, like that, you have a good
15 chance of knocking them down. So a wee child, yeah --
- 16 Q. Would you be in tears because of this?
- 17 A. Oh yeah.
- 18 Q. If we look at your younger brother, did this sort of
19 behaviour happen to him?
- 20 A. I know there were times when my younger brother got hit
21 because we could be in that company when he was getting
22 hit for whatever reason, but mostly, when my father went
23 away and they closed the door, my sister would head off
24 towards the girls' part and the nun would wait for us to
25 take us to the boys' bit and that's the time when the

1 resentment came from the nun.

2 Q. Do you know who this nun was?

3 A. No, sorry.

4 Q. Was she the nun that was in charge of your group or

5 a different one?

6 A. Well, part of when my father came to visit us, the same

7 nun would come and find the likes of myself or my young

8 brother and take us through to the parlour. So I kind

9 of assume it was the same nun that was ready to take us

10 back to where we should be.

11 Q. I understand from your statement, Michael, that you did

12 run away from Bellvue.

13 A. Oh yeah.

14 Q. Can you tell me a little bit about that? Let's take the

15 first time you did that.

16 A. Yes. I run away from both Rutherglen -- my father lived

17 in Dumbarton and it wasn't that difficult. I would run

18 from the front of the building down into Rutherglen's

19 main street and wait for the first tram car that was

20 going into Glasgow. I would jump on the tram and if the

21 conductress asked for a fare -- I never had any money --

22 they would either throw you off and I would stand at the

23 same bus stop until the next tram came and gradually

24 work my way into Glasgow, made my way to Waterloo Street

25 bus station, where there was a bus every 7 minutes that

1 went to Dumbarton and I would do the exact same thing on
2 the bus.

3 A lot of the conductresses took pity on me and would
4 say, "Just sit there quietly, you", and when we got to
5 Dumbarton East, [REDACTED]

6 [REDACTED] It was almost usually a Friday because I knew
7 my father would be home on a Friday. When I arrived
8 there, sometimes there was somebody waiting because they
9 knew that's where I would turn up. Sometimes I would be
10 put in a black car and taken back from Dumbarton, there
11 and then, to Bellvue. Other times my father would talk
12 the people into allowing me to stay the Friday night on
13 the promise that my dad would take me back on the
14 Saturday morning.

15 Invariably that led to a beating when I arrived
16 back, not in front of my father, my father would be
17 gone, and then, "What right have you got to run away?"

18 Q. The nature of the beating, can you describe the nature
19 of the beating for me? What sort of beating would you
20 get?

21 A. That would be a more severe beating. It wasn't just
22 a slap or a skite for trivial things; this would be
23 a nun continually bang, bang, bang and kicking you and
24 everything else. That would be -- I daresay there was
25 a kind of degree of beating that you got: you got

1 a punch or a slap for trivial things, but you'd get
2 a bigger beating for something more serious.

3 Running away was kind of serious and sometimes they
4 caught me before I even got to the main road and other
5 times I got all the way to Dumbarton.

6 Q. So you ran away on quite a number of occasions?

7 A. A few occasions yes.

8 Q. Why were you running away?

9 A. I seem to remember there were times when my father never
10 came to see us on a Friday and then shortly after that
11 I would try and go and see him, so I would head off on
12 my own to get a tram car or a bus that got me to
13 Dumbarton.

14 Q. When you tell us in your statement -- it is on the
15 screen, at paragraph 59:

16 "What I always remember is getting battered stupid
17 when I got back. That was a punishment I was going to
18 get, no matter what."

19 So that is the sort of battering you got?

20 A. Yes, it would be a severe beating.

21 Q. From one nun?

22 A. Same nun. Same nun. It tended -- my recollection is it
23 was the same nun that picked on me probably more or as
24 much as any of the other boys and yet there was other
25 boys who got beaten regularly as well. But if it was

1 a normal skite, as we would call it then, it would be
2 for something trivial like not getting washed properly.
3 But a beating was when supposedly you had done something
4 or the nun that was hitting me lost her temper because
5 I would not give into her and then it just got out of
6 hand and they were sore beatings.

7 Q. How regular an occurrence was the sore beating during
8 your time at Bellvue?

9 A. I would expect a sore beating maybe once a week or once
10 a fortnight, at least, and in between that a skite for
11 whatever reason they thought was ...

12 Q. If we turn to that section of your statement where you
13 give detail about the abuse at Bellvue. This is at
14 page 10. We have touched upon a number of these things
15 already. You tell us at paragraph 62 that you were hit
16 almost every day.

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. I think you have described to us already the way that
19 you were being punished, particularly by being grabbed
20 by the hair, and also what happened when your father
21 left after the visits.

22 A. Yes. There would be cases where the nun used their
23 hand. There's other occasions when she had a big
24 hairbrush, about a foot long, and she would use it like
25 a paddle to hit me and hit other boys.

1 On one of the occasions she dropped it and I believe
2 I either started laughing or wouldn't give into what it
3 was. One of the other wee boys had a broom and she
4 literally turned grabbed the broom, turned it upside
5 down and proceeded to hit me with the broom. The kind
6 of venom on her face. The broom snapped, the head flew
7 off it, and she continually beat me with the half of the
8 shaft of the broom she had in her hand. And that would
9 be sore because that wasn't just a skite; that was
10 something that would go on for a few minutes.

11 Q. And which part of your body was you --

12 A. Everything she could find, your back your legs. You
13 would always try and cover your face, that's human
14 instinct. I believe. But whatever she could see, I'm
15 that size and she's that size (indicates), so it wasn't
16 hard for her to find somewhere.

