

1 Wednesday, 25 April 2018

2 (10.00 am)

3 LADY SMITH: Good morning.

4 When we rose yesterday evening, Mr MacAulay had
5 indicated that we had two witnesses who are going to
6 give evidence this morning. I take it the first one is
7 ready to start?

8 MR MacAULAY: Yes, my Lady. Good morning. The first
9 witness, who is an applicant and does not want to be
10 anonymous, is Christopher David Buchan Booth.

11 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

12 MR CHRISTOPHER DAVID BUCHAN BOOTH (sworn)

13 LADY SMITH: That microphone should be a real help in
14 enabling you to make yourself heard. You may need to
15 move around at times to do that, but we'll let you know
16 if your voice isn't coming over clearly enough.
17 Mr MacAulay will also explain what the red file is all
18 about. I'm now going to pass over to Mr MacAulay to ask
19 questions.

20 Mr MacAulay.

21 Questions from MR MacAULAY

22 MR MacAULAY: Christopher, can I take from you your full
23 name: are you Christopher David Buchan Booth?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. And were you born on [REDACTED] 1941?

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 Q. So you're now 77?
- 3 A. Yes.
- 4 Q. You've come here because you are what we call an
5 applicant to give your evidence, but you are also
6 a child migrant, is that correct --
- 7 A. Yes.
- 8 Q. -- in that you were migrated to Australia when you were
9 a very young boy?
- 10 A. Yes.
- 11 Q. Before I look at all of that, can I turn to your
12 statement, which is in the red folder in front of you.
13 For the transcript, the reference is WIT.001.001.3642.
14 If you could just turn to the very last page of the
15 statement at 3676.
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. Can you confirm that you have signed this statement?
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. And do you tell us in the last paragraph:
20 "I have no objection to my witness statement being
21 published as part of the evidence to the inquiry"?
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. And do you also say:
24 "I believe the facts stated in this witness
25 statement are true"?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. I will be asking you questions based essentially on what
3 you've said in your statement. But if you remember
4 things that you hadn't remembered before, feel free to
5 tell us about those things. Likewise, if I ask you
6 a question, for example about a date, and you can't
7 remember, just say you can't remember.

8 A. Okay, yes.

9 Q. Can I, first of all, touch upon your life before care.
10 I think you do tell us a little bit about that in your
11 statement.

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. You were living in Aberdeen; is that right?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. And in the main in the early part of your life, were you
16 looked after by an aunt?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. But did there come a point in time when in particular
19 your grandmother died and your aunt decided that she
20 could no longer look after you?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. What happened after that?

23 A. Well, basically, what happened is that my auntie sent me
24 back to my mother and, because I was a Catholic, my
25 grandfather would not let me in the house, so I was sent

- 1 to another auntie. And a week later I was in
2 Nazareth House.
- 3 Q. Was your mother at that time staying with your
4 grandfather?
- 5 A. Yes. It was actually the first time I'd ever seen her.
- 6 Q. Because you'd been living with your aunt before that?
- 7 A. Yes.
- 8 Q. According to the records that we've been able to see,
9 Christopher, you were admitted to Nazareth House on
10 22 September 1951.
- 11 A. It was actually 27 September.
- 12 Q. I'm sorry, you're quite right. 27 September 1951.
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. So you would have been aged 10 at that time?
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. We'll come to see how and why you left, but you left on
17 about 30 April 1952.
- 18 A. Yes, I'm not exactly sure of the date because I only
19 know the date that I arrived in Australia and I worked
20 it back because the boat took about six weeks.
- 21 Q. So that would take you to about April of 1952?
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. By then, [REDACTED]
24 you'd be aged 11 when you came to leave --
- 25 A. Yes.

1 Q. -- Nazareth House. On that basis you'd have spent about
2 six to seven months in Nazareth House?

3 A. Yes.

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10 Q. Can I then just look at the very first part of your stay
11 at Nazareth House. Can you describe the layout to me?

12 A. I don't remember a lot of it, but I do remember we
13 basically slept in dormitories and there was a big
14 recreation room and there was a church. That's
15 basically the three parts of it that I remember.

16 Q. If I showed you a photograph, would that --

17 A. I know what the building looks like outside.

18 Q. I'll put a photograph on the screen. This is at
19 NAZ.001.001.0254. This'll come on the screen. I really
20 want to scroll down to the second photograph.

21 I think we're there seeing the view of the front of
22 the building; is that right?

23 A. That's correct, yes: that's on Claremont Street.

24 Q. In Aberdeen?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. And I think we can see the front door. Are you able to
2 say where your section was within the building?

3 A. My left -- if you take it from the front door, it was on
4 the right-hand side.

5 Q. On the right-hand side?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. If you're looking at the front door?

8 A. No, no. If I was the front door --

9 Q. Ah yes.

10 A. -- it was the right side. So if I'm looking at the
11 door, it was on the left side.

12 Q. And so far as boys and girls were concerned, were they
13 kept separate?

14 A. Yes. You weren't allowed to mix, yes.

15 Q. Was the girls' side then on the other side --

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. You did mention the chapel. If we look at another
18 photograph at NAZ.001.001.0255 -- we'll turn that round
19 for you.

20 A. Yes, that is basically the entrance to the church.

21 Q. We can see staircases both to left and right.

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. If you look at the bottom photograph, does that give us
24 a view of the church? We'll scroll down to the bottom
25 photograph.

- 1 A. Yes.
- 2 LADY SMITH: Can we rotate that top photograph or not? You
3 may need to rotate the whole lot for us to see the top
4 photograph the right way round.
- 5 MR MacAULAY: As you can see, Christopher, the photograph is
6 on its side, but you can work out, I think --
- 7 A. Yes. Basically, I don't ever remember being on those
8 stairs. I think I probably was because I think that's
9 the only way you can get upstairs.
- 10 Q. Was where you went to sleep upstairs?
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. Perhaps I should ask you about that. What were the
13 sleeping arrangements?
- 14 A. It was basically like a dormitory, like, you know, a row
15 of beds down one side, a row of beds down the other
16 side. There was also beds down the middle facing that
17 way (indicating), instead of being against the walls,
18 facing out, they were actually -- and I'm not sure how
19 many there were, but there was a row of beds. So you
20 had two aisles down either side of the beds.
- 21 Q. And this would be a boys' dormitory?
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. How many boys do you think --
- 24 A. I'm not sure.
- 25 Q. And were you in that same dormitory throughout your time

- 1 in Nazareth House?
- 2 A. Yes, the whole time, yes.
- 3 Q. I think you tell us in your statement that the person in
4 charge was the Mother Superior, but --
- 5 A. I don't think she was the Mother Superior, the lady in
6 charge of us.
- 7 Q. No, no, was there a Mother Superior?
- 8 A. Yes, there would have been a Mother Superior, yes.
- 9 Q. Did you ever see the Mother Superior?
- 10 A. Not while I was there, but in 1979 I visited the
11 orphanage to try and get some information and I met
12 a Mother Superior then. But they gave me no
13 information.
- 14 Q. And it's unlikely that would have been the same
15 Mother Superior.
- 16 A. It's possibly a different one because we're talking
17 about 1952 to 1979, we're talking about 27 years'
18 difference.
- 19 Q. But insofar as you're concerned, was there a particular
20 nun in charge of you?
- 21 A. Yes, there was two nuns: one I don't remember her name,
22 but the other one was a Sister LDR
- 23 Q. So far as the one you don't remember, have you any
24 recollection about her at all --
- 25 A. No.

- 1 Q. -- as to what she was like?
- 2 A. No.
- 3 Q. What about Sister LDR
- 4 A. I'm not allowed to say, but she wasn't a nice person.
- 5 Q. We'll look at this later, but can you summarise for us
- 6 why you say that?
- 7 A. Well, she was very cruel. She used to carry a big long
- 8 cane round with her. If you got in her way, you were
- 9 likely to feel her wrath. There was a time -- actually,
- 10 it was when I had my 11th birthday -- evidently when
- 11 children had a birthday they used to give them some
- 12 sweets, but I refused to let them know it was my
- 13 birthday and I got a thrashing for not telling them.
- 14 Q. I will look at that later with you.
- 15 Can I ask you now, before we do that, did you see
- 16 any non-religious staff?
- 17 A. No.
- 18 Q. So what about the work of the --
- 19 A. I didn't see any of the workers, like even when we were
- 20 out in the playgrounds, it was always nuns. I didn't
- 21 see anybody else other than nuns.
- 22 Q. What about the work that would be necessary to run an
- 23 establishment like Nazareth House --
- 24 A. I don't remember seeing anybody other than nuns.
- 25 Q. Okay. Can you then give me some insight into the

- 1 routine that you can remember? In the morning, for
2 example, what was the --
- 3 A. Basically, in the morning, they got us up and they then
4 took us down to church, we said our prayers, and they
5 took us into a dining room, we had breakfast. And after
6 breakfast, if it was a weekday, we went to school at
7 St Mary's in Summer Street --
- 8 Q. That was the primary school, was it?
- 9 A. Yes. Evidently, I was halfway between primary and
10 secondary, so if I'd been 11 at the time, I'd have
11 probably been sent to St Peter's in Nelson Street.
- 12 Q. Leisure time, can you tell us about that?
- 13 A. I don't know much about leisure time. I do remember we
14 did have leisure time. There was -- again, if we talk
15 from the front door, me being the front door, the left
16 side, the recreation area was on the left side. It was
17 basically all tarred and we used to play there. It had
18 a big wall between our recreation area and the girls'
19 recreation area to keep us separate.
- 20 Q. Looking at visits, did any family members come to visit
21 you when you were there?
- 22 A. I only remember seeing my mother once. I don't remember
23 much about it, but I only remember seeing her once.
- 24 Q. And did she come into the building then to see you?
- 25 A. Yes, they had a room where she was sitting in and I was

- 1 brought into the room.
- 2 Q. Can you say when during your time there that was? Was
3 it early on or later on?
- 4 A. I'm not sure. I'm not sure. I know it was some time
5 in that time. I know it was nowhere near the time that
6 I was sent away. So it was well before that.
- 7 Q. And when you saw your mother when she came to visit,
8 what about the nuns? Was there a nun present?
- 9 A. Yes.
- 10 Q. Do you know why the nun was there?
- 11 A. To make sure you didn't tell her anything that was going
12 on.
- 13 Q. And what about a social worker or a children's officer?
- 14 A. No, never saw a social worker or anybody -- I never saw
15 anybody -- as I said, I remember seeing my mum once, but
16 I never saw anybody else.
- 17 Q. I think it's right to say that you have seen and
18 recovered some records; is that correct?
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. In relation to your going into Nazareth House in the
21 first place, did a priest have something to do with
22 that?
- 23 A. Yes. The parish priest of the Sacred Heart in Torry.
24 I can't remember his name, but somehow he had organised
25 with my mother to put me into Nazareth House.

1 I basically would say that from the moment my auntie
2 sent me back to my mum, that's when she started it,
3 because I don't think you'd be able to get it done in
4 a day. As I said, I was with my other auntie for
5 a week. So she must have had gone to see the parish
6 priest basically the day I arrived there.

7 Q. And you think he had some influence on you being placed
8 in Nazareth House?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. If I turn to your statement at paragraph 20,
11 Christopher, one thing you say there -- and this is on
12 the next page that we were on -- it'll come on the
13 screen. It's on the screen now. You say:

14 "There was no adult at Nazareth House who was nice
15 to me and there was no one I could turn to to confide
16 in."

17 A. Yes, that's correct.

18 Q. Can you just explain that to me?

19 A. Well, I can only ever remember, as I said, seeing two
20 nuns. There was Sister **LDR** and another nun, and
21 I don't remember seeing anybody else. I think there
22 were other nuns there, but I don't remember any others.
23 But there was no affection or anything shown to any of
24 the boys.

25 Q. You then go on to tell us about discipline and things

- 1 that happened to you, beginning at paragraph 22.
- 2 A. Yes.
- 3 Q. You describe the discipline as very strict.
- 4 A. Oh, it was really harsh, yes. I mean, I remember on one
- 5 occasion one of the little boys had wet the bed and
- 6 evidently if you wet the bed there, you had to wash your
- 7 own sheets. That's what they made them do. Because
- 8 he was only a little boy I went to help him and I got
- 9 a thrashing for helping him because no one was supposed
- 10 to help them and they had to do it themselves.
- 11 Q. You have used the word "thrashing" already. When you
- 12 use that description, can you give us an insight as to
- 13 what happened?
- 14 A. Well, yes. In those days, because I was only about 10
- 15 at the time, we all wore short trousers. So when you
- 16 got punished they made sure you weren't hit in any spot
- 17 that could be seen. I got hit across the back of the
- 18 hips, the knee line, and also across the back. There
- 19 was no such thing as -- when you see it now, you'd get
- 20 six of the best on your hand. There was none of that.
- 21 It was a lot more than six. They used to hit you until
- 22 you cried.
- 23 Q. What was used to hit you?
- 24 A. A cane.
- 25 Q. What you tell us in paragraph 23 is the nuns carried

- 1 canes about with them all the time.
- 2 A. Yes.
- 3 Q. Were the canes visible, could you see the canes?
- 4 A. Um ... You know, the sort of clothes they had on,
5 basically you couldn't really see it because with the
6 folds they had it ... But it come out fairly quickly,
7 so they had it in a spot that they could get at easily.
- 8 Q. And when you say that you would get a thrashing, you'd
9 be struck, I think you tell us, on the back of your
10 shoulders and the back of your knees; is that right?
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. Would there be marks left?
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. You have mentioned Sister **LDR**
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. What about other nuns. Did any other nuns --
- 17 A. I think the other nun probably did, but I don't remember
18 her giving us anything.
- 19 Q. So was it really Sister **LDR** that you're focusing
20 upon?
- 21 A. Yes.
- 22 Q. How long would a thrashing last?
- 23 A. Until you cried. It depended on how long it took you to
24 cry.
- 25 Q. Would you cry?

- 1 A. Yes, I did, yes, a few times.
- 2 Q. You've already mentioned your 11th birthday and what
3 happened. You tell us about that in your statement.
4 Can I just understand what happened on that particular
5 day?
- 6 A. Evidently, on someone's birthday, the nuns used to give
7 them a few sweets, and I had been pally with one of the
8 boys there. I told him it was my birthday and he said,
9 "You've got to tell the sisters". I said, "They know my
10 birthday, they know when it is", and I just didn't tell
11 them and because I didn't tell them, I got a thrashing
12 again.
- 13 Q. Was that from Sister [REDACTED] LDR
- 14 A. Yes.
- 15 Q. And what did this thrashing involve?
- 16 A. Well, I'm not sure how many times, but again, as I said,
17 it was until you basically broke down and started
18 crying.
- 19 Q. Was it the same sort of approach, by being struck on the
20 back and the --
- 21 A. Yes, wherever it couldn't be seen.
- 22 Q. You tell us about climbing the outside wall on
23 occasions.
- 24 A. Yes. I mean, being a kid, you know, sort of thing. We
25 thought it would be great if we tried to climb the wall

1 to see the girls. Now and again you'd get caught doing
2 it.

3 Q. And what happened?

4 A. You got a thrashing.

5 Q. When you use the word "thrashing" then, are we to
6 understand it's the same sort of procedure where you'd
7 be stuck with a cane --

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. -- several times on the back --

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. You give us one example in your statement of a maths
12 teacher giving you a reward for having done well in
13 a maths test.

14 A. Yes. That was when I went to St Mary's in
15 Summer Street. Because we were being sent out to school
16 by -- I don't know why, but I was very good at maths,
17 and the teacher of the class put us into teams. We were
18 given a competition. The team I belonged to, we won the
19 competition, so he gave us some money each. On the way
20 back to Nazareth House, I spent some of it. When I got
21 back to Nazareth House, I got again a thrashing because
22 I didn't bring all the money back to Nazareth House.
23 I should have brought the money back and given it to the
24 nuns.

25 Q. Who gave you the thrashing?

1 A. Sister **LDR** I'm sorry to mention her all the time,
2 but she's now dead.

3 Q. But she was the nun who was caring for you?

4 A. Yes. Well, if you call it care.

5 Q. Well, she was in charge of you?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. And perhaps I should ask you this: did you form an
8 impression as to how many boys she was in charge of?

9 A. I think, if I can remember from when I was
10 at Boys' Town, I'd say probably 60 to 100.

11 Q. So if that's the number of boys that were there, she was
12 in charge of all the boys?

13 A. Yes: but as I said, there were other nuns that I wasn't
14 aware of, but they were helping her.

15 Q. Perhaps I can just put this document to you. This is
16 at -- you won't have seen it before but I'll take you
17 through it. It is NAZ.001.001.0265.

18 LADY SMITH: Just for a moment, going back to the maths
19 competition, do I take it from what you say that nobody
20 back at Nazareth House said "well done" to you when you
21 got back?

22 A. No, they didn't.

23 LADY SMITH: Because that was quite an achievement.

24 A. Yes.

25 LADY SMITH: You must have been very pleased.

- 1 A. Well, I've always been good at maths and I never
2 remember getting less than 90.
- 3 LADY SMITH: That's pretty good. But nobody praised you at
4 Nazareth House?
- 5 A. No.
- 6 MR MacAULAY: The document I've put on the screen for you,
7 Christopher, is a list of statistics that have been
8 provided to us by the Sisters of Nazareth in connection
9 with the numbers --
- 10 A. It's pretty close.
- 11 Q. -- at different institutions.
- 12 If you focus on the time you were in Nazareth House
13 in Aberdeen, which is the one to the left, you'll see
14 "Aberdeen" at the top and you see the list for boys --
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. -- and according to this, in December 1951 --
- 17 A. There was 86.
- 18 Q. -- and in December 1952, there was 73. So those are the
19 sort of numbers?
- 20 A. Yes.
- 21 Q. What you have said to me, that fits in with what you've
22 been telling me.
- 23 A. Yes.
- 24 Q. But you believe that Sister **LDR** was in charge of all
25 the boys?

1 A. Yes, I definitely think she was in charge of all the --
2 I mean, to have -- to be in charge of that many boys,
3 there must have been other nuns giving her a hand. As
4 I said, I remember one, but I'm pretty sure there must
5 have been more.

6 Q. Perhaps I should have asked you this before, but the age
7 range of the boys, did you form any impression as to
8 what that was?

9 A. I'm not sure what age they started at, but it went up to
10 about 16, because when you were at ... I think going to
11 school, I think if you were, say, 10, they classed that
12 you were still at primary school, so they sent you to
13 primary school. Once you were 11, they then assumed you
14 were going to secondary school. But before I got sent
15 to Nazareth House, I was actually in secondary school at
16 St Peter's when I lived with my auntie, so I was
17 actually dropped one or two classes just because of my
18 age.

19 LADY SMITH: With a [REDACTED] birthday you're at that stage
20 of the year where you could start and be younger, at the
21 younger end of the year, or postpone --

22 A. I was actually four and a half --

23 LADY SMITH: -- and be older --

24 A. -- when I started school --

25 LADY SMITH: Yes, right.

1 So that would fit then --

2 A. Yes.

3 LADY SMITH: -- if you weren't yet 5 when you started

4 school, you'd have got through the grades for primary

5 school to be starting at the secondary school.