17 Q. I think you tell us about this particular episode when
18 the broom broke in your statement.

19 A. That was one of at least three occasions the broom
20 broke.

21 Q. So this happened on more than several occasions?

22 A. Yes and it was generally at a time when the particular
23 nun had lost the plot, so to speak, or in a case of the
24 hand brush falling on the floor, the next available was
25 a broom, so the broom was used.

1 But I remember about three times that the broom was
2 broken over my back or over my head.

3 Q. Were you left with bruising because of these --

4 A. Sorry?

5 Q. Were you bruised?

6 A. Oh yeah. There was nobody to talk to about bruising.
7 If you get hit in the ear or hit in the face, it doesn't
8 generally bruise, but when you got beaten, then your
9 shoulders, your back, your legs -- we wore shorts all
10 the time then -- it would be pretty sore. Yes, it would
11 bruise, but there's no treatment for that. You never
12 went to get, I don't know, ointment or cream or anything
13 in those days, you just put up with it until the next
14 time.

15 Q. You have told us about being struck by a hairbrush. Did
16 you see other children being struck by that sort of
17 implement?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. How regular an occurrence was that?

20 A. She used to walk about -- this would be usually the
21 evening time when we were getting put to bed after being
22 washed and examined. And this particular nun carried
23 this brush, hand brush, hairbrush, whatever, clothes
24 brush. She carried it about as she gave instructions to
25 the boys and that was her chosen way of hitting you at

1 that particular time.

2 In some cases with other boys as well, the hand
3 brush would fall and she would grab the first thing, or
4 she would start kicking and punching the boys. It was
5 usually temper, I would say, that took it to that stage.

6 Q. You tell us about an episode where you were caught
7 pinching from Woolworths.

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. What were you pinching?

10 A. Anything I could eat. I believe -- I am not proud of
11 it, but I believe I would have been quite rebellious in
12 that environment and my father would bring us fruit and
13 chocolate and we would never see it again. I discovered
14 that there was two pantries near the dining bit and
15 I found the key for it and I opened the door and I was
16 in the middle of eating whatever I could find to eat is
17 when one of the lay staff came in and the only time
18 I remember a lay staff touching me, was she grabbed me
19 by the ear and literally dragged me through the corridor
20 to the nun and told the nun that I had broken into the
21 pantry and she had biscuits or whatever as evidence and
22 then I got the beating of all beatings. But I can
23 clearly remember getting a heavy beating for stealing
24 from the pantry.

25 Q. And that heavy beating was it by the same nun or --

- 1 A. I seem to remember the same nun there all the time.
2 I don't think there was as many nuns about Bellvue as
3 there were in Smyllum. Smyllum had a lot of nuns.
4 Bellvue -- from the boys' perspective, there was
5 really one and one, maybe two, lay staff. But the nun
6 ruled everything in the boys' bit. The same nun.
- 7 Q. That particular beating you have just mentioned, were
8 any implements used in that particular beating?
- 9 A. Yes. There was a room in Bellvue where all the boys
10 congregated to play and that's where the nun was and as
11 I was dragged into that room in front of everybody,
12 probably everybody -- all the boys in Bellvue, I get
13 battered from pillar to post and being told "Why?" It
14 is one of the few times I understood why I got a beating
15 because I was pinching.
- 16 Q. What did the beating consist of?
- 17 A. It was hands and feet and in a corner of the room, being
18 boxed into a corner and continually hit or kicked or
19 whatever -- clearly because I got caught in the pantry.
- 20 Q. What I was actually asking you about was what you say at
21 paragraph 63 of your statement where you got caught, as
22 you put it for pinching, "wee postbag things "out of
23 Woolworths --
- 24 A. That was another occasion.
- 25 Q. -- in Rutherglen.

1 A. In Bellvue. Yes.

2 Q. It was a Woolworths shop in Rutherglen centre?

3 A. What sometimes happened is we were given money --

4 I don't know how much, say a shilling in those days --

5 and we would all march together down to the local

6 picture house to see the matinée and we had a wee bit of

7 spare time and about half of dozen of us went into

8 Woolworths and we had never seen Woolworths. This was a

9 big glorious store. And I ended up pinching wee

10 notebooks; I put them in my pocket. I was proud as

11 anything, 11 year old and pinching out of Woolworths.

12 Anyway when we got back up to Bellevue -- sorry,

13 when we got back and got caught basically. I think

14 everybody knew where we came from. Somebody had come to

15 Bellvue and the nun lined about eight of us up outside

16 on the concrete and explained that Woolworths had caught

17 us stealing and I went in my pocket and brought the out

18 the notepads which I had pinched. She then spoke to --

19 it was say a 15-year-old boy, one of the older boys, and

20 we had to stand like that (indicates) and he was to kick

21 us as hard as he could in the private parts on the

22 instructions of the nun. Then the next boy got kicked

23 and so on. I ended up lying on the ground being sick

24 and, wrong or right, I don't believe we understood how

25 severe pinching notepads out of Woollies was, but the

1 punishment certainly was severe enough.

2 Q. One thing you say in your statement, Michael, is that
3 you think that the only way the nuns could rule was by
4 fear.

5 A. I have always felt that, Colin. If you put a collective
6 of boys -- I can't speak for the girls because we never
7 seen the girls, we never knew exactly what they were
8 going through.

9 But if you have got one nun and one lay worker and,
10 I don't know, 20, 30 boys, I always felt that the only
11 way they could do it was ruling by fear. So if the
12 other boys see me getting punished and I see other boys
13 getting punished, that was a deterrent to do exactly
14 what you were told, when you were told, and do it
15 properly the first time. I felt that that's how they
16 controlled all these wee boys.

17 Q. How would you describe the environment at Bellvue during
18 your time?

19 A. Bearing in mind I was between six years old and ten
20 years old, it wasn't a nice environment, but I had
21 nothing to compare it to. Part of what happened in
22 Bellvue and Smyllum, because we were almost a closed
23 environment I never -- I couldn't compare it to a home
24 life with my father, for example. We would have thought
25 that was normal but it was certainly rule by number,

1 rule by time and rule by fear.

2 Q. I think you told us already that you did tell your
3 father that you were being beaten by the nuns --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. -- and he wouldn't accept that?

6 A. My father to this day -- my father, [REDACTED]
7 [REDACTED] Until the day he died he would never acknowledge
8 what had happened, but he did mention from what he found
9 out in later life he regretted very much putting us into
10 that environment, if you want to call it. But that was
11 the way it had to be at that time. But it wouldn't be
12 a part of my life that I have very pleasant memories of.
13 I don't remember a party or anything that would be
14 a positive thing. The whole day consisted of
15 regimentation and usually getting a skite for some
16 reason.

17 Q. There came a time, though, when you left Bellvue --

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. -- because it was closing down?

20 A. Yes. I don't remember the reason for it closing but
21 certainly in the last couple of months we were up
22 pulling the skirting board, on instructions, off the
23 wall and throwing them out of the window for the workmen
24 to gather them all up. I was told that I would be going
25 to a place called Smyllum. I don't remember actually

1 moving on a day in a van, in a car or in a bus, but
2 I can remember arriving, if you want to call it, in
3 Smyllum which at that time was, oh this is wonderful,
4 it's big, it's is open, there are lots of boys there,
5 and initially I thought all the Bellvue stuff is in the
6 past, but it very quickly transpired that it followed me
7 along the road.

8 I don't know for sure, but when I think back to the
9 faces of some of the staff, I had a strong feeling that
10 some of the staff moved from Bellvue to Smyllum but
11 I have got no way of -- it is just my own theory, some
12 of the memories, they either morph into one or the
13 other, but I can see faces. I can see them in Bellvue
14 and in Smyllum as well.

15 Q. We know that you were admitted -- from the records we
16 have seen, that you were admitted to Smyllum in
17 [REDACTED] 1961.

18 A. No, I was born in [REDACTED] 1951.

19 Q. Thought I said 1961.

20 A. 1961, yes.

21 Q. So you were about ten actually when you were at Smyllum.

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Just looking at the set up at Smyllum then, again you
24 had this age grouping that you mentioned.

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. You would be in a group that would cover the ten year
2 olds?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. What was the range?

5 A. I believe 10 would be the youngest of the bigger boys
6 and below 10 you would still be in the wee boys.

7 Q. You were in the bigger boys then when you got to Smyllum
8 were you?

9 A. As I recall I was in my last year of primary school when
10 I moved to Smyllum and I had done part of a year at
11 Smyllum in the primary school. I can clearly remember
12 that. But I also sat a bursary exam. Someone had left
13 money to Smyllum and I managed to do well out of that
14 and it allowed me to go to [REDACTED] igh School in
15 [REDACTED] with all the expenses paid through the
16 bursary award. But at that time I would classify myself
17 as the smaller of the big boys.

18 Q. Are you able to identify now any particular nuns that
19 were in charge of your group?

20 A. Smyllum was easier. There seemed to be two nuns that
21 followed each other about, they were glued at the hip
22 these two. One was called [REDACTED] BAA [REDACTED] who was [REDACTED]
23 [REDACTED] and the other one I believe was
24 [REDACTED] AFJ [REDACTED], or a name like that, who was the opposite: she
25 was [REDACTED] as well.

- 1 Q. But they were generally together?
- 2 A. Always together yes.
- 3 Q. I think you describe them as they were like twins.
- 4 A. I called them a tag team, yes.
- 5 Q. A tag team?
- 6 A. They were together all the time.
- 7 Q. Are you able to indicate roughly what ages you thought
8 they were. It is difficult when you are a young boy but
9 did you have any sense of that? How old they might have
10 been?
- 11 A. I would say [REDACTED] BAA -- is that the question, how old
12 was [REDACTED] BAA
- 13 Q. Yes.
- 14 A. I would put her, by recollection now, not old, mid-20s,
15 late 20s, maybe perhaps 30 at the most. [REDACTED] AFJ , the
16 other nun, was a fair bit older. She was around and had
17 been a nun all her days, I believe.
- 18 Q. You also mention in your statement civilian members of
19 staff you and remember a lady by the name of
20 Ms [REDACTED] IAQ .
- 21 A. Yes.
- 22 Q. I do not think you have any recollection or rather you
23 don't have a bad word to say about her. You have no
24 recollection of her doing anything?
- 25 A. I hardly remember her speaking a word but she was not on

1 the side of the nuns to punish us. There was two
2 laywomen that took care of our group of boys.

3 Ms [redacted] IAQ [redacted], again a [redacted], she had a [redacted]
4 [redacted] nowadays like somebody who maybe [redacted]
5 The other layperson was a lady called [redacted] who was
6 about [redacted] and unfortunately she had a [redacted]
7 [redacted] but both of them were good with us.

8 Q. Can I then look at the regime at Smyllum. Again you had
9 your own dormitory; is that right?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. How many boys would there be in this dormitory?

12 A. There would seem to be a lot more boys and the dormitory
13 was quite long and the beds were kind of crammed in.
14 There certainly was a row of beds side by side, the full
15 length of the dormitory. Another at this side
16 (indicates) and at certain times there would be beds in
17 the middle as well.