6 A. Yes, in Aberdeen the council used to pay for the bus

7 because I had -- my auntie lived in Northfield, so I had

8 to get from Northfield into Summer Street, which was --

9 if you know Aberdeen, it's near the start of the

10 Gallowgate. The school's not there any longer.

11 MR MacAULAY: You've already mentioned bed-wetting in

12 connection with one particular child. As far as you

13 were concerned, I think you tell us you never wet the

14 bed.

15 A. No, I've never, ever wet the bed.

16 Q. But you were aware that a number of boys did?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Can you explain to me what the procedure was then if

19 boys did wet the bed?

20 A. Basically, irrespective of how old they were, because

21 they wet the bed, they had to wash their own sheets --

22 and there was a room -- I said -- I mentioned the hall,

23 the rectory -- like a gym, like at the end of the gym,

24 there was sort of a washroom type thing with big sinks

25 and baths, and that's where the boys had to wash their

1 sheets.

2 Q. Would you see boys taking sheets --

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. -- from their beds to wash the sheets?

5 A. Yes. Because actually, they thought that -- I'm only

6 making an assumption, but I think they thought that if

7 they made the boys wash their own beds, that would stop

8 them from wetting the bed.

9 Q. You've told us already about this younger boy; I think

10 you thought he was about 5 years old.

11 A. Yes. I'm not exactly sure how old he was.

12 Q. But he was a small little boy?

13 A. He was about half my size.

14 Q. At that time?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. And he had wet his bed on, I think you said, a couple of

17 occasions?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. And you helped him?

20 A. Yes, I went to help because I thought he was only a tiny

21 little thing and he needed help, so I went to help him.

22 Q. So how did it come to be that it was realised -- well,

23 what help were you giving him?

24 A. I was helping him to wash the sheet.

25 Q. Did a nun see that you were doing it?

- 1 A. Yes. Sister LDR came in and caught me helping the
2 boy.
- 3 Q. And did she say anything to you?
- 4 A. Well, she dragged me -- from memory -- the back of the
5 neck or my hair and pulled me away and said I was -- I'm
6 not sure of the exact words, but it wasn't
7 complimentary, basically saying I was very naughty for
8 breaking the rules and helping the boy to wash his
9 sheets. And then I paid the price.
- 10 Q. And that was what you've described already as
11 a thrashing?
- 12 A. Yes.
- 13 Q. And that again would involve the use of the cane several
14 times until you cried?
- 15 A. Yes. They were very happy to see that they could break
16 you.
- 17 Q. And what about washing itself, when you came to wash
18 yourselves? What was the procedure then?
- 19 A. To be quite honest, I don't ever remember washing myself
20 or having a shower or a bath in Nazareth House. I don't
21 ever remember that.
- 22 Q. But one thing you tell us in your statement at
23 paragraph 29 is that when you did wash yourselves, you'd
24 be checked.
- 25 A. Oh yes.

- 1 Q. Can you tell me about that?
- 2 A. Well, what they did is they checked, you know, your
3 neck, behind your ears, in your ears, and your hands,
4 front and back, and if they caught any spots that
5 weren't clean, then all hell broke loose.
- 6 Q. What would happen?
- 7 A. You'd get a thrashing again.
- 8 Q. You have mentioned Sister [REDACTED] LDR [REDACTED] but were other nuns
9 involved in this process?
- 10 A. Well, she wasn't the only one that, you know, took the
11 cane to us, but she was the prime instigator, if I can
12 use those words. She was the main one because sometimes
13 what would happen is that one of the other nuns would
14 send you to Sister [REDACTED] LDR [REDACTED]
- 15 I remember when I was in St Peter's school, this is
16 when I lived with my auntie, if you did anything wrong
17 at the school you were sent to the headmaster's office
18 for the headmaster's punishment, but that was basically
19 usually six of the best, which you could take, you know,
20 in those days. That was just classed as discipline.
21 I mean, it really was discipline compared to
22 Nazareth House.
- 23 It's like anything, if you do the wrong thing and
24 you get caught, you've got to take your punishment.
- 25 Q. Was the punishment or the thrashing, as you called it,

1 inflicted --

2 A. Not at the school.

3 Q. No, no. The questions I was going to ask was: was the

4 thrashing you experienced at Nazareth House a more

5 painful experience --

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. -- than getting the belt at school?

8 A. We didn't get the belt, it was again a cane, but you

9 just put your hand out, the headmaster -- because he was

10 the only one that dished out any punishment if the

11 children at school had been causing problems.

12 Q. The thrashings at Nazareth House then, were these more

13 painful --

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. -- than what might have happened at school?

16 A. Yes, you didn't feel what happened at school.

17 Q. Can I just go back to the bed-wetting. One thing you do

18 say in paragraph 28 at the very end is that the

19 bed-wetters would usually get a rubber sheet on their

20 bed after that.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. You say that.

23 A. What they did is when they -- you used to have to make

24 your own beds, but obviously because they were too small

25 they didn't make their own beds, but what happened was

1 any of the boys that were bed-wetters, they put a rubber
2 sheet underneath the normal sheet so that -- obviously
3 I'm making an assumption -- that wouldn't go through to
4 the mattress.

5 Q. One thing I have been asked to ask you is were you aware
6 at any time of rubber sheets with batteries that might
7 vibrate or buzz?

8 A. No, I don't remember that, no. Because I was never on
9 one, so I don't know.

10 Q. Can I just ask you a little bit about mealtimes. This
11 is something you talk about at paragraph 26 in
12 particular of your statement. I think you say earlier
13 that you don't have a huge recollection of what the food
14 was like, but do you have a recollection of what might
15 happen if you didn't eat the food?

16 A. Yes. You had to eat what was put down in front of you.

17 Q. You do remember that?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. What would happen if you didn't?

20 A. You got a thrashing and then you had to stay there until
21 you ate it.

22 Q. Did that happen to you, can you remember?

23 A. I don't remember it happening to me because I think at
24 that age you ate whatever -- because they weren't huge
25 portions. You gradually ate whatever was put down in

- 1 front of you. I don't ever remember having anything
2 that I didn't eat.
- 3 Q. Did you have any memory of seeing any other children
4 being made to eat their food?
- 5 A. Oh yes, yes. I saw that.
- 6 Q. What are your memories there?
- 7 A. On a couple of occasions I do remember they were
8 actually force-fed, like how you feed a baby. They were
9 actually force-fed their food: holding the nose, in,
10 shut, swallow it (indicating).
- 11 Q. Just to indicate for the notes, when you were describing
12 what was happening, you went and held your own nose.
- 13 A. No, no, no, the nuns held the child, the force-feeding,
14 they held his nose, opened his mouth and stuffed the
15 food in and then shut his mouth down until he swallowed
16 it.
- 17 Q. And that's something you have a recollection of seeing?
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. On more than one occasion?
- 20 A. On more than one occasion, yes.
- 21 Q. You've been telling us about your own experience and the
22 thrashings, as you've described them, that you
23 experienced. What about other boys? Did you see if
24 other boys --
- 25 A. Yes, I had seen -- as I say, I didn't get thrashed every

1 day because then, at 10, you start to get a bit smart
2 and make sure you weren't anywhere where you were likely
3 to get punished. As I say, it did happen quite a few
4 times, but I had seen other boys being given the cane,
5 and similarly they got the same punishment that I had
6 received and I'd actually seen them get it.

7 Q. You've given us some examples as to why you were
8 thrashed. For example, the half crown, the money that
9 you won for the maths test being one example. Helping
10 the boy with the sheet, another example. Can you
11 provide us with any other examples as to why you think
12 you were being thrashed in the way you described?

13 A. Looking in hindsight now, I think they enjoyed it.
14 I think they looked forward to some of the boys or a boy
15 breaking a rule. You know, they had lots of rules you
16 had to obey, like how you walked into rooms, around
17 rooms, how you behaved in church.

18 If they caught you talking in church -- so obviously
19 you didn't get punished while the service was on, but
20 afterwards you got punished for talking in church. That
21 sort of thing.

22 Dawdling around or stargazing. You had to
23 concentrate. If you weren't concentrating, they thought
24 giving you the cane would help you concentrate.

25 Q. Did you have any happy memories of Nazareth House?

1 A. Not of Nazareth House, no.
2 Q. What are your memories?
3 A. Basically ... You see, I don't even remember having
4 a happy occasion when my mother come to see me. I don't
5 think that was a happy occasion. I mean, I wasn't glad
6 to see her because basically I didn't know who she was.
7 As I said, the first time that I'd ever saw my mother
8 was when my auntie sent me back to my mother in Torry.
9 That was the first time I'd ever seen her. And when
10 I was at Nazareth House, apart from her once, I didn't
11 have any visitors.

12 We weren't shown any movies or there was no concerts
13 or anything like that. There was no -- you know, where,
14 like ... I think, you know, if you would imagine if you
15 had boys, that many boys, because we're not talking
16 about -- you think they would probably would have had
17 a home projector sort of thing so they'd show the
18 movies, but there was never anything like that.

19 Q. At a point in time you found out that you were going to
20 go to Australia.

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. How did you find out?

23 A. Sister **LDR** told me.

24 Q. Did she tell you why you were going to Australia?

25 A. Yes: "Your family doesn't want you, your country doesn't

1 want you, you're just garbage." They were the words
2 that she used. I'll never forget them.

3 Q. What was your own reaction, Christopher, to being told
4 at that time that you were going --

5 A. I don't really remember. But I do remember the words.

6 Q. I think what you tell us in your statement is that
7 somehow your aunt found out?

8 A. Yes, you see, because it was older boys that were going
9 to St Peter's, and my cousins were going to St Peter's,
10 my auntie's children were going to St Peter's, and
11 I think one of the boys from the orphanage must have
12 told my cousins that I was being sent to Australia.

13 One of the boys at the orphanage, once you were told
14 you were going to Australia, it was just common
15 knowledge among the boys in the orphanage. There was
16 actually three of us that were being sent to Australia.

17 Q. I'll come to that in a moment. But then, the news,
18 I think, filtered through to your aunt that you were
19 going to Australia.

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And do you know if she did anything?

22 A. Yes. Well, I don't know much about it, but I do know
23 she did because she made a song and dance about it.

24 Q. I'm sorry?

25 A. She made a big fuss because she didn't want me to be

1 sent to Australia. And Sister [LDR] actually gave me
2 a thrashing because my auntie had gone to the orphanage,
3 complaining about me being sent to Australia, because
4 Sister [LDR] told me that, you know, and she had blamed
5 me for telling my auntie. When you look at it, common
6 sense, I had no ways of communicating with them because
7 I never, ever wrote a letter or anything. When I was in
8 the orphanage, I never, ever saw my auntie again.

9 Q. So do you know why you were picked to go to Australia?

10 A. I've got no idea whatsoever. I think, basically, I'm
11 only guessing, because of a time frame, because in those
12 days, obviously, there was no Internet, there was no --
13 all the mail was obviously sent by land. So the
14 arrangements had to be made because where I was being
15 sent to, they obviously had accepted me and I believe
16 that what happened is that basically from the day I was
17 put into Nazareth House, that was the day they decided
18 they were going to send me to Australia.

19 Q. That's you looking at it in hindsight --

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. -- but you didn't know at the time?

22 A. No, no, not at the time, no. I had no idea of what the
23 arrangements were.

24 Q. Did you have any idea as to whether your mother was
25 consulted?

- 1 A. I don't know.
- 2 Q. Since have you tried to raise this with your mother to
3 see what the position was?
- 4 A. When I was working in Australia, the company I was
5 working for helped pay for me to go to Scotland to visit
6 my mother, and [REDACTED] put me up in her house for the
7 couple of weeks that I was there, and I did speak to my
8 mother about it, but it was like talking to that brick
9 wall over there (indicating). There was no sorry or any
10 reason whatsoever.
- 11 Q. But did you ask her particularly if she had agreed to
12 you going to Australia?
- 13 A. Yes, and she said no she hadn't signed any papers to
14 send me. I mean, that could be an untruth, just that
15 she was trying to get out of it, but that's what she
16 told me, that she had not agreed to send me to
17 Australia.
- 18 Q. We may come back to that, Christopher.
- 19 One of the things I think that you had to have
20 before you were sent to Australia was a medical
21 examination.
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. Can I just look at that and perhaps just get -- that
24 might give us an inkling into a date. I'll put this on
25 the screen for you: NAZ.001.003.1661.

1 A. Is that the leaving of Nazareth House Aberdeen bit?

2 LADY SMITH: There's another document that will come up in
3 a moment.

4 MR MacAULAY: It'll come on the screen hopefully within the
5 next half a second.

6 Unfortunately, much of it --

7 A. Actually, that document I actually got off one of the
8 priests at St John Bosco Boys' Town. He gave me that
9 and I gave a copy to yourselves.

10 Q. Yes.

11 A. And that was basically the report that the doctor had
12 written about my health.

13 Q. The process was, it would appear, that you had to have
14 a medical examination before you could go to Australia.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Is that your understanding?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. And you went to see a doctor?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Who carried out a medical examination and this is the
21 report of his examination?

22 A. That's right, yes.

23 Q. If we look at the top, for example, can we see that it
24 says:

25 "Child migrants nominated by St John Bosco Boys'

- 1 Town."
- 2 A. That's what I was saying to you before, that they must
- 3 have arranged basically from the time I went into the
- 4 orphanage that I was going to Australia, because they
- 5 would have had to get in touch with Boys' Town,
- 6 Glenorchy, to give them my name, et cetera, and then
- 7 there was time from them to send back and say they were
- 8 going to accept us. So that would have gone by ordinary
- 9 mail and, from my recollection, ordinary mail in those
- 10 days -- there was no such thing as air mail, it was sea
- 11 mail, and that took about six weeks.
- 12 Q. I think the point you're making is that these
- 13 arrangements must have been put in place quite some time
- 14 before, for example, you had your medical examination.
- 15 A. Yes.
- 16 Q. If we look at this document, the name that has been
- 17 blanked out is your name. You have no objection to that
- 18 being read out?
- 19 A. No.
- 20 Q. It's "Booth, Christopher David Buchan", and we're
- 21 provided with some other information. The description
- 22 at the bottom:
- 23 "Fair complexion, blue eyes, slightly built lad."
- 24 Do you see that, handwritten presumably by the
- 25 doctor?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Difficult to work out the date but --

3 LADY SMITH: Is that "slightly" or "stocky"?

4 MR MacAULAY: I think it may be "stockily", actually. It is
5 "stockily built lad".

6 The date has been blanked out on your copy. On my
7 copy it looks like "13/1/52", so that's January 1952.

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Would that fit in with your own recollection?

10 A. Yes. It was basically after -- but I'm saying that the
11 arrangements must have been made before then. I would
12 say that January 1952 was when Boys' Town had come back
13 in touch with them and said, "Yes, we'll accept him".

14 Q. Okay. I think you tell us in your statement at
15 paragraph 34 that you weren't aware of any other medical
16 examination; this was the only medical examination you
17 had.

18 A. Yes. I did when I ... When I was first put into
19 Nazareth House, after living with my auntie, I wasn't
20 wearing specs because -- I should have been wearing
21 specs but I wasn't. So the nuns had got me a pair of
22 specs, so they must have sent me to an optician.

23 Q. And I think we see from the medical report you're
24 described as wearing spectacles.

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. You didn't leave Nazareth House until April that same
2 year, 1952, so several months went by between the time
3 of the medical examination and you actually leaving to
4 head off to Australia.

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. I think you've told us, but just to be clear, I think
7 you say that you never saw your mother or your aunties
8 before you left for Australia.

9 A. That's correct, yes.

10 Q. After the medical examination in particular, in January,
11 is that the case, you never saw your mother or your
12 aunts?

13 A. That's right, yes.

14 Q. In preparation for leaving for Australia were you given
15 a case?

16 A. Yes. What we were given -- we were basically given
17 a grey suit with short legs and some clothes. I'm not
18 sure what was in the case, but we were given a case to
19 take our belongings that we basically had to Australia.

20 Q. We can, I think -- you have brought the case with you
21 today.

22 A. I've still got it, yes.

23 Q. Can I just put it in front of you and you can just
24 confirm that that is it. (Handed)

25 It's looking fairly battered now, but was it new

1 when you got it?

2 A. Yes. Well, it is over 66 years.

3 Q. Yes. So it's survived quite well.

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Can I ask you to look at a photograph, if you don't

6 mind. It's at WIT.003.001.0775. I think you provided

7 this to the inquiry; is that right?

8 A. Yes. That was basically -- well, that would probably

9 have been taken the day that we left Aberdeen because we

10 left at night-time by train from Aberdeen to London.

11 I'd say that would be taken on the train. I'm the

12 middle one.

13 Q. And you're the one we can see?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. I think the other two -- I'll ask you about them in

16 a moment, but they're blacked out.

17 But there is a sister standing behind you; was that

18 Sister [REDACTED] LDR

19 A. That's Sister [REDACTED] LDR yes.

20 Q. On the unredacted version we can actually see

21 Sister [REDACTED] LDR

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. You mentioned the grey suits. We can see from the

24 photographs -- they're the type of suits you wore?

25 A. Yes.

- 1 Q. Can I say, you all look rather smart in that photograph.
- 2 A. Yes, well, they were brand new.
- 3 Q. Handkerchiefs in your pockets, for example, and brightly
- 4 polished shoes.
- 5 A. Yes.
- 6 Q. We don't want the names of the other two boys, but
- 7 am I right in thinking that two other boys left with you
- 8 from Nazareth House?
- 9 A. Yes.
- 10 Q. To go to Australia?
- 11 A. Yes. They were also sent to Boys' Town.
- 12 Q. That was the other question. So they went with you all
- 13 the way to Boys' Town?
- 14 A. Yes. But what happened, actually happened, is the two
- 15 boys either side of me, although they had come to
- 16 Boys' Town with me, to Tasmania, they were actually
- 17 supposed to have been sent to Bindoon in
- 18 Western Australia. And some time after we'd arrived in
- 19 Tasmania, they were then shipped back to
- 20 Western Australia.
- 21 LADY SMITH: Do I take it that you've helped us by supplying
- 22 this photograph?
- 23 A. Yes.
- 24 LADY SMITH: How did you come to have it?
- 25 A. I'm not allowed to mention his name, but one of the boys

1 in the photograph had got it out of, I think,
2 a newspaper or something.

3 LADY SMITH: Ah, right.

4 MR MacAULAY: Was that later on? Was that some time later?

5 A. Yes, that's when I was back living here in Aberdeen. He
6 and his son came to visit us and he gave me that
7 photograph. I'd never seen it before.

8 Q. So you had kept in contact with one of the boys?

9 A. No, no, no, no. What had happened is -- and I'm jumping
10 many years into the future -- we'd been given a formal
11 apology by Gordon Brown in 2010. What they did, they
12 set up a travel sort of thing, basically. Any of the
13 migrants in Australia that wanted to come back to
14 Britain to try and locate their family were given money
15 to come back to Britain. Obviously, that didn't affect
16 me because I was already here, so I didn't benefit by
17 that fund. [REDACTED] -- sorry --

18 Q. We can use the first name.

19 LADY SMITH: It's okay, a first name is fine.

20 A. Anyway, he had come with his son back to Britain and
21 he was staying with some Sisters of Nazareth down in
22 England. They put him up, they provided his
23 accommodation. What he'd done, he came up to Aberdeen.
24 I'm not sure how he got my address, but he got in touch
25 with us and he came to our house and visited with his

1 son and I got that photo off him.