18 Q. If you look at the size of this room from top to bottom,
19 does this give you a sense as to --

20 A. I would say not far short of the blue screen right to
21 the wall, it would have been, and possibly longer. It
22 was a lot of boys.

23 Q. Then let's look at the morning regime. You have told us
24 about Bellvue and what happened there. What was the
25 position at Smyllum?

1 A. Well, Smyllum slightly different. Almost from the day
2 I arrived there I was to be an altar boy. I don't
3 remember the day I was told, you are now an altar boy,
4 but very quickly after arriving at Smyllum. So I would
5 be woke up by Ms [REDACTED] IAQ or whoever, around
6 6 o'clock, half 6 in the morning. I quietly got washed,
7 got ready and went to the chapel.

8 The priest who said Mass would be from St Mary's in
9 Lanark. They came up to say Mass every morning for the
10 nuns and by any local people who wanted to go to Mass at
11 7 o'clock at the morning. So my day started before Mass
12 and before most of the other wee boys would be out of
13 their bed.

14 Q. Did you witness anything in connection with the
15 bed-wetting at Smyllum?

16 A. The same problem prevailed in Smyllum as it did in
17 Bellvue, that some wee boys wet the bed and it seemed to
18 be the same type punishment: you would get a sheet over
19 the head or a skite or hit for wetting the bed. But
20 this time probably the ages of the boys in my dormitory
21 would have been -- I could have been one of the
22 youngest, so I don't know whether you grow out of
23 wetting the bed or the skite has cured it, I really
24 don't know, but there wasn't so much bed-wetting in
25 Smyllum as I recall in Bellvue.

1 Q. As you said, you were away before the other boys were
2 up?

3 A. Most mornings, yes.

4 Q. What about food at Smyllum?

5 A. I'm sorry?

6 Q. What about the food?

7 A. I would say it was quite ghastly. There was no
8 particular -- chicken wasn't invented as such that you
9 can get chicken every day of the week now. I think we
10 would get chicken on Easter Sunday or a feast day. The
11 rest of the time it was cooked on the basis that you are
12 going to feed 100 children. There were no choices. You
13 got whatever was put in front of you once again and
14 I wouldn't say it would be top-class cooks that done the
15 cooking, it was more catering for however many children.

16 Q. Did you have to eat it?

17 A. You had to eat what you were given.

18 Q. If you weren't able to?

19 A. It wasn't nice food at all. I struggled at times to
20 finish my meals for any reasons, same as I said
21 before -- carrots, fat on food -- but there comes
22 a point when you need to eat something to survive so we
23 would eat -- we were generally taught to clear your
24 plate and even to this day it still sticks in my head
25 but it wouldn't be a lot of food and it would be served

1 up to everybody the same. You walked past the table
2 with a blue and white plastic plate and somebody would
3 dunk the food on it, somebody put potatoes on it
4 whatever, you went and sat down in your seat and
5 proceeded to eat it.

6 MR MacAULAY: My Lady, we tend to have a short break at this
7 point. Would that be a good point to have it?

8 LADY SMITH: We are just going to have about a five-minute
9 break at this point and then we will resume after that.

10 (3.00 pm)

11 (A short break)

12 (3.10 pm)

13 LADY SMITH: Mr MacAulay.

14 MR MacAULAY: My Lady. I want now to ask you about
15 an incident that happened where a boy, a young boy, was
16 hit by a golf club and I want to ask you about it
17 because you were there when it happened.

18 A. I believe so, yes.

19 Q. You tell us about it at paragraphs 129 onwards in your
20 statement, but what you don't remember is where it
21 happened. You provided two options: it may have been at
22 West Linton, at summer camp, or the bottom field at
23 Smyllum.

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. I think there may be evidence that the boys had to

- 1 travel back on a bus, so that might indicate it is
2 somewhere out with Smyllum.
- 3 A. I believe more so than being at Smyllum. It was at
4 a place called West Linton, down south of Edinburgh
5 where annually certain of the boys would go in a bus or
6 two buses to West Linton. It was like an army barracks
7 camp and part of that, as I recall, there was a golf
8 club and maybe two or three old golf balls and the way
9 it worked was if you managed to get one of the golf
10 balls that had been hit, then you get a shot of the golf
11 club.
- 12 Q. But you were in the group that was taken on this
13 occasion?
- 14 A. Yes.
- 15 Q. Who was in charge of the group?
- 16 A. BAC
- 17 Q. Were there any nuns there?
- 18 A. Yes, the nuns came through as well.
- 19 Q. Was it a boys only or was it a mixed group?
- 20 A. I don't recall girls going to West Linton although they
21 may have done so. I believe we went for two weeks and
22 then we went back to Smyllum on the bus.
- 23 Q. Can I then take you to the incident that you witnessed.
24 You have mentioned that there was some golf balls and --
25 was it one golf club?

1 A. One golf club, an old rusty golf club, and I would have
2 been one of the smaller boys at the time, so I had no
3 chance of getting one of the golf balls and getting
4 a shot at the golf club. So it was kind of a mound or
5 a raised bit of grass and I was standing back to the
6 right --

7 LADY SMITH: Were you actually -- there is a golf course in
8 West Linton; do you think you were actually at the golf
9 course?

10 A. I believe that it was part of a field complex. There
11 may have been. It seemed like a raised bit of grass.

12 LADY SMITH: Which you would have for a tee on a golf
13 course.

14 A. Possibly. It could possibly have been. But by standing
15 down below, as it got busier and busier and more
16 arguments about whose turn it was for the golf club, the
17 boys started to close in on the particular boy that
18 swung the golf club and he never hit the ball, but it
19 caught somebody on the temple, the side of their head.