2 MR MacAULAY: From what you've told us about, I think
3 although he went with you to Boys' Town, he was then
4 sent --

5 A. He wasn't supposed to come to Tasmania. As I've said,
6 it was all arranged. I mean, the boys were arranged to
7 where they were going. So when we first got to
8 Australia, we actually landed in Fremantle and some of
9 the boys were disembarked and sent to Bindoon in
10 Western Australia and then they travelled round the
11 Great Southern Ocean to Melbourne and when we got to
12 Melbourne we were disembarked and taken to a Boys' Town
13 in Melbourne. It was in Brunswick Street, the street it
14 was in, and there we were given lunch and that evening
15 we were taken down back to the Melbourne port and put on
16 a ship over to Tasmania.

17 Q. And [REDACTED], who you've mentioned, he shouldn't have been
18 going there but he went there?

19 A. That's where they were originally sent with all the
20 other boys that went to Tasmania, they were sent with
21 us, so obviously there'd been some sort of mistake.

22 Q. But then he was sent to where he should have been going?

23 A. Yes, that's right. Him and the other boy were sent back
24 to Western Australia.

25 Q. And had you not seen him then for many, many years?

- 1 A. Yes. I was an adult -- well into adults by then.
- 2 Q. Perhaps just to get a time frame as to when you arrived
3 in Australia, you had some correspondence with
4 a Father Papworth at what became Savio College?
- 5 A. Yes.
- 6 Q. And that was where you had been, although it wasn't
7 known as Savio College --
- 8 A. That's right. When we first arrived there, it was known
9 as Boys' Town, St John Bosco Boys' Town. Then
10 evidently, what had happened -- basically, about a year
11 before I left, the Bishop of Tasmania had asked the
12 Salesians to change the home into a college and bring in
13 outside day boys. So what would happen is -- there was
14 a lot of Tasmanian boys used to come as if they were
15 going to school in a day, they'd come in in the morning,
16 have the school lessons, and then go home.
- 17 Q. Can I ask you then to look at the correspondence you had
18 with Father Papworth. That's at WIT.003.001.0770. This
19 is a letter that's dated 30 April -- is that 1964?
- 20 A. 1964, yes.
- 21 Q. Clearly, you had made an enquiry of him for some details
22 in relation to your background; is that right?
- 23 A. That's correct, yes.
- 24 Q. And this is him providing you with some details?
- 25 A. Yes.

1 Q. If we look towards the bottom of the page, can we see
2 in the second last entry that he tells us that your date
3 of arrival on the Ormonde was on 6 June 1952?

4 A. That's correct, yes. Then he's got the medical history
5 down the bottom of it.

6 Q. Yes. Over the page, he's provided some information that
7 had been obtained, I think, from Nazareth House.

8 If we turn to page 0771, there are a number of
9 deletions, but we can read the information that he
10 obtained was:

11 "This boy, son of [and your mother's name is
12 mentioned], was cared for from infancy by his mothers's
13 sister and was received into Nazareth House Aberdeen on
14 27 September 1951 because his aunt was unable to look
15 after him any longer."

16 A. Yes. Well, that was basically because round about that
17 time -- I'm making deductions, but what had happened is
18 because I'd been baptized a Catholic, my grandfather
19 wouldn't let me into his house, right? So that's why
20 I was sent to Nazareth House. And my auntie and her
21 husband and family, they were Catholics, and that's why
22 my grandmother -- I'm making an assumption -- paid for
23 her to look after me. So when my grandmother died, she
24 died in 1951, obviously my auntie wasn't getting any
25 more money, so she could no longer afford to look after

- 1 me, because I think in those days there was no such
2 thing as child benefits or whatever.
- 3 Q. If we read on, there's some mention again of your mother
4 with another younger child, and then we read:
5 "The case was recommended by the Reverend Father
6 Lamont."
7 A. Yes.
- 8 Q. And an address is given. And I think --
9 A. Yes, I mentioned that. That was Sacred Heart, Torry.
10 He was the parish priest of Torry.
- 11 Q. Then let's go back to the journey itself --
12 LADY SMITH: So you're referred to as a case, not a child --
13 A. Yes.
- 14 LADY SMITH: -- not a little boy, you're a case?
15 A. Well, the trip, now you've mentioned it, was great --
16 MR MacAULAY: Before you tell us about the actual trip,
17 I just want to look at the departure, first of all.
18 A. Right, okay.
- 19 Q. You left, as you have told us, with the two other boys
20 that we saw in the photograph.
21 A. Yes.
- 22 Q. And you were taken to the train station, I think you
23 tell us, by a man with a Labrador dog.
24 A. Yes.
- 25 Q. When you left Aberdeen I think you tell us you picked up

- 1 more boys in Edinburgh; is that right?
- 2 A. Yes, we picked up two boys in Edinburgh, they also come
3 to Tasmania with us. We then stopped -- I think it was
4 at York, and there were some more boys joined us, and
5 then we got -- I think it was Euston Station or
6 St Pancras. What we did, when we got off the train
7 there, we then walked from whichever one we got off to
8 the other one to then catch a train to Tilbury docks.
- 9 Q. And that's where --
- 10 A. That's where the boat left from, Tilbury docks.
- 11 Q. That's where you embarked upon the Ormonde?
- 12 A. Yes.
- 13 Q. The journey took six weeks I think you tell us in your
14 statement.
- 15 A. Yes, six weeks.
- 16 Q. And you enjoyed the journey?
- 17 A. Yes, it was good. I learned the Australian national
18 anthem before it became the Australian national anthem.
- 19 Q. You've already given some insights as to what the
20 journey was before you got to Australia and ended up, as
21 you've indicated, in Tasmania.
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. When you got to Tasmania and to your ultimate
24 destination, were you met there by anybody?
- 25 A. We were met by some priests and brothers -- because what

1 happened was, as I said, we caught the boat from
2 Melbourne to Tasmania and then we got the train from
3 Western Junction, which is just south of Launceston, and
4 took the train to Hobart railway station and then they
5 met us there, picked us up -- I think probably in
6 a minibus or something like that -- and then we were
7 taken out to Boys' Town.

8 Q. And that's Boys' Town in Glenorchy in Hobart?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. How many boys ultimately were in your group?

11 A. Well, in my group that was sent from the United Kingdom,
12 there was about 28.

13 Q. Were there 28 of you on the minibus or had some been
14 dropped off --

15 A. No, no, we were all on the same bus. So it might have
16 been bigger, but we were all on the same bus with the
17 priests and brothers.

18 Q. And was that then your introduction to Boys' Town in
19 Glenorchy?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. When did you know that that was where you were going to
22 be?

23 A. When we got there.

24 Q. And can you describe the location to us then? What sort
25 of buildings were there, what sort of --

1 A. Evidently, what had happened -- I mean, this is going
2 back to why the children from the United Kingdom were
3 sent out the country. What had happened is Boys' Town
4 had applied to take them, what they did is they built
5 this new building. Right? It was brand new when we got
6 there. It was brand new. It was a fairly substantial
7 brick building and that had been made specially --
8 I don't know who paid for it, but that had been made
9 specially for the Australian boys that were already
10 there and the British children that were going to end up
11 there. Because we ended up -- there were actually about
12 50 to 60 of us that had come from Britain, because there
13 were two lots: there was our lot that arrived in June
14 and there was another lot of British boys arrived
15 in the September.

16 Q. So you think 50 or 60 British boys?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. And what about Australian boys?

19 A. I'm not sure how many Australian boys. Probably about
20 the same number.

21 Q. So quite a number of boys in the one place?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And who ran the place?

24 A. The Salesian priests and brothers, the Salesians of Don
25 Bosco.

- 1 Q. What you tell us in your statement -- this is at
2 paragraph 48 -- is that there were three types of
3 priests --
- 4 A. Yes.
- 5 Q. -- or religious, if you want to put it more generally,
6 at Boys' Town. Can you help us with that?
- 7 A. What there was -- there was obviously the rector, he was
8 a priest. Then there were some other priests, I think
9 three or four priests, so there was about five priests
10 altogether. And then there were some -- they were
11 called brothers. They were studying for the priesthood.
12 So because they were at a Salesian organisation, they
13 were at the school and they wore the same sort of
14 clothes as the priests were. And then there were the
15 lay brothers -- can I mention their names?
- 16 Q. Yes, of course.
- 17 LADY SMITH: Yes.
- 18 A. There was a Brother Newport. He was a cook, he was
19 a lay brother. And he did all the cooking.
- 20 MR MacAULAY: What did the lay brothers wear?
- 21 A. Normal clothes. Just civilian clothes.
- 22 Q. But the priests and brothers, they wore black cassocks?
- 23 A. Yes.
- 24 Q. So they were easily distinguished from the others?
- 25 A. I only remember seeing two lay brothers. There was

1 Brother Newport and another brother who was like
2 a gardeners, groundsman type thing.

3 Q. And so far as the sleeping arrangements were concerned,
4 can you help me with the set-up there?

5 A. That I can remember a lot better. There were three
6 dormitories and the boys were split into three
7 dormitories.

8 Q. Was there a particular method of splitting up the boys?

9 A. It was basically by age group, the younger boys' one,
10 then the middle boys, then the older boys.

11 Q. What was the age range?

12 A. Basically, I'd say from round about 5 or 6, because
13 there were some young boys there, probably to about 15.
14 Because once you were -- I'm just jumping the gun a bit.
15 Once you become 16, you were sent out to work.

16 Q. I think that's what happened to you and we'll come to
17 that.

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. The younger boys of 5 or 6, had they come from the UK
20 or --

21 A. Some of them had, yes. Some were Australians and some
22 were from the UK.

23 Q. You were telling me about the sleeping arrangements.
24 You had three dormitory areas; is that what you're
25 telling me?

1 A. Yes, that's right.

2 Q. So you would be in with a group of boys of the same sort
3 of age as yourself?

4 A. Roughly the same age, yes. Same age group, probably two
5 or three years, maybe sort of 10 to 13 or something.
6 And then 14 to 15 and then probably under 10.

7 Q. What size of dormitories were they?

8 A. They were fairly big. There was about 30 beds to the
9 dormitory, in three rows, and they all faced the same
10 way. Window -- you had the head to the window. And
11 then the middle row, their head was to the window that
12 way (indicating), and the other row was to the windows
13 on the other wall. So there were three rows of beds.

14 Q. You tell us that when you arrived there, the principal
15 priest in charge was a Father **LHH**

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. But he left after six months and he was replaced by
18 Father **LHE**

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. And I think you tell us later what happened in
21 connection with Father **LHE** and I'll come to that later.

22 First of all, can I ask you about the routine --

23 A. Basically, apart from feast days, basically we got up in
24 the morning, got dressed, we then went down to the
25 chapel, said our prayers, and then we had some

1 recreation time. Then we went and had breakfast. Then
2 we had some recreation time. And then we went into
3 classrooms to basically -- there was no formal
4 education, we weren't in the Tasmanian education system.
5 So basically they only taught us to read, write, and do
6 our maths. That was basically all that we were taught.
7 We weren't really given any history or geography or
8 science or anything like that. It was just -- basically
9 they were the three things: read, write --

10 Q. And who taught you?

11 A. The brothers.

12 LADY SMITH: So do I take it, if you had no geography there,
13 nobody was showing you on a map, for example, where you
14 were in relation to where you'd come from?

15 A. Yes, that's correct.

16 LADY SMITH: And had anybody in Aberdeen shown you where you
17 were going?

18 A. No. No, we were just -- as I said, we were just told
19 that we were going to Australia. They didn't tell us
20 we were going to Tasmania because I remember I kicked up
21 a fuss because on the boarding cards that we had, it
22 said we were going to Melbourne. So they took us to
23 Hobart and I complained about being taken to Hobart
24 because I should have gone to Melbourne.

25 LADY SMITH: I see.

1 MR MacAULAY: Again, some aspects of the routine. You say
2 in your statement that it was bad to talk in the
3 dormitories.

4 A. Yes, you weren't allowed to talk in the dormitories.

5 Q. So far as the food was concerned, I think your
6 recollection is the food was fine.

7 A. Yes. As I said, Brother Newport, he was the cook, and
8 what happened is in the dining room, the boys were in
9 tables of six. Right? And one table had a turn that
10 day to help Brother Newport prepare the meals and serve
11 the meals. Another table was given some other task --
12 you know, we were all given tasks to do, like keep the
13 place clean, and all that sort of thing, help with the
14 cooking, help with the serving, et cetera.

15 Q. Just touching on one or two points that we looked at
16 when we looked at Nazareth House. Bed-wetting. Were
17 there any issues with bed-wetting?

18 A. I don't remember. There probably was, but there was no
19 such thing -- there was nobody punished, I should say,
20 at Boys' Town for wetting the bed, so I don't really
21 remember if anybody did wet the bed.

22 Q. And again, aspects of routine for the moment. Leisure
23 time. Did you have some leisure time?

24 A. Oh, we had loads of leisure time.

25 Q. Playing sports and so on?

- 1 A. Pardon?
- 2 Q. Did you play sports?
- 3 A. Yes. They taught us Australian rules football, taught
4 us our love of cricket, taught us Australia comes first.
5 I'm sorry, we were very anti-England. We supported
6 every country in the world, that was Scotland, Wales,
7 Ireland and any other country, and obviously Australia,
8 but we were very anti-English.
- 9 Q. One thing you do tell us also is that you did go on
10 trips and holidays.
- 11 A. Oh yes. What they did, they set up what they called the
12 Big Brother Movement. People in Tasmania would take the
13 boys for school holidays, so when the school holidays
14 were on, you had someone they called a big brother, big
15 sister, they would take you to their home and you lived
16 in their home when there was a two-week holiday or the
17 summer holidays.
- 18 Q. You do tell us about one incident when you went to
19 a family in Stonor on your own. What age were you when
20 that happened?
- 21 A. I was 10 -- no, I was 11, sorry, because we're talking
22 1952. I was 11. There was this chap and his wife and
23 they had a couple of children. They lived in Stonor,
24 which is in the midlands of Tasmania, and they come
25 down. What happened is I was put on a train at

1 Glenorchy station and told to get off -- I forget,
2 I think it was called -- I'm not sure of the name of the
3 station, but it was -- I was met there by the husband.
4 He then drove us to Stonor where they lived and he was
5 a farmer -- I think he was actually a farm labourer,
6 I don't think he owned the farm, I think he worked for
7 the farmer.

8 Q. Did something happen on that occasion that cut the trip
9 short?

10 A. Yes. What happened is I was playing with the daughter
11 and her younger brother, and the mother -- we were
12 playing mums and dads and I kissed the girl and the wife
13 went ballistic. They gave me -- this was round about,
14 just after Christmas, because I was taken there for
15 Christmas. We weren't doing really anything wrong, you
16 know -- it wasn't anything sexual -- anything like that,
17 but they probably thought there was. What happened is
18 they gave me the option: don't ever do it again and you
19 can stay or you go back to Boys' Town. I'm sorry,
20 I took Boys' Town.

21 Q. So you were sent back to --

22 A. They took me to the train station, put me on the train,
23 and I was picked up at Glenorchy station by Father LHE

24 Q. But leaving aside that episode, and I'll return to
25 aspects of it in a moment, were there other trips of

1 that kind that you did during your time?

2 A. Yes. There was another family. They then took me for
3 the holidays. They had three boys and there was me, and
4 the wife had told me that they had selected me because
5 I was roughly the same age as their middle son. So
6 I was brought there as a friend to him and him to be
7 a friend to me. And that was brilliant, they were
8 really nice people.

9 Q. And you do tell us in your statement, Christopher, that
10 you did have good times --

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. -- when you were in Boys' Town.

13 A. Yes. There were good times. As I said, they taught us
14 how to play Australian football and the teams in
15 Hobart -- all the towns had their own football team and
16 they used to play against each other, and what happened
17 is they have grand finals -- it's slightly different to
18 the Scottish system because what happens is they play
19 all the normal games for the season and what happens at
20 the end of the season, you have the top four, and so the
21 top four play against each other. Then you end up with
22 two teams playing for the grand final. So you don't
23 have such a thing like here at the end of the season,
24 you've got a team with the most points are the
25 champions. That didn't matter there. At the end of the

1 season, the four top teams played in the finals and
2 we were taken to the grand finals. We were guests of
3 the North Hobart Football Club and we were taken to the
4 grand final.

5 Q. Healthcare; can I ask you about that?

6 A. Yes. I don't remember any doctors, but I do remember
7 there was a dentist who used to come. Just off the
8 dining room there was a little room which was set up as
9 a dentist's thing, so we had our care by him. We also
10 had some barbers used to come every month or so and cut
11 all our hairs, short back and sides.

12 One of the priests -- we had an infirmary there and
13 he was in charge of the infirmary, so if any boys took
14 ill, they were taken to the infirmary.

15 Q. And I think you tell us you had your tonsils taken out
16 at the Royal Hospital.

17 A. Yes, that was basically within months of arriving at
18 Boys' Town. In my knowledge there was nothing wrong
19 with the tonsils but I was taken to the hospital and
20 they took my tonsils out. That was a very, very bad
21 experience.

22 Q. What about religious instruction? Was that an important
23 aspect of life?

24 A. Yes. We went to Mass every day, twice on Sunday, and
25 we were taught our catechism. Obviously, before our

1 meal, we said grace before meals, and after meals we
2 said grace after meals.

3 Q. Were you allowed to talk during meals?

4 A. After. What happened is at the start of the meal, you
5 weren't allowed to talk, and what we had is -- we had
6 boys would read stories like Biggles books and that sort
7 of thing, so we'd have a few chapters of Biggles read.
8 Once that had finished, you were allowed to talk.

9 Q. Chores. You tell us a little bit about chores in your
10 statement. Did you have an arrangement whereby there
11 were certain chores you had to carry out?

12 A. It was like a rotation thing. Basically, as I said,
13 helping Brother Newport, a set of boys, they would do it
14 for one day, and then the next day there would be
15 another set of boys that would help. The polishing of
16 the floors and tidying up the yard and everything like
17 that, it was all like a rotation system. We all had to
18 take a hand.

19 Q. Were there any other helpers, cleaners?

20 A. No, no, no. We did it.

21 Q. You do tell us about milking cows; that was something
22 you did?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. And wanted to do?

25 A. Yes. It was good, they had -- I'm not sure how many

1 they had, but they had some paddocks that had the cows
2 in. What they used to do, each morning, each afternoon,
3 the cows were milked and the milk -- some of it was used
4 as milk for you to drink, the rest of it was -- I'm not
5 sure of the word you use, but it was separated into milk
6 and cream and then the cream was put into churns and
7 made into butter.

8 Q. You weren't given pocket money as such?

9 A. No.

10 Q. But there was a system whereby you could, as it were,
11 get credit?

12 A. Yes. What they did is they had your names in a book.
13 Right? And you'd get so much a week, depending on how
14 much work you did, and you were credited with that, and
15 they had a tuck shop. What happened is when the tuck
16 shop was opened you could get a bar of chocolate or
17 a sweet, and that was taken off the balance that you had
18 in the book.

19 Q. Can I ask you about birthdays? Were birthdays
20 celebrated?

21 A. Yes, you were looked after, but they didn't make a huge
22 fuss. I'd say you probably got some extra chocolates or
23 something like that.

24 Q. Christmas, what about Christmas?

25 A. There was no Christmas.

- 1 Q. Did you have any personal visits when you were there
2 from anyone?
- 3 A. No.
- 4 Q. You do tell us about an incident when some dignitary
5 came.
- 6 A. Yes. But they come -- they didn't come to see us
7 individually. Yes, that was -- I just can't remember.
8 I think he was the Pope's representative in Australia
9 and he come to the home. I remember we were all
10 gathered around him with the other priests. I remember
11 him asking if anybody was unhappy with being at the
12 home, and like an idiot I put my hand up and said I was,
13 I didn't like it, I wanted to go back home.
- 14 Q. What age were you then?
- 15 A. Probably about 12, I'd say. After he had gone, I got
16 the wrath of Father **LHE** because I wasn't supposed to
17 turn round and say anything bad about the home.
- 18 Q. What happened?
- 19 A. I got a thrashing.
- 20 Q. And what sort of thrashing was this?
- 21 A. His method -- he used to have a cane, but then there was
22 Father **LHG** and he liked to have a short length of
23 hose. There was one of the brothers, he liked to have
24 a leather strap which was cut -- part of it was cut into
25 strips. So they all had their choice of weapon.

- 1 Q. I'll come to that, but this particular incident
2 involving Father **LHE** you say you got a thrashing then;
3 what did he do to you?
- 4 A. I got his cane, because at that time we were -- I had
5 long pants so it didn't matter where they hit it. I got
6 the cane.
- 7 Q. On different parts of your body?
- 8 A. Yes.
- 9 Q. You do tell us that, as you put it, you were made to
10 write to your mother once a month.
- 11 A. Yes.
- 12 Q. And that's something you did, was it?
- 13 A. Yes. Well, you had to do; it wasn't by choice.
- 14 Q. What about the letters?
- 15 A. Well, you weren't allowed to seal the letter. So when
16 you'd written the letter, you had to hand it to one of
17 the priests. They read it and if it was okay, they then
18 sealed it and sent it off.
- 19 Q. Did you receive any letters from your mother?
- 20 A. I did, yes. She did answer my letters, but basically,
21 before I even opened the letter, I could tell you
22 exactly what she said. It was basically just weather,
23 what the weather was like. No other -- nothing else.
- 24 Q. If we look at your statement, it's on the screen now, at
25 paragraph 79, you say, I think, something similar to

1 what you said before:

2 "There was no one in Boys' Town that gave me any
3 love or affection and there was no one that I could
4 confide in or look to for any type of care, support or
5 advice."

6 A. That's right, yes. There was nobody. You couldn't
7 complain to anybody. If you did complain to one of the
8 other priests or brothers, again, you know, you were in
9 trouble.

10 Q. So far as personal possessions were concerned, you've
11 told us about the red case.

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. You can't really remember what was in the case, can you?

14 A. No. I assume there were some spare clothes. That's the
15 only thing I can assume.

16 Q. You did for a time collect stamps.

17 A. I started that when I was at Boys' Town. I used to --
18 most of them were used stamps, there wasn't any mint
19 stamps, but I collected them. I was even -- you know,
20 other boys collected, so we'd swap, you know. I had
21 a stamp that he wanted, he had a stamp that I wanted, so
22 we'd swap and I built up a reasonable collection.

23 Q. What happened to the collection?

24 A. One of the priests, Father Preitto, told me that I was
25 selfish and never shared or gave anything away and he

1 So I sat an exam for the fourth division, did very
2 well in it, so I was offered a job by the Commonwealth
3 Public Service, the Social Services Department, in
4 Hobart. Unfortunately, you had to sit a medical
5 certificate -- medical, and I failed the medical on my
6 eyesight. I've never had a serious illness in my life.
7 I have had one operation, but I've never, ever been
8 really sick. I've been really blessed that way, someone
9 must be looking after me. I've hardly ever been sick.

10 Q. So on this occasion you failed because of your eyesight,
11 but you still got a job?

12 A. They give me a temporary job, but I was basically told
13 to leave as soon as possible. So when I left
14 Boys' Town --

15 Q. That's before --

16 A. This is part of it. I'm just explaining. When I left
17 Boys' Town, I was put in a boarding house of a lady in
18 North Hobart, and one of the boys that was there, he
19 worked at a tannery, so he spoke to the boss about me
20 and got me a job in the tannery, so I went from the
21 Social Services Department to work in the tannery.

22 Q. When you had the temporary job, as you tell us, you
23 moved from the accommodation that you were in at
24 Boys' Town to another part of Boys' Town?

25 A. Yes. That was the old house. They had a house -- when

1 the Salesians first got there, I'm not sure what year
2 they got there, but when they first got there, there was
3 this house and that's where they used to live and
4 where -- because they only had a few boys. Because if
5 you saw the size of the house, it wasn't big enough.

6 Q. But you managed to get some accommodation in that
7 house --

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. -- when you had the temporary job?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Can I ask you a little bit now about discipline at
12 Boys' Town during your time there as a boy.

13 A. The discipline was very harsh. You had to do what you
14 were told when you were told and do it fast. And
15 obviously, when you were told to do something, you're
16 told to jump, you used to say, "How high?" But if you
17 did anything wrong, the discipline was harsh but not
18 cruel. Right? So the sort of thing like, as I said, if
19 you broke one of the rules, you'd get six of the best,
20 but basically that was it.

21 And I very rarely did I get into trouble except in
22 the dormitory. You weren't allowed to talk in the
23 dormitories and sometimes I had a habit of speaking to
24 the boy next to me in the dormitory. I would get into
25 trouble, but on one particular occasion someone was

1 speaking in the dormitory, which wasn't me, but I got
2 a huge clap around the ear for talking in the dormitory.
3 But that was the favourite, their favourite thing, if
4 you were in the dormitory, to get clapped around the
5 ear. I've actually got very bad hearing because of the
6 effects of that.

7 Q. You mentioned earlier that the priests and the brothers
8 had different implements.

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. If you look at paragraph 90 of your statement -- this is
11 on page 3663 -- the way you put it is that every one of
12 the priests and brothers had their own favourite weapon.

13 A. Yes, they did, yes. I explained that. Father **LHE** had
14 a cane, father **LHG** he had a hose. I'm not sure
15 of the name of the brother, but he had a leather strap
16 which was cut into strips, something like a cat o'nine
17 tails.

18 Q. So when you did something wrong, depending on who was
19 punishing you, that would depend on what implement was
20 being used?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Are you able to compare the types of punishment you had
23 in Boys' Town to what happened at Nazareth House?

24 A. You are, because there was no comparison. In hindsight,
25 when you look back, at Nazareth House, it was brutality.

1 In Boys' Town, as I said, if you broke a rule, you got
2 the cane or the strap or the hose, but it was basically
3 on your hand -- or if you were talking in class, you'd
4 get six of the best. But that was sort of -- as I said,
5 they were very harsh, the rules were very strict, so if
6 you obeyed the rules, no problem.

7 Q. You've already told us, Christopher, about the visit you
8 paid to the family in Stonor and what happened.

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. And essentially the trip was cut short --

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. -- because of the fact that you'd kissed the girl?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. That's what it came down to, isn't it?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. When you got back to Boys' Town, did anything happen?

17 A. That was basically the start of my abuse, sexual abuse.
18 I was subjected to sexual abuse.

19 Q. What age were you then?

20 A. I was not quite 12.

21 Q. And are you able to tell us what happened?

22 A. Yes. I was sexually abused by Father **LHE** who was
23 actually -- he was the priest in charge. So that was
24 the first. I did -- in a couple of submissions I've
25 done, I basically said that was the only time it

1 happened, but it wasn't, because I was ashamed of what
2 happened. But he wasn't the only one that abused me.

3 Q. If you feel happy to tell us about it, please do. You
4 link it to the trip to Stonor. Were you asked about the
5 Stonor trip when you came back?

6 A. I was asked, "Why did I kiss the girl?" I said,
7 "Because she's a girl", you know. "Would you kiss
8 a boy?" "No".

9 Q. And what happened after that then, that led to the abuse
10 that that happened to you?

11 A. Well, I don't remember all of it, but I was basically
12 questioned about my sexuality or my preference of
13 sexuality.

14 Q. By Father **LHE**

15 A. Yes. As I said, if I can use the word, when I was
16 buggerized.

17 Q. Was there some sort of introductory process to it?

18 A. No.

19 Q. Was there any sort of grooming process to it? Did he
20 ask you to help him to do things?

21 A. After that -- after that, I used to -- at the end of
22 each month -- he had an office in the middle of the
23 complex. I used to go and help sort out the bills,
24 alphabetically. So you put them in piles and then once
25 you got A, B, C, et cetera, you then sorted them out

1 in that pile alphabetically. Usually, either through or
2 after, I was sexually abused.

3 Q. You have used the word buggerized. Did that happen over
4 a period of time?

5 A. A number of times, yes. This wasn't by Father **LHE**

6 Q. If we just focus on Father **LHE** for the moment. For how
7 long did that happen in connection with --

8 A. Well, from my memory, it was basically until the end
9 of ... roughly about the end of 1954. Because in 1955,
10 another priest came to Boys' Town and took over from
11 Father **LHE**, and he was sent back to one of the other
12 houses on the mainland.

13 Q. Who else abused you?

14 A. The priest who took over from Father **LHE**

15 Q. What was his name?

16 A. I'm not quite sure. I think it was Father **LVM**.
17 Something like that his name was, but I'm not exactly
18 sure.

19 Q. What happened in connection with him?

20 A. Basically the same sort of thing with Father **LHE** what
21 Father **LHE** did, he basically took over. Obviously,
22 I don't know whether they spoke about it or whatever,
23 but that happened. That was a lot shorter because, as
24 I said, that started off at the beginning of 1956 and
25 I left Boys' Town at the end of November 1956. I was in

1 the infirmary, which I mentioned about the infirmary to
2 you, on one occasion, where one of the other priests who
3 looked after us in the infirmary -- where he played
4 around with me in ... He didn't have sex with us, just
5 the actual, you know, playing with my penis, et cetera,
6 and also having a go at his own.

7 Q. That's when I think you were in the infirmary, is that
8 right --

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. -- your tonsils had been taken out?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. You do say that there were others who made what you
13 described as grooming attempts.

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Can you help me with that?

16 A. Well, it's very hard to put into words. They used to,
17 you know -- for example, one of the things they used to
18 do is -- remember I told you we went to Mass every
19 morning and we said our prayers? I was allowed to lead
20 the prayers. There was also -- I told you about when
21 we were in the dining room, the boys used to read books
22 to us and I was allowed to read the books we had, which
23 I didn't mention.

24 We had a lady used to come and teach us Highland
25 dancing. Her name was Mrs Busey(?). She was a lovely

1 lady and after I left Boys' Town, I continued to go to
2 her dancing school and learn Highland dancing. That was
3 one of the good things.

4 They also had a lady used to come and teach us how
5 to play the piano. So they were the sort of things that
6 you were rewarded with to keep you sweet.

7 Q. What you say in your statement is that there were others
8 who may have had a go at you, as you put it, but you got
9 wise to it?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. So --

12 A. You tried the best you could never to be alone with any
13 of them.

14 Q. You tell us a little bit at paragraph 94 about the
15 toilet block --

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. -- and why that was a place to avoid if at all possible.

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Why was that?

20 A. The building was in an L shape, and in the L there was
21 a portion of lawn, right, which one of the priests used
22 to play lawn bowls and -- we were talking about
23 sweetening you up and he taught me how to roll the bowl.
24 But just off that, there was a toilet block, which was
25 basically a urinal and where you sit down. You just

1 made sure you were never in that block on your own. If
2 you needed to go to the toilet, you made sure that you
3 went when there were other boys going to the toilet as
4 well.

5 Q. Did anything ever happen to you in the toilet?

6 A. No, no, as I said to you, I was too smart to go to that
7 toilet block on my own.

8 Q. Can I ask you about paragraph 93 of your statement where
9 you say:

10 "There was a lot of physical and mental abuse."

11 The physical abuse that you have in mind there, is
12 that really the use of the different implements for
13 punishment?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. But the mental abuse that you talk about --

16 A. You used to get belittled. I told you about what
17 Sister LDR said.

18 Q. Yes.

19 A. They basically came out with the same sort of words,
20 telling us -- well, because I was in Australia, my
21 mother was in Scotland, I was told that my mother didn't
22 want me, which was true at any rate, that the country
23 doesn't want you. That hurt because we were sent away
24 from our country. And they told us we were just
25 garbage, so we got that quite often to a stage where you

1 believed it. I mean, sometimes you'd just look at one
2 of the priests or brothers the wrong way, and they gave
3 you a slap with an implement they had. You didn't like
4 get thrashed, but it's like getting a slap across -- you
5 know (indicating). So they had their own favourite way.

6 But they did teach us a lot of sport and a love of
7 country. But they didn't teach us anything else.

8 Q. You tell us about one particular incident, about a boy
9 who -- I think his mother was French and his father was
10 British. This is paragraph 95. It seems to have stuck
11 in your mind.

12 A. That was back in 1952.

13 Q. That was early on?

14 A. Yes, his name was [REDACTED] and his -- I think
15 his mother was French and his father was English. I'm
16 not sure. But he spoke French and we used to tease him.
17 We used to call him [REDACTED] because he used to wear silk
18 underwear. But somehow -- as I said, it was in the ...
19 We had some cold days and he had on an overcoat. And
20 Father [REDACTED] LHH early in the morning, had told him to
21 take the coat off. He didn't take it off. In the
22 middle of the morning he told him to take it off again.
23 The boy didn't take it off again. And when we were
24 having our lunch, we heard this awful crash and he had
25 taken his fist to the boy and rammed it in his face and

1 said, "I will not tell you a third time".

2 Q. And Father [REDACTED] LHH I think, was the priest in charge.

3 A. Yes, he was the priest that did it. It was nobody else.

4 This was before Father [REDACTED] LHH was sent away.

5 Anyway, not long after that, [REDACTED] was
6 sent back to Britain. I don't know what happened to
7 him. But he was -- I think probably his parents had
8 found out about him being sent away. I think they'd
9 only put him in, you know, to a home to be looked after
10 for a short period and he ended up in Australia.

11 Q. So far as yourself is concerned, then, Christopher, you
12 do tell us that, when you were 16, you left

13 Boys' Town --

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. -- and you went into boarding.

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Looking at that shortly, that wasn't a particularly
18 pleasant experience for you either, being in a boarding
19 house?

20 A. It was basically four and a half years of hell. She was
21 not a nice lady at all. In my first year, I used to
22 take home £4/12/6 a week, and she used to charge us
23 £4/10 board. So basically, I had two and sixpence left
24 to myself.

25 So as I said to you, I got a job in a tannery and --

1 where we lived was in North Hobart, the tannery was in
2 South Hobart, and I had to walk to work hail, rain or
3 shine, it didn't matter what because I didn't have any
4 money to catch a bus or anything. One of the chaps that
5 worked in the tannery drove us into town so it cut short
6 the distance I had to get home.

7 But we had -- we complained to the Tasmanian
8 Government Social Services Department about the food,
9 the accommodation. We were made to do our own washing,
10 our own ironing. The food was dreadful. She would buy
11 the worst cut of corned beef. I don't know if you know
12 what Australian corned beef is like, but it is actually
13 proper beef and they corn it. You get rolled corned
14 beef and you get silverside, which was corned beef. But
15 she used to buy rolled corned beef and it had mostly fat
16 through it. So it was very cheap, you know, the
17 cheapest cuts.

18 Q. But you complained. Was there any response?

19 A. Yes, we complained to the Tasmanian Social Services
20 Department. So they sent out someone to inspect the
21 place. But what did he do? He told her he was coming.
22 So what happened is when he turned up, the food we were
23 having was great.

24 Q. So you were there until --

25 A. Sorry, he didn't ask us about it, he spoke to her about

- 1 it, about the complaint. He never spoke to us.
- 2 Q. You say "us"; how many of you were there?
- 3 A. Six. There was one boy, he had a room to himself.
- 4 Right? And then four of us shared another room.
- 5 Q. And that was the position for about four years or so?
- 6 A. Yes, until I was 21, because I was told that because
- 7 I was a ward of the Australian government and Tasmanian
- 8 government, I had to stay there until I was 21.
- 9 Q. In your statement you provide some information about the
- 10 reporting of abuse and in particular the abuse you
- 11 suffered when you were in Boys' Town, the sexual abuse.
- 12 Did you ever report that at the time?
- 13 A. Well, no, because no one would believe us. Who would
- 14 believe you, that a priest would abuse a child? I mean,
- 15 if you happened to get the ear of someone and you
- 16 complained about abuse, that priest or brother was
- 17 quickly moved out away from there and moved to another
- 18 home in Australia, and he was replaced by somebody else.
- 19 Q. But did you in fact at any point in time tell anyone
- 20 during your time in Boys' Town --
- 21 A. No. Not to my knowledge.
- 22 Q. When was the first time then that you think you
- 23 mentioned the sexual abuse?
- 24 A. This was a few years ago. The Tasmanian government had
- 25 an inquiry into abuse that happened in homes under their

1 jurisdiction. I was living here at the time. It was
2 actually funny because I didn't know about it, but in
3 2010 the Prime Minister then, Gordon Brown, had given
4 the child migrants a formal apology from the British
5 Government. One of the boys -- or one of the men,
6 I should say -- that was there was one of the chaps that
7 I was in Boys' Town with, he told me about the Tasmanian
8 inquiry. So I got in touch with them and they had
9 a counsellor speak to me over the phone. It was in the
10 middle of the night because obviously you've got a time
11 difference, and I told my story to her.

12 Q. You've mentioned the Gordon Brown apology before. Was
13 that something that you, as a child migrant, welcomed?

14 A. No, because I reckon it was very easy to turn round and
15 say you're sorry. Anybody can say they're sorry.
16 You've got to back it up with action to -- like this
17 inquiry is trying to do -- improve the lives of the
18 children that are going to come after us so that it
19 doesn't happen to them.

20 But all Gordon Brown said was sorry. He set up the
21 travel fund -- do you remember I mentioned the travel
22 fund before when we were talking about young [REDACTED] He
23 set up the travel fund so that the British men and women
24 that were living in Australia could come to the UK to
25 try and trace their family. But that was basically all

1 he did.

2 There was no, like -- I'm sure everybody's heard of
3 the Windrush people, where the British government mucked
4 that up. But Amber Rudd has said that they will give
5 financial compensation to any of those people that
6 suffered financial hardship. For 60 years the British
7 Government has done nothing for us. In actual fact,
8 I don't call it the British Government, I call it the
9 English government. I'm sorry, madam, but I've got
10 a great hatred for the British Government. I've been
11 knocked from pillar to post throughout my life. I have
12 had some good times in my life. I've got a nice wife,
13 I've had some lovely holidays. But in my mind, I've had
14 to live with this for 66 years. I have been asked would
15 I have counselling -- I'm sorry, but I don't want
16 counselling because all it's going to do is bring it
17 back. It's not going to ... I've lived with it all
18 those years. I just have to make the best of what I've
19 got left.

20 Q. You've also been in contact with the Child Migrants
21 Trust.

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And in particular, they have put you in touch with the
24 Royal Commission into --

25 A. No, I knew about the Royal Commission because it was

1 advertised. I got in touch with them and they told me
2 that because I'm Scottish it doesn't cover me. They
3 wouldn't even hear me.