20 Q. So we can be clear about what happened then, it was
21 a boy from Smyllum who had the golf club in his hands?

22 A. Yes, definitely.

23 Q. He swung the golf club?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Was it in a backwards motion as if you were to --

1 A. No, he would have swung the club backwards and come
2 through the ball, missed the ball, and the
3 follow-through part is when it caught him on the side of
4 the head.

5 Q. Caught the other boy on the side of the head?

6 A. Yes. I believe it was this side of his head
7 (indicates).

8 Q. You are pointing to the right-hand side of your head?

9 A. Yes, mainly because of where he was standing. It wasn't
10 a wound where blood poured and poured, but you could
11 tell it wasn't right. But I don't believe he went away
12 in an ambulance as such. I believe back on the bus,
13 back to Smyllum, and I clearly remember being down at
14 the cinema, possibly the following Saturday, at the
15 matinée, and somebody come running along to tell us that
16 the wee boy had actually died. And that would be maybe
17 a week after the incident.

18 Q. So we know this boy was Francis McColl, I think.

19 A. Right.

20 Q. He died on 12 August 1964.

21 A. Okay.

22 Q. I don't know if that date means anything to you or not.
23 You would be about 13 or so then?

24 A. I would be about 13, yeah, and it would have been in say
25 my final year or final 18 months of my time at Smyllum.

1 Q. And from what you are saying, Michael, you had a clear
2 view of what happened here?

3 A. I can still picture it. If I close my eyes, I can see
4 two or three boys getting right in close. What they
5 were trying to do was grab the golf club so they could
6 get the next shot and invariably sort of got on top of
7 each other.

8 Q. Was BAC there at the time?

9 A. No, it was the boys on their own. There was no
10 supervision, somebody there to tell us what we could and
11 couldn't do.

12 Q. Again, if I can ask you then about birthdays and
13 Christmas at Smyllum.

14 What was the position there? Were they celebrated?

15 A. I clearly remember going to Mass and in those days they
16 thought it prudent to say three Masses on the trot
17 rather than one Mass. Christmas Day, I don't remember
18 anything different about it.

19 Q. And your birthday?

20 A. The only thing is my dad would come along and give us
21 fruit and chocolate, but they were not celebrated. We
22 never got presents or an acknowledgement that it was
23 your birthday.

24 LADY SMITH: Just going back to Francis McColl, you said you
25 remember hearing about the boy having died --

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 LADY SMITH: -- although you don't remember who it was. Do
3 you have any recollection of any sort of funeral or
4 service for the child at all?
- 5 A. No. That's one of the surprises. I believe he got back
6 to Smyllum, and he would have been hospitalised then,
7 but when we got told that he had died, there was never
8 like a Mass for him or any acknowledgement by the rest
9 of the boys to turn up at Mass or anything like that.
10 I don't remember anything that related to the fact that
11 he had died.
- 12 Q. On the issue of visits, you have already told me about
13 your father's visit. Did you have any visits when you
14 were at Smyllum from anyone from the Social Work
15 Department?
- 16 A. Absolutely not. No.
- 17 Q. I think you do tell us in your statement that you also
18 ran away on two or three occasions from Smyllum.
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. But when you went back what happened to you?
- 21 A. The same as Bellvue: I would have been punished by
22 beating.
- 23 Q. I think you say in your statement it may not have been
24 as severe as Bellvue.
- 25 A. Well, my recollection of Smyllum it wasn't as difficult,

1 if that's the right word, as Bellvue was. Perhaps there
2 was more boys there, but I still seemed to get hit, but
3 not the beatings as such. The ones I remember were in
4 the case of Lanark when I had gone down to jump on the
5 train to Glasgow and then get a bus to Dumbarton, but
6 always brought back again. There I would be taken aside
7 by the nun with nobody else there and punished, beat up
8 or whatever.

9 Q. What nun? Was there a particular nun who did that?

10 A. The predominant nun who I remember hitting me personally
11 was BAA and the second nun -- sometimes both of
12 them: one would watch while the other one hit me and the
13 other one could hit me and BAA could watch.

14 Q. You mention in your statement some involvement with
15 BAC who you have already mentioned. You
16 were in the brass band; is that right?

17 A. That is right.

18 Q. That meant that you had band practice on a regular
19 basis?

20 A. We went to band practice Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday,
21 Thursday, Friday every week without fail immediately
22 after supper or the evening meal. You automatically
23 just went to band practice.

24 Q. Was that in a particular room at Smyllum?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. What you say in your statement at paragraph 154 is that:

2 "I probably saw more cruelty in that room than
3 anywhere else in Smyllum."

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Can you describe what you mean by that?

6 A. Previously I have mentioned all the beatings I had ever
7 had were from the nuns. When [REDACTED] BAC [REDACTED] come along
8 it was a different thing altogether. This was
9 systemic -- I will choose my words very carefully in my
10 opinion of the man, but he had some party tricks.

11 A brass band is laid out almost in an U shape.
12 I played the [REDACTED] which was -- would have been to
13 the right of [REDACTED] BAC [REDACTED] and we would start playing
14 a piece of music and his wee party trick was to walk
15 round behind all the boys and listen carefully to the
16 notes we were actually playing. He carried like
17 a drumstick that he would use to direct us in the music.
18 He would come behind us when you heard the footsteps
19 stopping, one of two things would happen. He would use
20 the drumstick and always catch your ear which, believe
21 you me, is very sore. That happened to almost all the
22 boys in the band.