4 Q. I think you did provide them with a submission,
5 a statement.

6 A. Yes, but they ...

7 LADY SMITH: Ah, what are we talking about here? Are we
8 talking about the inquiry that's going on in London --

9 A. The double I -- yes.

10 LADY SMITH: -- or the one that has now finished that took
11 place in Australia?

12 A. No, no, not the Australian Royal Commission; this is the
13 one in England.

14 LADY SMITH: Right. The confusion is it's not called
15 a commission, but that's fine as now we know what you're
16 talking about. You're talking about the inquiry in
17 London; correct?

18 A. Yes.

19 LADY SMITH: Right, thank you.

20 MR MacAULAY: Sorry, I had confused you then, Christopher.

21 I was asking about the Australian Royal Commission.

22 A. Ah, sorry.

23 Q. I think you have been put in touch with them.

24 A. Yes. I did a submission to the Australian Commission,
25 which -- they thanked me for my submission. They were

1 apologetic for what happened. Then they thanked me for
2 being brave enough to tell them what happened. But
3 that's where it is at the moment.

4 Q. Yes. Can I take you very briefly to your handwritten
5 submission because you have provided us with it,
6 Christopher. I'll put it on the screen for you again.
7 It's WIT.003.001.1234.

8 A. Is that the one about getting continued communication
9 with the Child Migrants?

10 Q. No, this is your submission to the Australian Royal
11 Commission.

12 A. Ah yes, yes. That was the letter that took me two days
13 to write.

14 Q. I understand that, because you found it quite difficult
15 to, in particular, recount some of the abuse you
16 suffered.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Can you tell me when it was you submitted this document?

19 A. I think it was 2017.

20 Q. I'm not going to take you through the detail of it
21 because we can read it for ourselves, but if you move
22 down the first page of it, do you set out, to begin
23 with, some information in relation to your experience at
24 Nazareth House?

25 A. Yes.

- 1 Q. For example, you say that:
- 2 "The nuns that looked after me were very harsh and
- 3 brutal."
- 4 You provide us with information that you've already
- 5 provided to us in evidence.
- 6 A. Yes.
- 7 Q. On page 1237, if you go on to page 1237, towards the
- 8 bottom of the page, I think you start to begin talking
- 9 about the sexual abuse that you suffered.
- 10 A. Yes.
- 11 Q. You needed, I think, your wife to be with you when you
- 12 talked about that.
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 Q. Again, you provide us with quite a lot of detail. I'm
- 15 not going to go into the detail with you, but the detail
- 16 is all there. You supplied all that information that
- 17 you've given to us today, effectively.
- 18 A. Yes. I actually left out quite a bit because I didn't
- 19 tell them that the abuse was constant because I was
- 20 ashamed of it. I just told them that it happened once.
- 21 Q. In any event, you've told us today what the position is.
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. Can I just look now with you, Christopher, at your life
- 24 after being in care. You provide us with some insight
- 25 into that in paragraphs 107 through to 121.

1 A. Yes. That was really the start of the good times I had.
2 As I said, I was told I had to stay with Mrs Kew(?)
3 until I was 21 and basically, the day after I turned 21,
4 I found myself some accommodation with two ladies, they
5 were sisters.

6 They did what was called short-week boarders. They
7 took boarders because they were -- working until Monday
8 and Friday. They didn't have any full time. Somehow,
9 I talked her into taking me on.

10 They took me on, so I lived with them full time for
11 a number of years. They treated me very well. I used
12 to -- because in Tasmania we have fires in the house, so
13 I used to chop -- they used to order in wood and I would
14 chop it and got it ready for them and mow the lawn and
15 help around the house wherever I could.

16 I used to take them to Mass every Sunday, which was
17 a really hard thing to do because being a young -- in
18 your 20s, I liked to go out, go to dances and movies and
19 things like that, so quite often I got home very early
20 on Sunday mornings, but then I had to get up. I didn't
21 begrudge it, but I used to have to get up early to take
22 them to Mass. That was one of the things I liked to do.

23 Q. At one point, and you have touched on this already, you
24 came back to Scotland and you tell is that was in 1979?

25 A. Yes, that was when I was working for Patrick Green.

- 1 Q. They provided some financial assistance for you to do
2 that?
- 3 A. Yes.
- 4 Q. And this is when you met again with your mother --
- 5 A. Yes.
- 6 Q. -- who you had not seen for many, many years?
- 7 A. Yes. I told you about that. That was when [REDACTED]
8 put me up for a couple of weeks, and when I spoke to my
9 mother, as I said, it was like talking to a brick wall.
10 I couldn't get any comment out of her whatsoever.
11 I even asked her who my father was. She wouldn't tell
12 me. But I know that whoever he was, he must have given
13 me a strong character because every time I've been
14 knocked down, I've got back up.
15 I've been told many times, I can't do this, I can't
16 do that. I had a job working for ICI in Hobart as
17 a storeman, and the manager, when I left there, gave me
18 a reference and said because of my lack of basic
19 education I would never hold down an office job, and
20 I proved him wrong.
- 21 Q. Okay. You went back to Australia, Christopher?
- 22 A. Yes.
- 23 Q. But you eventually came back to Scotland for good,
24 effectively, in 1995?
- 25 A. Yes. That was when I burnt my bridges because I married

1 an Australian girl when I was living in Tasmania, and
2 she lived in Sydney. Basically the first few years were
3 good but then, after that, I couldn't do anything to
4 please her, no matter how hard I worked and how much
5 money I brought into the household. She was never
6 satisfied and I was basically ... You know, she
7 belittled me in front of our friends or whenever we were
8 out in public, things like that.

9 I put up with it for 27 years. It wasn't until
10 I saw a programme on the television about the Lost
11 Children of the Empire, which was a movie about the
12 British children being sent to Australia, and there were
13 phone numbers, and I contacted -- this was the Child
14 Migrants. I used to have two jobs. I worked as an
15 accountant on one job and then I worked for another
16 accountant as a tax agent. I used to put all the money
17 that I earned at my first job into the household and
18 what I earned part time I kept to myself.

19 I used to sometimes go and play the poker machines.
20 What I did is when I went in, I took in what I called
21 the stake. If I lost that, I left. If I won the
22 jackpot, I left and I banked the jackpot. I was able to
23 take my wife and my son on a three-month holiday around
24 the world with the money that I won on the poker
25 machines and she still complained about that.

1 Anyway, when I spoke to the Child Migrants, I spoke
2 to Margaret Humphreys, and she told me, you don't have
3 to put up with it. We went away for a weekend and
4 I came down ill, so I went back home. She told me that
5 I couldn't take time off work for the family, but
6 I could take off time to be sick. Basically, that was
7 the last straw and I just told her, "I'm out of here".
8 I got in touch with [REDACTED] and asked her if she could
9 put me up until I could find my own accommodation and
10 I came back to Scotland.

11 Q. Was that [REDACTED] in Aberdeen?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. And that's when you came back in 1995?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. And you've been back here ever since?

16 A. Yes. Well, because basically I burnt my bridges.

17 Q. Yes.

18 A. Because I couldn't -- you know, I mean, I don't
19 regret ... After 1996, I don't regret whatsoever. But
20 before then -- in Australia they have a system where the
21 husband has to support his family, especially with
22 children under the age of 18. So my first wife took me
23 to the Australian Family Law Court and I had to go back
24 to Australia for the hearing.

25 When I was in there, they brought up things that

1 I was doing in Aberdeen. They said that I was working
2 for the NHS. Unfortunately, she made a mistake because
3 they said I was working -- I forget the name of the
4 hospital for the moment, but it's where the people that
5 have mental --

6 LADY SMITH: The Cornhill Hospital?

7 A. Yes, the Cornhill Hospital. What it is, I was being
8 employed by the AAA Aberdeen employment agency and they
9 were finding me part time work --

10 LADY SMITH: Yes.

11 A. -- because I was trying to get a full time job. So
12 I was working. What I was actually working for, I was
13 actually working for the people that do all the payment
14 of the bills and all that sort of thing, doing
15 accountancy work for them, but I wasn't working at
16 Cornhill Hospital. That's what the person that said
17 I was working at Cornhill Hospital -- so I knew that [REDACTED]
18 [REDACTED] had been telling my ex-wife everything
19 that I was getting up to in Australia.

20 LADY SMITH: So it took you a bit of time to sort out your
21 divorce from your first wife; is that right?

22 A. No, I am very lucky. The system is completely different
23 to this country. If you have a breakdown and you've
24 been separated for 12 months or more, it's pretty well
25 standard that you'll get the divorce.

1 LADY SMITH: You'll get the divorce, but there may still be
2 other things to sort out?

3 A. Yes.

4 LADY SMITH: But don't worry about that. I think we know
5 that you then settled here and remarried.

6 A. Yes, very successfully.

7 LADY SMITH: Which is very good fortune for you.

8 A. Yes.

9 MR MacAULAY: And if I can pick up on a couple of points
10 because of what happened to you, one of the things you
11 tell us in your statement, for example, is because of
12 the fact that you went to Nazareth House and you were
13 a child migrant, you never had a relationship with

14

15 A. Yes. Well, you see, that's why I come back here when my
16 marriage broke down. See, I thought I've got family in
17 Aberdeen, so that's why I come back. I thought I could
18 make a relationship -- but I was the skeleton in the
19 cupboard and they weren't interested in me whatsoever.

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[REDACTED]

Q. But one thing you do tell us is that, notwithstanding what happened to you, it hasn't affected your religious faith.

A. No, because the way I look at it, it's not the faith that's doing the bad things to you -- it's like if you've got a barrel of apples. Right? Some of the apples go bad. It was them that did the abuse, not the faith. Actually, I'm very lucky. I think that I have a strong faith because, apart from my wife, that's what gets me through life. I go to Mass on a Tuesday and Friday as well as Sunday. I try to be a good Catholic. I try to be a good example as best I can, but unfortunately I do get angry quite often when I hear the news at things that the English government are doing.

Q. What news is that?

A. Well, it's like you've got a thing going about Brexit at the moment. Now, Theresa May has said they're going to give £39 billion to the Europeans. Right? I will admit, I'm anti-European, I don't believe in Europe because when Britain joined the Common Market, one of the markets that Tasmania had was the apples, we used to sell apples to Britain, and that was ruined because of the Common Market thing. So I've never, ever liked Europe.

1 But the thing that I'm looking at is that we've got
2 loads of children in this country living below the
3 poverty means. We've got single mothers struggling to
4 bring up their children, disadvantaged people,
5 handicapped people that need help. And this government
6 is prepared to give £39 billion to the Europeans when
7 that 39 billion could be used more sensibly in this
8 country. That's the sort of thing I get angry at.

9 Q. I want to ask you, just following the theme about your
10 religious faith, Christopher, about the approach you
11 made to the Bishop of Aberdeen, Mario Conti. I think in
12 fact you had a meeting with Bishop Conti. When was the
13 meeting?

14 A. I'm not sure exactly, but what happened is -- it was in
15 1996. Right? I got in touch with Bishop Conti and told
16 him I wanted to speak to him about what happened to me
17 in Nazareth House, et cetera, but he said that he
18 couldn't meet me because there was a sub judice about
19 one of the Sisters of Nazareth that was being tried in
20 court. He couldn't talk to me about then, but he would
21 talk to me about it after.

22 Q. And you had a meeting with him?

23 A. Yes, I did. I went to his -- the bishop's house in
24 Aberdeen and I had a chat with him and I told him what
25 happened in Nazareth House. Basically, I didn't go into

1 the great detail of what we have this morning, but I did
2 explain that it was bad.

3 He turned around and said to me, "Don't you think
4 that was just normal discipline in those days?" I asked
5 him to get in touch with the Sisters of Nazareth and
6 find out any documentation that they had about why
7 I was sent to Australia, who approved me being sent to
8 Australia, and he just basically ignored me. I saw him
9 on television last night after there was a gentleman
10 here yesterday. They were talking to him on the
11 Scottish news and he gave his thoughts about what
12 happened to him. And then Mario Conti come on and said
13 that he had been told by very, very many people in
14 Nazareth House that that didn't happen to them,
15 Nazareth House wasn't like that at all.

16 Q. We've touched upon the Child Migrants Trust before. If
17 I take you to paragraph 127 of your statement where you
18 tell us that the Child Migrants Trust people have helped
19 you and in particular you think that the formal apology
20 might have been because of them.

21 A. Yes, I think it was, because what happened -- I don't
22 know actually when it started, but Margaret Humphreys
23 used to work for the Nottingham City Council. There was
24 a lady in Australia had got in touch with her and told
25 her about her -- what happened to her and she asked

1 Margaret Humphreys for help. Margaret Humphreys
2 couldn't believe it, so she started to investigate, and
3 that was basically when she opened up the can of worms
4 and found out that thousands of British children had
5 been sent out of this country.

6 Q. One of the things you say in that context, and I'm
7 quoting here, is:

8 "They have robbed us of our lives."

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. What do you mean by that?

11 A. Well, when I was born, I was born a Scotsman; right?
12 When I was sent to Australia -- I mean, now that I know
13 it probably wouldn't have been a good thing, but I was
14 robbed of a family, I was robbed of a country, I was
15 robbed of an education. Because when I was here -- at
16 least in Nazareth House I was being sent to school and
17 I was being educated. They robbed me of my identity, of
18 really who I was.

19 As I said, I have had some years that have been
20 very, very good. A lot of bad years, but some years
21 were very good, because I met some people in Australia
22 that were really nice to me.

23 See, that's what the British Government did. They
24 had no thought whatsoever. They colluded with many
25 organisations and what they did, they were paying the

1 Sisters of Nazareth so much a head for every child they
2 sent to Australia. The idea of the child migrant scheme
3 was that we were supposed to be either fostered or
4 adopted by Australian families because we were supposed
5 to take the place of all the men that had died in the
6 war for Australia. They wanted us to fill the gap
7 because being children we learned how to adapt and they
8 wanted to teach us how to grow up in that country.

9 Q. That's something you do mention in your statement. If
10 we go back to paragraph 35 of your statement -- can
11 I take you to paragraph 35 -- it'll come on the screen
12 for you, Christopher, I hope. It's on page 3650.

13 You've already talked about what -- you've told us
14 what you were told by the nuns, but you also go on to
15 say that you were going to be fostered or adopted by
16 Australian families.

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Was that said?

19 A. That didn't happen.

20 Q. I understand that, but was that also something that the
21 nuns said to you?

22 A. No, I've discovered this from my own research.

23 Q. I'm looking at your statement and this is something I've
24 been asked to raise with you. You say:

25 "The only thing the nuns ever told me about

1 Australia was that I was going to be fostered or adopted
2 by Australian families."

3 A. No, that was wrong. I did say that because I thought
4 that was what they did, but they didn't.

5 Q. Was there any mention --

6 A. No, all we were told, as I said, for the second time,
7 I've been thinking a lot about it, they just told us
8 we were being sent to Australia. That's all they told
9 us.

10 There was a thing which goes back round to about
11 1947/1948 when the British Government had set up -- you
12 won't find this in my statement. They had set up with
13 the Australian government to send children to Australia
14 to be fostered, as I said, or adopted. The British
15 Government were contributing to the Australian
16 government for our upkeep.

17 The idea was, as I said, that we were supposed to be
18 fostered or adopted by Australian families and what
19 happened is the majority of the children, both boys and
20 girls, were sent to homes --

21 Q. Yes.

22 A. -- in Australia. We were not fostered or adopted,
23 we were sent to homes, and unfortunately some of them
24 got sent to nice homes, a lot of them got sent to bad
25 homes. I don't know if you've ever heard about Bindoon.

1 That was run by the Christian Brothers and that was one
2 of the worst cases of physical abuse and sexual abuse
3 that the boys suffered. That was in Western Australia.

4 The Christian Brothers had put up a statue of the
5 brother that was in charge at that time, and some of the
6 things and protests -- I'm led to believe that they had
7 protested about a statue being raised in honour of him
8 when he had been such a paedophile.

9 Q. Okay. Can I take you to the final part of your
10 statement then, Christopher, at paragraph 134, where you
11 set out what hopes you have for this inquiry, and we'd
12 be interested to know what your hopes for the inquiry
13 are.

14 A. What I'm hoping that the inquiry will be able to do is
15 to make sure that no other child, male or female, is
16 subjected to all we've been through. I'm hoping that
17 they will be able to bring in a law that will hunt these
18 people down and punish them. I don't mean give them
19 a slap on the wrist; I mean really punish them so that
20 anybody else that thinks that they can get away with
21 paedophilia will know that if they're caught, they're
22 going to get sent to harsh punishment. I would like to
23 see them being put to jail for the term of their natural
24 life on bread and butter. I know that's excessive but
25 that's how I feel. I feel that if that happens, the

1 children that come along in this country will be able to
2 live in loving homes and not be subject to any form of
3 abuse.

4 I would like, if it's at all possible, that if
5 a child reports abuse to the police, or anybody in
6 authority, that they are listened to. Children don't
7 tell lies. I know as a boy you tell fibs, but they're
8 not going to turn round and tell you that someone abused
9 them if it's not true.

10 I would like, as I said, for the authorities to make
11 sure that every child that says it's being abused, in
12 any shape or form, that they're listened to and action
13 is taken against the abuser.

14 Q. I understand, Christopher, there was something else you
15 wanted to add before you finish your evidence, or have
16 I misunderstood that? Was there something else you
17 wanted to say about the apology that had --

18 A. Well, this is my thinking. I've been told when
19 I said -- I'm sounding like I'm greedy for money, but
20 I'm not. I honestly believe that any child, whether
21 they're a British migrant or whether they're abused in
22 Scotland or in England, Wales, Northern Ireland, any
23 child that is abused is -- they should be given
24 financial compensation for them to use in a way that
25 will make their lives seem happy and that they can do

1 something worthwhile with their lives instead of having
2 to live in fear of paedophiles and things.

3 I mean, we know that even in your own home, in some
4 cases, a child isn't safe, and that's why I said that
5 I'd like the children to be listened to.

6 MR MacAULAY: Well, thank you for that, Christopher.

7 My Lady, questions were submitted to me and
8 I believe I have covered the questions. If my learned
9 friend Mr Lindsay can confirm if that is the case, and
10 that being so, I think I've covered all the written
11 questions that have been submitted to me.

12 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much. Are there any outstanding
13 applications for further questions of this witness?

14 Christopher, it has been a long -- I was going to
15 say morning but we're well into the afternoon now. I'm
16 very grateful to you for coming along today and speaking
17 so openly and clearly about your experiences, both here
18 in Scotland and in Australia. It has been of enormous
19 assistance to us in our work here at the inquiry and I'm
20 now able to let you go.

21 A. I have got some good times though, I had some good
22 times.

23 LADY SMITH: I have noted that and it's very fair of you to
24 make clear that you have some positive memories and that
25 must be something that gives you at least some small

1 Questions from Mr MacAULAY

2 MR MacAULAY: Good afternoon, John.

3 Can I just take from you your year of the birth -- I
4 don't want your date of birth, but just your year of
5 birth to get a time frame. Am I right in thinking that
6 you were born in 1959?

7 A. That's correct, yes.

8 Q. In the red folder in front of you, you'll find the
9 statement that you provided to the inquiry.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. It begins at WIT.001.001.2534. If I could take you to
12 the very last page at 2554, can I ask you to confirm
13 that you have signed the statement.

14 A. I have signed the statement.

15 Q. You tell us in the last main paragraph:

16 "I have no objection to my witness statement being
17 published as part of the evidence to the inquiry."

18 A. That's correct.

19 Q. And you go on to say:

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

22 A. That's correct.

23 Q. Can I begin by asking you, John, a little bit about your
24 life before you went into care because we're going to
25 look at your life after you were in care. I think you

1 lived with your family, your parents, and you had
2 I think two brothers, one younger, one older, and also
3 an older sister; is that right?

4 A. That is correct.

5 Q. You lived in the west of Scotland. I think you were in
6 Greenock and eventually you moved up to Glasgow.

7 A. That's correct, yes.

8 Q. After the move to Glasgow, your father was involved in
9 a rather tragic accident, which had an impact on him;
10 is that right?

11 A. That's correct, yes.

12 Q. I think you tell us that a young boy ran in front of his
13 car, without any blame on his part, and was killed.

14 A. Yes. The story is that my father told me he'd actually
15 had the car MOT-ed the week before. He hadn't obviously
16 been drinking any alcohol or anything, so the police had
17 to reassure him, from what the witness statements were
18 at the time, that he was actually completely not at
19 fault. However, that doesn't take away the impact of
20 such a thing would have on someone at the time,
21 especially when it's such a young life that's been
22 taken.

23 After that, my father struggled coming to terms with
24 the fact that this young boy had died when he was
25 driving a car. Apparently the bike came out of the side

1 street and he never saw it and the boy never stopped and
2 he came right up and they collided. So there was
3 nothing he could do. He couldn't even brake, it was
4 that fast the way it happened. I always remember him
5 telling me that if he had ever had ever had a touch of
6 alcohol and had never had his car in tip-top condition,
7 he probably would have worried more about it.

8 Q. When did he discuss it with you? Was that later in
9 life?

10 A. Yes, it was much later when I was slightly older.
11 Because at the time we didn't know all this was
12 happening. We just knew that my father was in hospital
13 in Gartnavel in Glasgow.

14 Q. What age were you then when this happened?

15 A. My recollection is it was probably between 5 and 6 years
16 of age.

17 Q. I think, taking matters shortly, and it was with some
18 regret, I think you tell us in your statement, that your
19 parents decided to put you and your siblings into care;
20 is that correct?

21 A. That's correct, yes.

22 Q. To begin with, you went to a place called Overbridge,
23 which is in Drumbreck Road in Glasgow.

24 A. That is correct, yes.

25 Q. Can you just tell me a little bit about that? I'm not

1 going to go into the detail of it, but can you tell me
2 about it?

3 A. Okay. Well, my mother was struggling to cope with us
4 after my father went into hospital. She did seek help
5 from family members and from the Local Authority, but it
6 seemed to be falling on deaf ears at that time and she
7 wasn't able to look after us. We ended up staying --
8 first of all, the house we were staying in was subject
9 to a warrant sale, which was quite a horrendous system
10 in Scotland back in the 1960s, if you've ever
11 experienced it, where people came up and bought all your
12 stuff.

13 So we were then basically ejected from that house.
14 My father at that time was in hospital. My mother
15 couldn't cope with us and we stayed a few nights kind of
16 sofa surfing with relatives, friends.

17 Then I think there were a few other nights when we
18 ended up in a Salvation Army hostel in Glasgow and
19 during that period my mother was attempting, in a very
20 frustrated way, to get the Local Authority -- to see if
21 they could help us with either accommodation or -- but
22 they couldn't at that time, so she eventually had to
23 relent and she gave us up and put us into care at that
24 time.

25 Q. As I've just mentioned, the first place you went to was

- 1 this place called Overbridge --
- 2 A. That's correct.
- 3 Q. -- on Drumbreck Road in Glasgow; was that essentially
- 4 a large house?
- 5 A. Yes, it was a large house, just at the beginning of
- 6 Drumbreck Road in Glasgow. We were taken there one
- 7 night by someone -- obviously we didn't know what was
- 8 happening. All I remember was a car taking myself and
- 9 my two brothers and sister there. We stayed there,
- 10 I think it was for approximately -- I have only found
- 11 this out later -- 18 months we were there. I believe it
- 12 was part of Quarriers Homes of Bridge of Weir, and this
- 13 was a kind of satellite home. So we were placed there.
- 14 I'm assuming that it was partly to do with the fact
- 15 that we were needing four children placed, which was
- 16 quite a large number of children to be placed at any one
- 17 time, so they had obviously the space to take the four
- 18 of us.
- 19 Q. But there were other children there?
- 20 A. Yes, it was quite a big house. I think there were
- 21 approximately between 18 and 25 children at that
- 22 property.
- 23 Q. I think I'm right in saying that you have had sight of
- 24 some social work records.
- 25 A. I have, yes, that's correct.

1 Q. As has the inquiry, and I think according to the social
2 work records, you were taken into that particular
3 establishment on [REDACTED] 1966.

4 A. That's correct.

5 Q. Indeed, I think you have provided that particular date
6 in your statement.

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. So at that time you'd be aged about 6 or 7, that sort of
9 age?

10 A. I'd be 6 years of age at the time, yes.

11 Q. And you have just mentioned you were taken there with
12 your siblings.

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. I think you have been made aware, John, that Quarriers,
15 as an institution, are to be the subject of a separate
16 case study by this inquiry, so I don't propose to look
17 at what life was like in the 18 months or so that you
18 spent in that particular establishment. I think you've
19 been made aware of that --

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. -- but we will not lose sight of that evidence.

22 What I do want to ask you is how it came to be that
23 you came to leave Overbridge.

24 A. I suppose the story we were told as children by the
25 staff at Quarriers was that if you were in the home that

1 we were in for longer than a year, you then were defined
2 as long-termers. So therefore, I remember probably --
3 I'm not going to say the six months leading up to when
4 we left, but there was a period of time when I can
5 remember the staff saying: you're a long-termer now,
6 you'll be going soon. So it was very clear that there
7 was some sort of imminency that we were going to be
8 leaving, but we didn't know when or where -- there was
9 no indication where we would go. So that was -- as
10 a child I can recollect that.

11 Obviously from the local authority records, Glasgow
12 Corporation, I subsequently discovered that there was
13 obviously a lot more going on in the background between
14 my parents and the children's welfare officer -- I think
15 it was a Mr McEwan. My parents were attempting to try
16 and get a house together and they seemed to be getting
17 put under a bit of pressure by the corporation that if
18 they didn't, the children might have to move much
19 further away. We were not made aware of that; that's
20 something I've subsequently discovered through the
21 records.

22 So because we were told we were long-termers, we
23 knew that we were going to be leaving but we had no idea
24 where. Then I think it was obviously just before the
25 end of [REDACTED] that we were then transferred, with very

1 little notice -- and as far as I'm aware my parents were
2 not given any notice -- and we were then shipped off to
3 Nazareth House in Aberdeen.

4 Q. What you tell us in your statement is that, as you told
5 us, you had very little notice, a man turned up and
6 said, "Right, you're leaving"?

7 A. That's correct, yes.

8 Q. And then you were taken straight up to Aberdeen?

9 A. Yes.

10 MR MacAULAY: Now, my Lady, it's just after 1.00. That
11 might be a good point to stop and restart after lunch.

12 LADY SMITH: Yes. Thank you for enabling us to make a start
13 on your evidence just now, John, but we'll rise now for
14 the lunch break and sit again at 2 o'clock, please.

15 (1.00 pm)

16 (The lunch adjournment)

17 (2.00 pm)

18 MR MacAULAY: Before lunch, John, we were approaching the
19 door of Nazareth House and I think you were admitted
20 there with your siblings on -- and there are two dates
21 in the records, either [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] 1967.

22 A. That's correct. I'm still not sure which one it is
23 because I've actually had two different dates given to
24 me. I got one from Nazareth House and one from Glasgow
25 Corporation, and I'm not sure myself which one it is.

- 1 Q. But it was towards the end of [REDACTED] of 1967?
- 2 A. It is. The reason I know that is because I actually
3 celebrated my 8th birthday in Nazareth House in
4 Aberdeen, and that was on [REDACTED].
- 5 Q. You leave, according to the records, on
6 [REDACTED] 1967.
- 7 A. Yes. That is correct.
- 8 Q. So you're there for a little bit over two months?
- 9 A. That's correct.
- 10 Q. Ten weeks, thereabouts. Perhaps you can just give us
11 your initial impressions of Nazareth House when you
12 first went there.
- 13 A. Okay. Just before I give that, can I actually say
14 something that did quite shock me. When I discovered
15 the timescales that -- because it was only recently
16 I realised -- when you're that young you sometimes don't
17 realise how long you're in any place. And I was quite
18 shocked to realise that I'd been in Quarriers for
19 18 months and it was only just over two months in
20 Nazareth House, because it did feel a lot longer and the
21 impressions were very deep and they've been everlasting.
22 So I was quite shocked myself to realise it was such
23 a short period of time.
- 24 Q. You're going to come and tell us about what happened.
- 25 Let's look at your initial impression then when you

1 went there first of all. What was that impression?

2 A. Well, I remember when we arrived, it was quite strange
3 because we went from what was a large, almost family
4 type house, to quite an impressive, imposing -- I now
5 realise it's a grey granite building, which was huge as
6 a child. I remember thinking at the time, where's the
7 house for us to go to, not realising you were going to
8 be living in this quite imposing building with imposing
9 sized rooms -- because from a child's perspective, they
10 were huge.

11 There was also a chapel, I remember, within the
12 grounds. Yes, and obviously I'd never experienced or
13 come across so many people in a costume, such as nuns'
14 costumes or priests' costumes, so I was quite
15 bewildered, I suppose, in the beginning and I couldn't
16 understand why we were where we were. I just found it
17 quite strange.

18 Although my brother and sister, elder brother and
19 sister had practised as Catholics and went to communion,
20 I had never done that prior to going into care. So for
21 me it was a relatively new experience to see this. So
22 I found it quite daunting, shall we say, initially, and
23 for example, just going into the dormitory where you
24 would sleep at nights -- then it would have been a small
25 room, but it seemed, as a child, a huge room with many,

1 many beds. And again, it was almost like there was --
2 now when I think back on it, I was quite daunted by the
3 lack of privacy. It was just huge and there was no
4 private space and nothing that you might have been a bit
5 more used to when you were at, say, Quarriers, for
6 example.

7 Q. This was 1967 you went there?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. What about boys and girls? Did you stay with your
10 sister or was there separation?

11 A. No, I think one of the things -- again my sister was one
12 year older than me, so we were relatively close. My
13 younger brother was three years younger and my elder
14 brother was three years older, so we were in the middle
15 and so we were relatively close. But I never saw her at
16 all -- I could see her across the dining room, at
17 another table, but even then I wasn't allowed to speak
18 to her. So she was very much isolated from us.
19 We weren't allowed to converse with her.

20 Q. The inquiry has heard evidence, although we may have to
21 look at exactly when these changes took place, that
22 there were changes in these establishments that moved
23 them from the sort of establishment where people were
24 not together into group type groupings, family
25 groupings. From what you're saying, that wasn't the

- 1 position?
- 2 A. No, that wasn't the case. The whole time I was there,
3 I hardly saw my sister. I wasn't able to -- I asked the
4 nuns and they very much dismissed me: no, that doesn't
5 happen, you stay with the boys. I remember when you
6 used to go out and play there was a play area and there
7 was a huge granite wall and I could hear the girls
8 at the other side of the wall and if we tried to go and
9 climb the wall to go over, we were very much punished
10 for that. We weren't allowed to.
- 11 Q. What about your brothers, one three years younger, one
12 three years older, in total a six-year gap? Were you
13 with your brothers?
- 14 A. Yes, I had more contact with my brothers. My
15 recollection is that we shared the same dormitory in the
16 one -- I can't remember my young brother being away from
17 me, I'm sure he was with me. So we all shared the same
18 and we certainly had a lot more contact with each other
19 throughout the period I was there.
- 20 Q. So far as the dormitories were concerned, can you give
21 me any understanding as to how many beds you think there
22 might have been in the dormitory that you were in?
- 23 A. It just seemed very big to me, but as I say, from
24 a child's perspective, I realise that that can sometimes
25 be misleading. But I'm going to estimate it possibly

1 was at least 15 to 20 beds in a dormitory, at least.

2 Q. And the age group of the boys in the dormitory?

3 A. The age group seemed to vary. It seemed to be from

4 quite young to, I would say, at least teenage years,

5 I can remember.

6 Q. Looking to the time that you were there -- in fact you

7 were going there during the school term.

8 A. That's correct.

9 Q. So do I take it that those children who were going to

10 school would be going to school on a daily basis?

11 A. It's my understanding -- when we arrived at

12 Nazareth House in Aberdeen, I remember the

13 Mother Superior telling us at the time, because we had

14 arrived just before the school broke up -- and I don't

15 know when that was by the way -- that they weren't going

16 to send us to school because it was going to break up

17 soon. So therefore we were asked that -- we weren't

18 asked, we were told, you would just be following the

19 nuns around while they were doing their daily chores

20 while the children went to school, which was quite

21 boring obviously for children and they were doing a lot

22 of different tasks and we had to behave ourselves -- and

23 if we didn't, we got punished for it.

24 Q. I'll look at some of that shortly. But there's you --

25 you and your two brothers -- your sister, was she in the

- 1 same position?
- 2 A. Do you know, I don't even know. I don't remember seeing
3 her at all. So I'm assuming from the other side,
4 something similar happened to her. I've never asked her
5 that question, strangely enough, whether during that
6 period -- but she didn't go to school, I know that. She
7 did tell me that.
- 8 Q. Were there any other children on your side, boys, who
9 weren't going to school and therefore were in the
10 building while other children were at school?
- 11 A. I can't actually remember that, whether there were any
12 other ... I think there were some other children
13 because I remember we used to interact with them, but
14 that could have been when school broke up and we were
15 all together. Then again, there probably were some or
16 children there because when I think about it, when
17 school broke up, we ended up being taken out a lot, to
18 get us out of the building, and that was generally down
19 to the beach.
- 20 Q. And that was during the school holiday?
- 21 A. Yes, that was during the school holidays. So I am
22 assuming there was because I do remember playing with
23 other children as well during that period.
- 24 Q. Of course that would be after school broke up, so the
25 children would be there?

- 1 A. Yes, that's correct.
- 2 Q. I think in fact, as things turned out, because you left
3 shortly after the school term recommenced, you never
4 went to school at --
- 5 A. No, we didn't, that's right. Again, we were told that
6 because we might be going home, we didn't know when,
7 where or whatever, which was obviously quite exciting,
8 because every day you assumed that might be the day and
9 it wasn't, and then the children returned to school and
10 we were still at obviously the main hall, we were there
11 every day. It seemed like a lifetime, at the time,
12 I can tell you, but it was obviously quite difficult to
13 understand the timescale.
- 14 Q. Were you divided into any groupings when you were there?
15 By that I mean was there some sort of age grouping or
16 was it all boys together?
- 17 A. No, it was various groupings. I can remember the nuns
18 asking older children to look after the younger children
19 and generally the older children who were looking after
20 were ones who had been there a long time and therefore
21 would be more, how shall I say it -- it was almost like
22 they were taking on a quasi role as a carer by saying
23 the -- the nuns would say, you look after that lot while
24 we go and do this, and then be telling us what to do as
25 if they were the nuns.

- 1 Q. Are you looking at boys who were perhaps in their
2 teenage years?
- 3 A. Or at least their early teenage years.
- 4 Q. So far as the nuns were concerned, do you remember the
5 names of any particular nuns?
- 6 A. Yes. I do remember a Sister -- I think it was [REDACTED] LHV
7 a Sister [REDACTED] LFB a Sister [REDACTED] LVC I think that's
8 it. There was another one I mentioned, I can't remember
9 off the top of my head but I think they are the ones
10 which are more in my mind, I can remember.
- 11 Q. You do mention the Mother Superior and meeting her.
- 12 A. Yes.
- 13 Q. And you said she was nice to you?
- 14 A. We only saw her when we arrived and I think we saw her
15 before we left. I think only saw her once when I was
16 advised by other children, because it was my birthday,
17 that she had a cupboard full of toys and if you didn't
18 ask you wouldn't get. So there was no acknowledgement
19 it was your birthday; you had to go and say, "It's my
20 birthday today". And the children, other children --
21 I suppose these kind of things quickly spread -- because
22 we had only been there two or three days, they said: if
23 you want a present you have got to ask.
- 24 Q. Did you do that?
- 25 A. I did go and ask and I was taken to a cupboard by the

1 Mother Superior and she opened it and handed me
2 something -- I can't even remember what it was, it was a
3 toy -- and then the door was closed.

4 Q. That's your own experience. Do you remember other
5 children being given birthday presents in the time that
6 you were there?

7 A. Yes, I do remember other children getting things from
8 that cupboard. It obviously became -- word spread
9 quickly if it was someone's birthday. You didn't know
10 what they were going to get, but you were obviously
11 curious to find out what they may have got.

12 Q. Can I ask you a little bit about the routine then.
13 Let's start with the morning. I think you tell us in
14 your statement at paragraph 59 that you were woken up at
15 about 6 o'clock in the morning; is that right?

16 A. Yes, I was quite shocked at the time. I had never at
17 that stage in my life been up that early before that
18 I could ever remember. You were woken at 6 and then you
19 had to quickly make your bed and have a quick wash and
20 then you had to go straight down to the chapel. That's
21 what we were told.

22 The thing I can remember most is you had to kneel.
23 Because, as I say, I wasn't at that young age used to
24 being in a Catholic chapel, I struggled with kneeling.
25 It really hurt my knees because there was no padding

1 that I could see. It was on wood, so you had to lean --
2 kneel on the wood and then -- well, I didn't even know
3 what I was doing. I can't remember but I was told to
4 pray. I didn't know what it meant. I had no concept at
5 that age of what it meant. It was quite a long hour
6 obviously every morning before you got your breakfast to
7 sit there and kneel. I struggled with that. I just
8 didn't know what it meant.

9 Q. Were boys and girls in the chapel at the same time?

10 A. Yes -- well, the girls generally sat on one side,
11 I think, if I remember right, and the boys -- sometimes
12 on the odd occasion I saw my sister, but with the
13 different rows, you might be at the front and they may
14 be at the back. I couldn't remember.

15 Q. One thing you do tell us in your statement in relation
16 to the regime in the morning was the checking for wet
17 beds.

18 A. Yes, that's correct.

19 Q. Can you tell me about what you saw about that?

20 A. Well, one of the things very quickly that you became
21 aware of is that other than children wet the bed and
22 they were humiliated.

23 Q. You did not?

24 A. No, I did, I did on occasions wet the bed and I was
25 also -- the nuns would come in sometimes -- it seemed

1 like the middle of the night, it may have been the early
2 hours of the morning, I don't know. They seemed to come
3 in to check and see if you had wet the bed, so they
4 would actually come in and pull the covers back --

5 Q. Would this be before you got up in the morning?

6 A. Yes. It was before you got up. And if you had wet the
7 bed, then the lights went on and everyone got woken up
8 and then you had to get out of bed, take your clothes
9 with you and take them to -- it seemed like a big sink
10 or something -- and you had to wash -- sometimes you
11 went into a bath -- not all the time, but sometimes or
12 sometimes you just washed yourself and then you had to
13 dry yourself and then you had to put the sheets into
14 some bath thing to clean them. I can't remember too
15 much about it but I remember you had to lift the sheets
16 up, you had to physically take them and then you had to
17 put them into some sort of area to get the washed.