23 But when he was in a worse mood he would walk behind
24 and he would listen to the notes you were playing and
25 then his full hand or fist would come along, usually

1 from that side (indicates) --

2 Q. From the right side?

3 A. Yes, and it knocked you down in amongst all the other
4 trombone players. It wasn't a tap; the stick was as
5 hard as he could do it. The reason we knew was because
6 from where we were sitting I could see it happening to
7 that wee boy and that wee boy and so on and so forth.

8 But getting hit by [REDACTED] BAC [REDACTED] who was a grown
9 man as against a nun, you knew. What also happened was
10 because you were played a musical instrument, when he
11 hit you, you invariably split your lip wide open because
12 you were on the mouthpiece of the instrument. So when
13 he hit and you played the trombone, you got it there
14 (indicates), fell on the floor, but when you got back up
15 your slip would be split by the trombone.

16 Q. I think you tell us that this was a regular --

17 A. That was all the time. That was almost every piece of
18 music and we would go to band practice for maybe an hour
19 and a half, sometimes two hours. We were a good wee bad
20 for boys, well liked in the locality, but his method of
21 teaching you -- you could hit me all day long, it will
22 not make me a better [REDACTED] player, but that was his
23 attitude. If he punished you, you will get it right the
24 next time.

25 Q. Do you know if the nuns knew about this behaviour?

1 A. No I don't think -- I don't ever remember nuns -- the
2 band practice was [REDACTED] BAC [REDACTED] s domain and never
3 once do I remember a nun coming in to listen or watch or
4 anything.

5 Q. If I sort of run the clock forward a little bit to later
6 on, you actually were in Lanark at the time when you
7 realised that [REDACTED] BAC [REDACTED] was in a hospice and very
8 ill. That was some years later?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. You did go and see him?

11 A. Yes, it was a strange coincidence. For a number of
12 years I drove tankers with [REDACTED] and I was
13 given a delivery to the hospice at Lanark, at Smyllum,
14 and as I was putting the oil off, the caretaker said to
15 me, do you know Lanark, do you ever come to Lanark.
16 I said believe it or not I was brought up in
17 Smyllum Park -- the hospice is right on the perimeter
18 gates of what would have been known as Smyllum. He said
19 to me, "Were you ever in the band?" I says, "Yes,
20 unfortunately, I was in the band all the years I was
21 there". And he asked me did I remember [REDACTED] BAC [REDACTED]
22 And I just shook my head, "I can remember". He says,
23 "He is actually in bed dying, would you like to see
24 him?" And don't ask me why, but I said yes. He went
25 away and he brought back like a nursing sister and she

1 explained, take your overalls off, et cetera.

2 They took me into a room and a man -- there was no
3 way I could recognise him. I think he was in his final
4 days and he couldn't speak, he could do nothing, but at
5 that particular time I remember -- I don't think I have
6 ever hated anybody in my life but I came very close to
7 hating [REDACTED] BAC [REDACTED]. To see him there lying in
8 a bed, it was a very strange situation, but at the same
9 time my opinion would be, "Well, good enough for you?"
10 And I wouldn't never have said that about anybody.

11 [REDACTED] BAC [REDACTED] was a cruel man.

12 Q. I now want to ask you about another aspect of what
13 happened to you at Smyllum involving, I think, one or
14 two of the nuns, and that is at a time when you
15 developed psoriasis, which I think you tell us in your
16 statement you did develop. That's a skin condition,
17 isn't it?

18 A. It's all -- it's a touch of psoriasis. At the time,
19 from nowhere, my knees, the back of my knees, my ankles,
20 my elbows broke out in a horrible dry skin problem, and
21 we never had doctors. I don't ever remember going and
22 seeing a doctor. So any medication or whatever came
23 from the nuns. And I had had this for a wee while and
24 it was getting -- it was becoming really bad. Do you
25 want me to go on to --

1 Q. Before do you, what age were you when this happened?

2 A. I would have been 11/12-ish at the most.

3 Q. I think you do attribute this to nerves?

4 A. It predominantly is -- many times I went for treatment
5 privately into hospital and a nervous condition can
6 bring on psoriasis.

7 Q. Can you then tell us what happened when you developed
8 psoriasis and you were getting some treatment for it?

9 A. Well, I wasn't getting treatment. I never remember
10 being taken anywhere or given anything etc, at that
11 time. It was just something you put up with. Full
12 stop.

13 Q. But I think at one point Sister BAA became
14 involved with you in connection with your psoriasis?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Can you tell us about that?

17 A. Yes. In the boys' wash room the method of getting
18 a bath, if you would call it, there was a long trough,
19 half the length of this room, about 18 inches wide and
20 maybe a foot deep with two taps at the top end and
21 a plug at the bottom. And the way of everybody getting
22 a bath, they turned on the taps and you went into that
23 area and sat down and the water was generally cold by
24 the time it got to you, and you had a minute to wash
25 yourself and you got back out of the bath set up, and

1 there was about three partitioned areas where you got
2 dried and then got dressed again.

3 On one of these bath nights I was told by
4 Sister [BAA] to wait behind and there was another
5 boy who was told the same. I don't remember the other
6 boy having psoriasis; the word was never known. Anyway,
7 I was taken into this area by Sister [BAA] and told
8 to stand on a wooden bench. There was nobody else could
9 see us, and the other wee boy was taken into the next
10 area and I presume told to stand on a bench.

11 She then produced this tin of ointment, the size of
12 your hand, with a lid, and I was told to hold the tin
13 and Sister [BAA] started taking lumps of this
14 ointment.

15 Q. Can I just ask what was your state of dress at this
16 moment?

17 A. For myself?

18 Q. Yes.

19 A. Once I was in there she told me to take my shorts off
20 and stand on the bench. So I would be completely naked.

21 She then proceeded to take this ointment and rubbed
22 it very quickly on my knees, behind my knees, my elbows
23 and then for the next good while only rubbed it round
24 private parts, which I never had psoriasis there, that
25 was the strange bit.