18 I can't remember if I washed them or whether other
19 people washed them, but I remember you had to drag the
20 wet sheets off the bed.

21 Q. And what about -- were new sheets put on the bed then?

22 A. I'm assuming here again because I can't remember that
23 clearly, but you then had to go back down to sleep, so
24 I'm assuming sheets were put down -- but I can't
25 remember whether I did it or whether other people did

1 it, but you obviously had to have sheets on your bed.

2 Q. How did you feel about this at the time?

3 A. I struggled with the whole concept of what was
4 happening. I do remember on occasions when I was at
5 Quarriers that if you wet the bed, nobody would come and
6 check and in the morning the sheets were just taken off
7 and that was it. There was no ritual humiliation.

8 It was very clearly evident at Nazareth House, where
9 other children obviously commented on it and made you
10 feel bad. It was something that I'd never experienced.

11 Q. You mentioned ritual humiliation; what did the other
12 children do?

13 A. You got bullied and you got intimidated by it. When
14 I think back on it now, you were called names --

15 Q. What sort of names; can you remember?

16 A. It was just "pee the bed", you know, "bed-wetters" --
17 those were the names that were thrown at you. This was
18 by children. I can't recollect staff calling any names,
19 but I can certainly recollect staff's disapproval that
20 you were wetting the bed, I remember that, and the
21 frustration and anger on their faces that they had to
22 then act to get the beds cleaned and that was I'm
23 assuming costing them energy at that time that they
24 didn't want to be spending, so they were very frustrated
25 at the time.

1 Q. When you talk about staff, are you talking about nuns?

2 A. Nuns, yes.

3 Q. Did you see any lay staff?

4 A. No, I don't remember -- I don't recollect seeing any
5 staff. I can only recollect being -- at that time being
6 cared for and disciplined and dealt with on all
7 occasions by nuns. I don't remember seeing any other
8 staff around.

9 Q. Apart from what you have told us about having to take
10 sheets and them having to be washed and the humiliation
11 you mentioned, was there any other form of punishment
12 for bed-wetting that you can remember?

13 A. No, I don't remember any real punishment for the
14 bed-wetting. There was the -- part of the problem
15 I think you had was that you struggled at night because
16 you were afraid you'd wet the bed and of course the more
17 anxious you became, then it's likely you would have wet
18 the bed because you were very anxious. So that became
19 quite a difficult thing to try and come to terms with,
20 the fact that you were trying to stop yourself wetting
21 the bed, but you just became more anxious about it and
22 did it and you knew what was going to come the following
23 day: you were going to get called names and you were
24 going to get the frustration and disapproval of the
25 staff. Yes, it was a kind of -- it was a difficult

1 Catch 22 situation you couldn't really get out of.

2 I certainly know my younger brother struggled with that
3 as well; he was much younger than me.

4 Q. How did the staff -- I think you mean the nuns --

5 A. Yes, that's what I mean.

6 Q. -- express their frustration and disapproval?

7 A. They would -- yeah. They would make you do the work for
8 a start in a very coarse and authoritative voice. And
9 they would also -- and if you weren't doing it quick
10 enough, they would push you and go, "Move, you have to
11 get moving". So it was very much they were impatient
12 with -- bearing in mind you had just woken up and you
13 weren't asleep and they were already awake and obviously
14 checking and then when they discovered you'd done it, it
15 was very much it was to be done quickly so you had to
16 move quickly and if you didn't, you got pushed or
17 cajoled along, so it could get down.

18 Quite often I felt a bit disorientated, as you
19 would, trying to get out of bed to do these things and
20 -- then I just knew then I was going to be getting
21 called names that day like it had happened either the
22 day before or the time before, which was quiet quite
23 difficult and a struggle.

24 Q. Can I ask you a little bit about your recollection of
25 the food at Nazareth House then. What recollection, if

1 any, do you have of that?

2 A. I had never been in a place where you had to say grace
3 before, so that was something new. You ate your meals
4 together in -- usually in the dining rooms.

5 Q. Was that boys only?

6 A. Well, I think you had separate tables. I remember
7 sitting at a boys' table and I can remember on occasions
8 seeing my sister on a separate table. I can't remember
9 where exactly it was, but it seemed quite a big room and
10 we were all separated. You weren't allowed to converse
11 or interact with the other tables.

12 Do you know what? Strangely, I can't remember the
13 food; what I can always remember is being eternally
14 hungry. I can't remember there ever being enough. It
15 just seemed a strange concept that -- probably partly
16 today I gulp my food partly because of that very reason.
17 There just never seemed to be enough.

18 Q. One thing you do say is that you would have to eat
19 whatever was put in front of you.

20 A. That's right.

21 Q. Do you remember that?

22 A. I do.

23 Q. Do you have any recollection of any consequences if you
24 did not?

25 A. Well, you were pushed in the back and told you had to

1 eat it. If you didn't like it -- there was the odd
2 occasion where I didn't like what was put down despite
3 the fact I was hungry, but you would be told you had to
4 eat it and you wouldn't be able to leave the table until
5 it was finished.

6 Q. This is something I've been asked to ask you: you say
7 you can't recall being forced to eat, but do you have
8 any recollection of seeing any other children being
9 force-fed at mealtimes?

10 A. Yes, I do.

11 Q. What recollection do you have?

12 A. I do. I remember nuns lifting spoons and putting them
13 in their mouths and making them eat it. You had to eat
14 it and very much humiliate them in front of other
15 children.

16 Q. How would the child be made to eat it?

17 A. He would be told that if he didn't open his mouth -- he
18 would be forced to stay there and he would have to eat
19 this food until it was finished. So it was very much
20 clearly they were putting the spoon to his mouth and
21 say, "You have to eat this", and in a sense that created
22 a fear where you had to eat the food because if you
23 didn't, it was going to happen to you.

24 Q. We've already touched upon the fact that you arrived
25 there when the other children were at school and you

1 were there in Nazareth House, at least you and your
2 siblings, perhaps not on your own but at least with the
3 nuns. How would you spend the day before the other
4 children came back?

5 A. Well, after we had breakfast and the children went off
6 to school, there was a group of us where we were asked
7 to stand by the -- it seemed to be like a big utility
8 room where there was a row of sinks and we were asked to
9 stand there. I do remember that there was other
10 children there because one of the older boys was told to
11 look after us.

12 Yeah, the nuns would just say, check on them, make
13 sure they stay there, they don't move, and if you moved
14 then this boy used to take a stick out and hit you with
15 it, which was really, really painful, obviously.

16 I heard on many occasions nuns say, "That's good,
17 keep them in line", despite the fact that the nun was
18 only doing what they wanted them to do, but at the same
19 time hitting you with a stick -- in particular across
20 the back of the legs -- was extremely painful.

21 Q. What about the nuns themselves? Did they do anything to
22 you?

23 A. They did. On occasions when if they happened to pass by
24 and see -- maybe I'd be either joking or speaking to
25 someone next door or we were trying to play in front of

1 the sinks -- I was on occasions lifted by the nuns by my
2 hair. They would lift up your hair or they would pull
3 you by the ear and literally lift you off your feet.
4 I can remember hair coming out and the pain of it coming
5 out of my scalp. They were just lifting you straight
6 off the ground and so angry that you wouldn't stand by
7 that sink. It was just extremely painful and I just
8 remember it.

9 Q. For how long in the day would you be in that particular
10 location?

11 A. I suppose it's a difficult one to know, but it just
12 seemed to be forever, if you know what I mean. It
13 seemed to be until you got your lunch. You were there
14 all the time, standing there and having to -- literally
15 almost standing to attention. I remember the elder boy
16 telling us: if you don't stand to attention and stand
17 there, then I will hit you with a stick again. Even for
18 him -- I can imagine even for him it must have been
19 pretty boring. He was having to stand there and it was
20 because the nuns were encouraging him that that was what
21 they wanted him to do while they were getting on with
22 other chores or tasks at the time.

23 Q. Do you have any insight as to why you were being made to
24 stand there as opposed to, for example, going outside to
25 play?

1 A. Well, when I think back on it now, I thought that would
2 have probably been the easiest way to deal with
3 children. I have no idea why we had to stand there, but
4 I just seem to remember we were always standing by these
5 sinks. It was such -- in many respects, from a child's
6 point of view, a very boring thing and quite
7 a constraining thing. You couldn't move away because
8 you got punished. You couldn't talk or you would get
9 punished. When you did do any of these things then you
10 got punished severely. I can't work it out myself.

11 My brother was there and my sister -- I don't
12 recollect my sister -- so my younger brother and my
13 older brother but I don't recollect seeing my sister
14 there.

15 Q. I think you have told us there was this segregation
16 where the girls were in another part of the building.

17 A. Mm-hm.

18 Q. This would have lasted I suppose until the schools broke
19 up.

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. I don't know what the dates of that would be, would that
22 be some time in July?

23 A. It must have been, I agree. I can't think when they
24 would have broken up. It must have been some time then,
25 yes.

- 1 Q. When that happened then, did the situation change?
- 2 A. Well, it did. I remember when older children broke up
3 for school, a bus used to come every day and there were
4 two or three nuns, and they would take us down to
5 Aberdeen beach, which was again quite a strange concept
6 for me. We'd go down there and it was this huge open
7 space and you were just basically allowed to roam there
8 all day until the bus came back. It was quite strange
9 because on a number of days it was -- it's an extremely
10 windy beach. I've been back to that beach on several
11 occasions and I remember it being very cold there. You
12 were always looking for a shelter or something because
13 it wasn't -- although the sun may have been out, it was
14 still pretty cold.
- 15 Q. But were you there in all weathers?
- 16 A. All weathers, whether it rained it didn't matter.
17 Because I remember I used to -- well, you'd look outside
18 and if it was raining, you thought we're going to the
19 beach today, it just didn't seem like a nice place to
20 go.
- 21 Q. Was this a daily occurrence during --
- 22 A. It seemed to be. I can't remember anything else during
23 the summer but going to that beach. I can't remember
24 any days when we stayed in or we did anything else. It
25 seemed to be every day you went down to the beach. It

1 could have been there were some other days we did other
2 things, but I can't remember that. I can only remember
3 during the summer holidays going to the beach every day.

4 Q. What about your lunch then? Was there some arrangement
5 over lunch?

6 A. We used to bring packed lunches, sandwiches. So you
7 were given a sandwich and -- I think it was some juice
8 or something. You came and met with one of the nuns who
9 would dish them out and you at a sandwich and that was
10 it.

11 Q. When would you head back to the home?

12 A. My recollection was it was near the end of the afternoon
13 because I always remember we got back in, we had to wash
14 because of the sand on our clothes, wash quickly, make
15 sure there was nothing on our shoes and then you'd be
16 getting your dinner shortly after that, so I am assuming
17 it was most of the day.

18 Q. Did you get visits from any family members when you were
19 in Nazareth House?

20 A. Yes, I got -- I can recollect one visit I got from my
21 maternal grandmother. She had come to visit [REDACTED]
22 [REDACTED] -- [REDACTED] she must have come some
23 time in July. She arrived, wanted to take us out, was
24 told by the nuns she couldn't take us out, and she asked
25 if she would take them for a walk, and she wasn't

1 allowed to. We wanted to go with her but we weren't
2 allowed to.

3 Q. Do you know why that was?

4 A. No idea. She accepted it, but they just said, "You
5 couldn't take them out, the children". I do remember
6 there was -- during that visit the nuns stayed with us
7 the whole time. She was with us in the room. It wasn't
8 the Mother Superior, it was one of her colleagues,
9 I think, and they stayed there the whole time.

10 Q. What about your parents then?

11 A. No. I think from what I gather, there had been a bit of
12 strife between my grandmother and my mother because my
13 mother had wanted to go up and see us because it had
14 been my birthday and my elder brother's birthday two or
15 three weeks earlier, and there was some, I think,
16 difficult situation between them. My gran wouldn't
17 allow it and she went up instead.

18 My mother found that quite difficult -- because when
19 we did leave Quarriers Home, according to my mum, they
20 weren't told that we were moved to Aberdeen, and
21 obviously, because of their financial difficulties, they
22 didn't have the facilities to come and visit us. So my
23 mother struggled with that and she did tell me that many
24 years later, that she struggled with the fact that we
25 were up there and she couldn't come and visit us.

1 Q. I think you do tell us in your statement at paragraph 72
2 that your mother in fact had turned up at Overbridge to
3 visit you --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. -- but then realised that you were no longer there.

6 A. That's correct. My mother was extremely angry with the
7 way the transfer was dealt with. We didn't know my
8 mother didn't know; we just assumed we were going to
9 Aberdeen because -- one of the things I did note in the
10 information I did receive from Quarriers was that my
11 parents used to visit every Saturday if they could,
12 which even then was quite an unusual thing when you were
13 in care, that parents would make that effort to come.
14 My mother used to come every Saturday, because that's
15 when she was told she could come, was every Saturday
16 morning. Yeah, she turned up one Saturday morning and
17 we had already been gone and she was extremely angry, in
18 particular when she found out it was so far away and she
19 couldn't actually come and visit us.

20 Of course for us in Aberdeen that was even worse.
21 When Saturday morning came, we assumed our mother and
22 father were coming, we were told, don't be daft, they're
23 not coming to visit you.

24 Q. You talk a little bit in your statement about healthcare
25 and in fact what you say is you don't recall seeing

1 a doctor, nurse or dentist when you were at
2 Nazareth House. But I suppose it might be said that you
3 were only there for 10 weeks or so; was there any need
4 to see a doctor or a dentist, for example, during that
5 time?

6 A. I don't recollect having actually been examined in any
7 way by any health professional and I don't recollect
8 having needed one at that time. Certainly when I was in
9 Quarriers Home there was need for a GP, but not at
10 Nazareth House.

11 Q. If I take you to paragraph 75 onwards in your statement,
12 you are there talking about the type of discipline that
13 existed at Nazareth House and you have touched upon
14 aspects of this already as you've been giving your
15 evidence. In general terms can you describe the regime
16 for us?

17 A. The words that come to mind are cold, brutal. Yeah,
18 there was absolutely no -- it was like the regime was
19 designed for the convenience of the staff rather than to
20 consider any of the needs of the children. That's how
21 I would see it now, looking back on it. There was no
22 indication of any approach to look at what needs the
23 children had and how could we address them or how could
24 we support the children. It was very much about, yeah,
25 you were there, you were tolerated as long as you did

1 what you were told, and if you weren't, you were
2 punished. It was almost done -- in comparison to
3 Overbridge, it was done on an industrial scale. It was
4 almost warehousing people through a system, where they
5 were doing the minimum to get you through but not really
6 enough to see people as individuals and support them.

7 In particular, when you think back on all these
8 children were coming from different backgrounds,
9 different vulnerabilities, different experiences and
10 a lot of them would be extremely vulnerable. You just
11 felt that nobody was addressing any of their needs and
12 our family was no different from anyone else.

13 So it was very much we were tolerated. That's the
14 best way I can describe it.

15 Q. You give an example here in paragraph 75, for example,
16 that if you went to the toilet without telling a nun or
17 the nun in charge, that something would happen.

18 A. Yes. Yes. Even more in the playground, I remember, if
19 you went to the toilet and you didn't tell anyone, then
20 you were punished. That would either be that they would
21 twist your ear or they would shout and humiliate you in
22 front of other people. It depended what they were doing
23 at that particular time when they found out. But you
24 could be punished severely for not telling where you
25 were going and why you were going. It was almost like

1 someone had to know where you were at all times.

2 Q. In paragraphs 76 and 77, you tell us about a particular
3 family that were bullies. The names have been redacted.
4 It was quite a large family and they had a particular
5 role to play.

6 A. Yes, they did.

7 Q. Can you tell us about that?

8 A. Well, they were a family from what I gather who were
9 there long term. They used to proudly boast that they
10 were there for a long time and they knew the nuns better
11 than anyone and therefore they got special privileges.
12 We were just short-termers so we were very much --
13 almost lower down the pecking order. They were the very
14 ones who were instrumental in being used to hit you with
15 sticks if you didn't do what you were told or what the
16 nuns wanted to happen. Quite an intimidating family
17 because there was obviously quite a lot of them, so you
18 would generally tend to avoid them, keep out of their
19 way.

20 But yeah, in some ways, when I look back, I feel
21 sorry for the family because they were obviously being
22 in many ways misused to deal with situations that maybe
23 didn't even fit in with their own values, but it was
24 fitting in with the values of what was convenient for
25 the nuns rather than what they themselves might have

1 wanted to do. In some ways I think they were being
2 manipulated and forced, which was unfortunate.

3 But I do remember at the time having a fear for them
4 because I did get hit from them and I did get cajoled
5 and humiliated by them. But on reflection I realise
6 they themselves were victims in this situation. They
7 weren't doing it deliberately; they were only doing it
8 because they felt they had to.

9 Q. Were they doing in the presence of the nuns?

10 A. Yes, in the presence of the nuns. In fact, the nuns
11 encouraged it. They did encourage the fact that they
12 did want them to be used in that way so they could then
13 do other things while they were doing that.

14 Q. And how regularly did this sort of behaviour occur, if
15 you remember?

16 A. I can certainly remember it on a very frequent basis.
17 I can't say it was weekly or daily, but certainly enough
18 for you -- to make a good impression on you. There were
19 just certain things. When I think back on it now, there
20 were certain things you did to avoid that family, keep
21 out of their way, or if you were going out to play, you
22 knew the areas to play where they generally didn't go.

23 So you were always looking for ways, I suppose, to
24 survive. It was a strategy you started to develop where
25 you would avoid them and you knew where the nuns would

1 stand when you went out to play or when you were in the
2 main hall, so you always chose a seat that you would
3 hope would be where you would blend into the background
4 rather than be obvious or notable.

5 Q. You also make some further reference to religion in your
6 statement --

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. -- and what you say is that it was forced down your
9 throats.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. You give an example of a nun asking you about what you'd
12 had to confess, for example.

13 A. Yes, again, I was coming across concepts and words that
14 I just didn't understand at the time. It was quite
15 difficult because I didn't have the confidence at such
16 a young age to say, "What do you mean by that?"
17 Obviously if I was older I might have, but you just
18 generally listened to what they said and nod or do what
19 you thought was right.

20 For example, praying is a good one. I had no idea
21 what they meant by praying. I didn't know. I didn't
22 know when they asked for confession. Another example
23 was when they said, "You would do ten Hail Marys".
24 I had absolutely no idea what that meant. But you would
25 go to where they expected you to go and you would sit

1 for a while and then they would ask you if you've done
2 it and you would say yes, and then you would ask you to
3 then leave.

4 So the thing I remember more about that was that
5 there were some people had caught on to the fact that
6 if you said you wanted to become a priest -- if you said
7 you wanted to become a priest you were somehow treated
8 slightly differently by the nuns. So it did become
9 quite popular for a lot of boys to say they were going
10 to become a priest because they felt then they would
11 fall into favour with the nuns in terms of how they
12 might have dealt with them as opposed to if you said you
13 weren't going to become a priest, which meant you were
14 then seen as somehow not good enough or ...