1 This went on for quite a while and at the same time
2 the nun in the next area, her and [BAA] were
3 giggling, laughing, etc.

4 Q. Now the nun in the next area, was she the nun who was
5 normally with Sister [BAA]

6 A. Yes. The taller of the two. I will call her [AFJ]
7 because I think that's what her name is, but I might be
8 wrong. And there came a point when they decided to swap
9 over, so [BAA] went into that part and the other nun
10 came to me and proceeded to do the whole thing again,
11 and the ointment was kind of a grey-green muddy colour.
12 When she decided she was finished, we were told to go
13 and sit in a bath of cold water and wash it all off.

14 Q. Now, did that happen again?

15 A. Once very briefly. The second time there was only
16 myself and Sister [BAA] and she proceeded to go
17 straight -- there was no pretence about putting it on my
18 elbows or anything -- and she went straight to my
19 private area and continued to rub the ointment to create
20 arousal, if that's the word, and she probably got fed up
21 with it, but she walked out and said "Get a bath and get
22 dressed and come down."

23 Q. At the time did you think there was something
24 inappropriate about what was going on?

25 A. Oh yes. I wasn't -- if I was 11 or 12, I wouldn't know

1 what I know now, but I knew what was happening was
2 wrong. The same thing, the fact that all the boys were
3 there and then they were all sent away, and it's strange
4 to describe, but I felt what was happening was wrong,
5 for the simple reason it was nothing to do with
6 psoriasis and that was the only reason I believe she had
7 me there or claimed.

8 Q. So did that happen just on the two occasions you have
9 told us about?

10 A. The first occasion, there was myself and another boy and
11 the two nuns swapped over halfway through. The second
12 time it was only BAA and myself.

13 Q. But those were the only two occasions?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Now can I take you to page 26 of your statement, where
16 at paragraph 171 what you say is this:

17 "The nuns systematically hit children. I can't
18 explain it."

19 You give some examples. Just that description
20 "systematically hit children", was that your experience
21 of Smyllum?

22 A. The same, exactly the same. How we carried out the
23 cleaning etc, the paragraph this refers to was that, if
24 nobody was watching, once we had finished polishing the
25 floor we would use the cloths, the dusters, we ran along

1 and jumped onto the cloth and slid across the floor. It
2 was just a game. But one of the boys in the right-hand
3 side of his hip, quite a big splinter went in and came
4 back out and somebody run away to get whoever, and
5 I remember Sister [REDACTED] BAA coming back and she was more
6 annoyed at what we were doing than the wee boy and he
7 waited there a long time before they took him away.

8 But I remember unfortunately getting a skite that
9 day because it was "probably" my fault; that was just,
10 look about, and they see you and, bang, you get a skite,
11 when it wasn't my fault, everybody was playing at
12 slides.

13 Q. At 173 you say:

14 "The two nuns that hit the most were
15 Sister [REDACTED] BAA and another".

16 I think you have told us about her and this is why
17 you say:

18 "... they were like a tag team".

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. So they were together --

21 A. All the time. When it was time to go up to the
22 dormitory, the dormitory was above the school, which was
23 a detached building set at the rear of the whole
24 property, and we were taken from a sort of playroom when
25 it was time for bed and every night the two of them

1 would walk side by side and march us all up from the
2 dormitory. They always seemed to be together.

3 Q. This business that you tell us about, if someone did
4 something like breaking a window, for example, the
5 person who got hit was the first person -- first boy
6 that would be seen, as opposed to the culprit?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Is that the way it was?

9 A. Yes, I had one instance of that that where the
10 boilerhouse was was also -- we never knew at the time --
11 adjacent to the girls' shower room and the ball hit the
12 glass and the whole window disintegrated and a nun come
13 running out, and I was almost the first person she came
14 to, never asked who dunnit. Almost never broke her
15 stride and hit me a wallop across the ear. I believe
16 someone else got a wallop as well, but that was the
17 normal.

18 Q. Now, then, can I take you to the time Michael then when
19 you left Smyllum. Was that in 1964?

20 A. Yes, I would have been -- I believe I was about 13 and
21 a half, so it would be about 64ish.

22 Q. Did you go back to live with your father?

23 A. Yes, the reason it was explained to me was when I became
24 13 and a half it was allowable for my father to bring me
25 home and look after me in the house.

1 Q. At that time it was just yourself and not your brother
2 and sister?

3 A. No, my sister stayed on in Smyllum and it was about
4 another year and a half before my younger brother came
5 home, probably about the same age as when I had come
6 home.

7 Q. So far as your position in relation to Bellvue or
8 Smyllum would be concerned, as you say in paragraph 192:

9 "I never felt any love or affection in either
10 Bellvue or Smyllum"?

11 A. Never. The opposite.

12 Q. Now, you do provide us with some information about what
13 happened to you after you left Smyllum and what your
14 career became. If we look at paragraph 210 on page 31.
15 You managed to achieve quite an important position as
16 an operations manager for a [REDACTED]

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Before you set up your own [REDACTED] business?

19 A. That is correct, yes.

20 Q. What about the impact do you think your experiences at
21 Bellvue and Smyllum had on you, can you --

22 A. It is actually a question I have asked myself for many,
23 many a year. I feel as if I have been successful in my
24 career as such, in achieving what I have achieved, and
25 I have often asked myself is it because of the regime

1 that I was brought up in or was it something else more
2 assertive coming from myself? And when I got to -- one
3 time I was [REDACTED] operations manager for [REDACTED]
4 which was probably as I thought then as far as I could
5 go, I looked after [REDACTED] and a [REDACTED]
6 [REDACTED]. And I often thought -- I don't know the
7 right word -- was it because of or was it in spite of
8 that I was driven, that determined to make sure that it
9 would work and I would get it right? And I believe, if
10 I had to come down on the side of one of them, it was
11 because of what happened I was that determined after
12 that that I would work hard to make a go of it, if that
13 explains...

14 Q. Yes. I think you also tell us in your statement that it
15 also had an impact on how you yourself dealt with your
16 own children because you tell us --

17 A. Very much so. I have a son and a daughter, I'm very
18 proud of both of them, proud of the way they have been
19 brought up from babies all the way through to now, and
20 they are now early 40s, with children of their own. And
21 all through my career as such I was determined to get
22 things right to provide for them and that's never really
23 changed all the way through, I have been there with
24 them. But I also made sure they would never ever be in
25 the same position as I was.

- 1 Q. Can I take you to page 34 of your statement Michael,
2 paragraph 230. You are telling us here about a time
3 when you went back to Smyllum?
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. It was a derelict building, so it was quite a long time
6 after you had been there. But you managed to get
7 through a broken door into the building?
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. Can you tell me what your experience was?
- 10 A. The background to it was I met my wife [REDACTED] this is
11 going back 20 years or so ago, and I had obviously
12 talked about Smyllum, Bellvue and one day we decided to
13 drive through to Lanark to show [REDACTED] what Smyllum
14 actually was. And when we arrived there, the building
15 was truly derelict, but the front door was lying askew.
16 I think the vandals had got in.
- 17 We climbed in through the door to look at the place
18 and I had the strangest feeling I have ever had. The
19 hairs on the back of my neck stood up as if the ghosts
20 were still there and there was absolute silence, but to
21 walk about and hear the noises, hear the dog that was
22 there barking, hear the boys playing football, hear
23 people screaming who were getting hit. It was very,
24 very strange and I never went back since.
- 25 Q. Can I take you to that part of your statement, Michael,

1 where you set out on page 35 the lessons that you say
2 should be learned. I don't know, would you mind reading
3 from paragraph 236 through to paragraph 240? You can
4 either read it on the screen or in what you have in
5 front of you.

6 A. I will read it off the screen if that's ok.

7 Q. If you don't mind.

8 A. "There needs to be transparency. Transparency of the
9 people who are caring, of the people who are looking at
10 those doing the caring and of the ones looking at them.
11 There should not be such closed environments, there
12 should be people watching, listening and recording every
13 single thing that's going on.

14 "They should be answerable as well, nobody was
15 answerable in those days. It was such a closed
16 environment and my theory is that every single one of
17 them was involved in it. They all knew about it or were
18 guilty by association and if that same group of people
19 shut up about it, nobody would ever know. In that kind
20 of environment they could do whatever they wanted to do.

21 "I feel personally I will never get explanations but
22 I don't want that. I would like there to be some
23 recognition by someone about what these people did. All
24 I have seen until now is a denial, "oh we're nuns, we
25 would never do that" or "if it happened we weren't aware

1 of it". Everybody respects nuns and priests but the
2 truth is we have seen another side of that.

3 "If nothing else came out except an acceptance. I'm
4 not sure what good an apology does, I think a lot of
5 people have been hurt by it.

6 "I have been lucky I have come out okay, but there
7 is another hundred who haven't. I know there's people
8 that were there, it's probably destroyed them. How do
9 you answer that? There's no answer for them, nothing to
10 make their values change. It's deny, deny, deny, but
11 I can honestly say to myself, and to you today, that
12 I have seen it and experienced it, it's in black and
13 white and nothing can change that."

14 Q. Thank you. Now Michael, the last thing I want to put to
15 you is that the Inquiry has been able to speak to some
16 nuns who are likely to have been at Smyllum during the
17 same period that you were or part of the period that you
18 were there, and their position is that the nuns at
19 Smyllum were kind, caring people; there was no physical
20 abuse and it was a happy environment. What's your
21 reaction to that?

22 A. I will use the word out and out liars, I'm not sure if
23 that is allowable.

24 Q. No, if that's --

25 A. Everybody who lived in Smyllum and Bellvue, all the

1 laypeople, all of the nuns must have known exactly what
2 was going on and they done nothing to stop it. So for
3 the nuns to come out now and deny it; they can't take
4 away what's in my head, what I personally experienced
5 and they can't take away some of the things that I seen,
6 that won't change, that's in my head and it is there
7 because that's what happened.

8 Q. Thank you Michael. Those are all the questions I have
9 for you. My Lady, I have received no written requests
10 for questions, and I don't know if there's to be any
11 questions from anyone else?

12 LADY SMITH: Thank you. Could I check whether there are any
13 outstanding applications for questions? No. Everyone
14 is shaking their heads.

15 Michael, thank you very much for coming along today.
16 I note what you said at the end that it has been
17 difficult to do so, but very grateful to you for coming
18 and sharing your memories of what happened when you were
19 a child.

20 A. Thank you very much.

21 LADY SMITH: I'm now able to let you go.

22 A. Thank you.

23 LADY SMITH: Mr MacAulay.

24 MR MacAULAY: Now, my Lady, that's all the evidence

25 I planned to lead today having regard to the hour. Next

1 week we have another programme of oral evidence and
2 readings.

3 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much. We start on Tuesday in
4 the usual way at 10 o'clock. I will rise now for the
5 break between now and Tuesday morning. 10 o'clock
6 Tuesday.

7 (3.50 pm)

8 (The Inquiry adjourned until 10.00 am on
9 Tuesday, 5th December 2017)

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