15 Q. Can I take you then to when you came to leave
16 Nazareth House. I think you said earlier that you
17 became aware that you may be leaving.

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Because of that, I think you didn't go to the local
20 school at all.

21 A. Yes. That's correct.

22 Q. I think as you've told us, you left early [REDACTED] --

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. -- that same year. Did you go back essentially to live
25 with your parents and your other siblings?

1 A. It was the happiest day of my life when the day ...
2 (Pause). I remember ... It was a small minibus that
3 came. It came and picked us up and it took us down to
4 my parents in Greenock.

5 Just to be leaving that regime, which was so awful,
6 and to be returning home to my parents was just --
7 I consider it now how lucky and fortunate I was, as were
8 my siblings, that we were actually able to return and be
9 with our parents again in comparison to some of the
10 absolute shocking stories you hear from other people,
11 and the fact that they spent so long in care. It was
12 just the best day ever. I can't say anything better
13 than that.

14 We returned home. My father was still quite ill.
15 I believe that one of the sticking points for us not
16 going earlier was that there was some issue about my
17 mother and father couldn't afford beds. They had got
18 a house from some relative, but they couldn't afford the
19 beds to bring us home to. Eventually, I think Glasgow
20 Corporation agreed that, for the longer term benefit, it
21 may be better if they actually buy them. So they
22 purchased, I think, two sets of bunk beds. So when we
23 got back home, my parents were there and the beds were
24 there and, yeah, it was just an incredible feeling and
25 I feel so grateful that I was allowed to live back with

1 my parents again.

2 You know, despite our ups and downs, we were
3 a relatively close family after that, so we were
4 extremely, extremely lucky.

5 Q. You had been in a way separated from your sister for
6 that period, subject to the times when you could see
7 her, so at least at this point in time you were able to
8 resume contact with her.

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Do you think the fact that you were separated for that
11 period has had any impact on your relationship with her?

12 A. Well, it has. I know -- and I know that she's not ready
13 to speak about this herself, but I know from her own
14 opinions that it did have a deep impact on her. That's
15 as much as I am going to say about that.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. Fortunately, the relationship between us, as brothers
18 and sisters, is as good as ever but, yeah, we did miss
19 our sister and I know that she did miss us when she was
20 in care.

21 Q. Did you tell your parents anything about the treatment
22 you had had in Nazareth House?

23 A. I think as children, when you return home after
24 a situation like that, I think you're just glad to be
25 there, you're glad to be back and you're admitted to

1 a school, you got on with life, started making friends.
2 I think my parents deep down felt a deep embarrassment
3 and shame at what had happened and I think they
4 themselves struggled to come to terms with the period
5 we were away. I don't think they themselves were able
6 to articulate or know how to speak to us about it. So
7 it was one of these things, I suppose, that never, ever
8 really came out when we returned to the family.

9 We did, when we were more in our adult years, get
10 the opportunity to speak to our parents, and on the odd
11 occasions you got glimpses, but I definitely know they
12 were both upset and very, very ashamed at what happened.
13 I think they felt as parents they had let us down,
14 despite the fact they didn't. No one could have
15 foreseen what would have happened, would have triggered
16 the state of events that would have led us to be in care
17 when they themselves were not in control of that
18 situation. So I think we, as children, can see that and
19 understand that they did the best they could.

20 Q. You do provide us with some information -- I won't go
21 into the detail with you -- as to what you have done
22 yourself since you've been an adult. For example,
23 you're now involved in the mental health service;
24 is that right?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. But what I want to ask you is this: do you think then
2 the time you spent in care, in particular
3 Nazareth House, has had any impact on your life?

4 A. Well, I think for the very fact that you can remember it
5 so clearly. I think it's made a deep impression on how
6 I have seen children being looked after, for the very
7 fact that when I myself took up a career in social work
8 later on, I was very conscious of the fact of how
9 important it is that when any child, for whatever
10 reason, comes into care, how with the utmost care and
11 importance it is that professionals look after people
12 with the dignity and respect and kindness that they
13 deserve at that time. Children are powerless at that
14 time, they don't have a voice, and that was all the
15 things that we didn't have when we were in care. So
16 I think I was probably more acutely aware than most
17 people might have been.

18 I did, in my career, happen to on two occasions have
19 to admit young people into care and I remember on both
20 occasions, you know, you do everything you possibly can
21 to make sure their voice is heard, they're treated and
22 obviously dealt with in a way that is the way they
23 should be. It should be the standard, not different
24 from that.

25 So it's one of these things that you can't say with

1 enough words that young people need to be treated in
2 a way that we would all expect ourselves to be treated
3 if we were in that situation.

4 Q. If I take you to paragraph 98 of your statement, John,
5 on page 2553, you express the hope that lessons can be
6 learned.

7 A. Yes. I know that having worked in the Local Authority,
8 I know that things have changed since the days I was in
9 care, so I wouldn't be as naive to realise that anything
10 I might say here might be useful, but what I would say
11 is that the obvious things like -- there was no
12 accountability in them days, it seemed to be, for
13 organisations -- and I'm talking about a lot of
14 organisations, not just Nazareth House or Quarriers
15 Home.

16 I think there are areas that could be improved in
17 terms of -- children didn't have a voice and they should
18 have been seen by external visitors on a regular basis,
19 like may happen nowadays and I'm sure at least it
20 probably does. I've certainly witnessed it in local
21 authority care where you have children's rights officers
22 and external advocates who would could in.

23 Things like that were foreign and they weren't
24 around in the 1960s and also the fact that organisations
25 who had a duty of care to look after children didn't

1 seem to be accountable to anyone.

2 I think it's round these areas that you can see that
3 lessons need to be learned. But I also think these
4 things don't happen without investment. You have to put
5 resources in because without the resources to fund these
6 types of ideas, it doesn't become possible for it to
7 happen. We can come out with recommendations, we can
8 come out with ideas of how these things should be, but
9 unless they are supported by investment in good
10 childcare and good training by people to look after
11 others, then it'll become empty words again, and that's
12 what my fear is with most Local Authorities and
13 organisations under severe financial pressure now, that
14 that's one of the things that's going to be needed. You
15 need to invest in it for it to happen where young people
16 will feel safe and secure, as much as they can be in
17 care, and feel that their voices are heard.

18 Q. One thing that you do say is that you do hope that the
19 people who work in the care of children are the best
20 people for the job --

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. -- and that people are chosen who do not just have the
23 job thrust upon them.

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. You're making these comments by comparing those hopes

1 with what you yourself experienced; is that right?

2 A. Yes. I can't say there were very many people I came
3 across in care who I felt -- when I look back -- and
4 with the experience I have in this field now -- I can't
5 see many people I thought who were actually suited for
6 the job. That's unfortunate because as individuals
7 I don't know whether they were thrust into these jobs
8 because they wanted to do them or they had to do them as
9 part of a larger organisation because they were told to
10 do them, so therefore it's difficult to know. But one
11 thing I do know is that if you have children, who for no
12 reason than the fact that they're powerless and they've
13 been placed into an organisation where people have
14 a duty of care to them, it should surely be with people
15 who want to do it, who have a passion to help children
16 and support them, not people who have to do it because
17 they've been told to do it or as part of their job.

18 I also think if you consider, with no disrespect to
19 any religious order, but if you allow people to look
20 after people who don't have any family experience, that
21 in itself surely demonstrates that the insight to do
22 it is not as clear as it would be for people who were
23 parents themselves, for example, who knew some of the
24 difficulties in child development and raising children.

25 Q. I understand, John, there is something you also want to

1 say to the inquiry.

2 A. Yes. Would that be okay? I've got a short statement.

3 Q. I think so.

4 LADY SMITH: Yes, please do.

5 A. Fine, thank you:

6 "Throughout my time as a child in care I struggled
7 to make sense of what I had done to deserve being placed
8 there. I recollect being in a world of fear, hostility
9 and confusion. Rarely did anyone listen to me. Never
10 did anyone empathise or understand my struggle.

11 "I struggled when admitted to care and felt the
12 wrath of carers when I behaved in ways they disapproved
13 of and did not comply to their expectations. I was six
14 years old and my parents were unable to support me.
15 I was lost and confused and struggled to make sense of
16 why I was placed with people I did not know and who
17 could not help me make sense of what was happening to
18 me.

19 "When soiling or wetting the bed, staff and other
20 children would humiliate and bully me. I could not
21 understand what was happening to me. No one encouraged
22 me or helped me, no one listened to me. No one seemed
23 to connect with how I felt.

24 "One day, whilst visiting another home, I was
25 unhappy and missing my parents, a new and unknown staff

1 member looked at me and asked me, 'Are you okay? How
2 are you doing?' I stopped in my tracks and was
3 literally overcome by the individual attention this
4 woman was placing on me. I panicked and began to cry.
5 Indeed, for hours I became inconsolable.

6 "The staff were somewhat confused. On reflection
7 now, I think the months I had been treated in the
8 opposite way were all too familiar. I remember I cried
9 so hard and for so long I was eventually put to bed and
10 recollect waking up later in the night confused and
11 bewildered.

12 "It was only years later when I attempted to try and
13 make sense of what happened that I began to realise that
14 this was the first occasion in care that anyone had
15 taken the trouble to focus attention on me and ask me
16 how I was, how I felt. I had become so desensitised and
17 used to a culture of fear and rules dominating my
18 day-to-day functioning and survival meant blending into
19 the background and conforming.

20 "An unknown carer had demonstrated a small act of
21 respect and kindness, which may seem incidental and in
22 a brief moment in time. I never forgot that moment as
23 a child and will always be grateful to this lady who
24 treated me with the kindness and affection which I must
25 have been so desperately yearning for.

1 "Despite the many negative and harsh experiences
2 I have been subject to in care, I would like to think
3 I have been fortunate enough to use this in a resilient
4 manner. I have worked in social work for the best part
5 of 35 years in [REDACTED]

6 "The Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry has been both
7 a source of discomfort and at the same time a journey
8 into healing for me. I acknowledge many other
9 ex-children in care have suffered far worse and
10 unspeakable experiences than me. My heart goes out to
11 each and every one of them and I pray they will take
12 some comfort from this current inquiry and opportunity
13 we have to try and learn from many of these horrendous
14 and tragic experiences.

15 "It is my hope that future generations of children
16 will be treated and supported by those who are placed in
17 a position of trust to look after the most vulnerable
18 and challenging children who need understanding,
19 patience and a voice to be heard and listened to.

20 "I would like to thank my wife, who without her
21 support and loyalty, this day would not have been
22 possible. I would like to pay tribute to my late
23 parents for doing the best they could, despite the
24 challenges they faced and gratitude to my family for
25 their support and patience.

1 "I would also like to thank the members of the
2 Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry for their sensitivity,
3 professionalism and support throughout the time I have
4 been involved in sharing my experiences and being
5 allowed to speak here today. Thank you.

6 MR MacAULAY: Thank you for that, John. I have finished the
7 questions I wanted to put to you, and I think I have
8 covered the questions that have been submitted to me to
9 put to you; Mr Lindsay no doubt will be able to confirm
10 that. I haven't received any other questions, my Lady.

11 LADY SMITH: Thank you. Are there any outstanding
12 applications for questions?

13 John, it only remains for me to thank you very much
14 for coming along today and thank you for taking the
15 trouble to write so thoughtfully and carefully what you
16 have just read to us to capture a very clear summary of
17 your feelings about your experience in care. That will
18 be very helpful to me as we go forward, along with the
19 detail of your other evidence.

20 I'm now able to let you go and thank you again for
21 being here.

22 A. Thank you.

23 (The witness withdrew)

24 LADY SMITH: Mr MacAulay.

25 MR MacAULAY: My Lady, we do have the opportunity, I think,

1 of having one statement read in. It may be a little bit
2 earlier than normal, but we could have a short break.

3 LADY SMITH: Have a break now and get to the statement after
4 that? Very well, we will do that.

5 (2.54 pm)

6 (A short break)

7 MS MACLEOD: My Lady, I will now read in a statement of
8 a witness who wishes to remain anonymous and to use the
9 pseudonym Lucy.

10 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

11 Witness statement of "LUCY" (read)

12 MS MACLEOD: The statement is at WIT.001.001.4103:

13 "My name is Lucy. My contact details are known to
14 the inquiry. I was born in Aberdeen in 1932. I am
15 86 years old."

16 I will now move on to paragraph 4 on the same page.

17 "I was an illegitimate and unwanted child. When
18 I was about 2 or 3 weeks old I was put to a couple in
19 Glasgow. They must have been friends of my mother.
20 Then when I was only a few months old, I was put into
21 the home at Nazareth House in Aberdeen."

22 My Lady, the admissions register from Nazareth House
23 Aberdeen shows this witness being admitted in
24 [REDACTED] 1933.

25 LADY SMITH: Thank you.

1 MS MACLEOD: I'll now move on to paragraph 6 of the
2 statement on WIT.001.001.4104.

3 "In about 1937 there was a fire at Nazareth House.
4 When the News of the World spoke to me, I asked them,
5 'What about the fire at Nazareth House?' That is the
6 earliest memory I have.

7 "There was a girl who slept in the next bed to mine.
8 She is next to me in a photo I have. She was about the
9 same age as me. The fire happened at night. We were
10 all taken downstairs out of the building in our night
11 clothes and carrying our clothes in a bundle.

12 "I remember the girl was sent by a nun back to the
13 room. She was sent back into the building, which was on
14 fire, to get her clothes. I never saw her again after
15 that. I think she went back to her bed and died in the
16 fire. We were all coming downstairs with our clothes in
17 our arms. She was my partner. A nun stood on
18 a platform thing. She said, 'Where's your clothes?'
19 The girl panicked and she ran back. I think she went
20 back to her bed and was burned to death and nothing was
21 reported.

22 "The fire was in the early morning. We hadn't yet
23 had breakfast. No one has ever investigated this
24 matter. The News of the World did not know anything
25 about this. I remember this clear as day. I mind going

1 down those stairs. I am certain that this happened. It
2 wasn't a home; it was a prison.

3 "My sister was older than me. I was due to join her
4 in the older girls' room. She had rheumatic fever and
5 was always in the sick room. She died when she was
6 26 years old.

7 "I do remember when I suffered from constipation
8 a woman would put me across her knees. She would
9 squeeze and squeeze and squeeze on my stomach until
10 I passed a bowel movement. This was before the fire.
11 She would squeeze around my buttocks. This was when
12 I was about three years old. Lots of children got that.
13 I was always constipated. They did not like soiled
14 pants. Epsom salts were used as a laxative. There were
15 never enough toilets.

16 "If you could not get to the toilet you were
17 battered. You were belted with a belt. They pulled
18 your gown up over your head, then it was twisted so that
19 your arms were trapped and you couldn't save yourself or
20 anything. Then you got belted. Many a time I got
21 belted.

22 "There were polished wooden floors. We had to kneel
23 down in a line and sweep with a cloth, left to right,
24 down 2 inches and repeat. Each of us had our own job.
25 I was only about 7 or 8 years old.

1 "On one occasion a nun said we were to do another
2 floor after we had finished polishing one. I said, 'Not
3 another one'. She heard me. She pulled me on the hair
4 of my head. A large wooden splinter from the wooden
5 floor went into my lower left leg. I still have the
6 scar and I'm showing it now as I'm giving this
7 statement. My leg was bandaged but I got no other
8 medical treatment. They used to rip them off -- and it
9 was sore -- every two days. They were rough.

10 "There was no kindness shown by the nuns. Epsom
11 salts were given in a tablespoonful thrown down your
12 throat. They were not even given in a glass. That
13 would make us run to the toilet. If you soiled yourself
14 you were belted.

15 "I had a number. That's what I was called.
16 I wasn't called my name. We had to line up on a Friday.
17 We had to put our pants down on the floor for
18 inspection. We were terrified because you got battered
19 if you even made a small mark on your pants.

20 "One nun hated me. If she could have got away with
21 murdering me, she would have. My pants were numbered
22 with my number. The nun took them away to the toilet
23 and wet them. The toilet had not been flushed. She
24 came back and called out my number and asked who that
25 was and I said it was me. She said, 'How did you wet

1 your pants?' I said I didn't. I accused her of wetting
2 them. I was battered for answering back. I must have
3 been about 9.

4 "I ran away for the first time aged 10. I found out
5 where my mother lived. Me and another girl did it. My
6 mother lived in Aberdeen at the time. I went to my
7 granny's. She said, 'What are you doing here, lassie?'
8 I was pulled back by the nuns. I was put in a broom
9 cupboard, it was smaller and narrower than the door in
10 my living room. I was kept in there for 24 hours.
11 I was not given any food nor allowed to go to the
12 toilet. I was made to stand. There was no light. That
13 was my punishment.

14 "A couple of months later I ran away again. I was
15 warned that I would not be taken back if I did it again.
16 I would be sent to my parents. I did run away again.
17 Nazareth House would not take me back. I am not sure if
18 I was better in my mother's care. I got fed in
19 Nazareth House. At home I had to fend for myself.
20 I was about 12 but I could fight.

21 "I was a difficult child. I would say something was
22 black although it was white.

23 "If you had wet the bed in Nazareth House you had to
24 lie on the springs of the bed if the mattress was wet.
25 In the mornings children had to stand in the middle of

1 the floor. The wet sheet would be put on their heads.
2 We would all circle around and say things like, 'Swim
3 little fishes', making a fool of them. They would be
4 thrown into a cold bath in the morning. The same bath
5 was used by 12 children. The water was never changed,
6 never heated up.

7 "The boys were in a different building. We never
8 got to look at them. They never got to look at us. If
9 you did you were battered.

10 "I remember Sister **LDZ** was a swine of a woman.
11 She was big and stout and carried a mallet under her
12 cloak.

13 "I was in a big fight in the playground. There was
14 a playground with a big pole with big swings to swing
15 around. Next to it there was a vault; it held coffins
16 of dead nuns. As a punishment, I was put into the vault
17 with the dead nuns in their coffins. It was quiet and
18 dreary in there. I took the lids off the coffins and
19 swapped them. I mixed them up. Under the lids were the
20 dead bodies. Their skin was like prunes and there was
21 a terrible smell. I was belted for that. I was about
22 11 at the time.

23 "After I went back to live with my mother, she put
24 me into St Peter's School. I was living with my mother
25 from age 13 onwards.

1 "At Nazareth House there were 100 or so girls.
2 There were groups of 10 to 11-year-olds, 12, 13 and
3 14-year-olds, with about 12 to 15 people in each group.
4 My sister was a year and a half older than me. I didn't
5 know she was my sister. My mother came once to see us
6 both. We looked at each other and I wondered who she
7 was. My sister was a weak child, I used to look out for
8 her although she was older.

9 "I didn't know when my birthday was until I was
10 14 years old. I never had a birthday cake in my life.
11 I made sure my six kids did.

12 "I shudder when I see a bairn going into a home.
13 I didn't find out who my father was until I was 14 years
14 old. I had known him as uncle. I got a smack around
15 the lugs from my mother when I said he was more to me
16 than just my uncle. He turned round then and said I'm
17 your father.

18 "All of our clothes at Nazareth House were
19 home-made, even the pants we had to wear. They were
20 made of calico. I never knew what an ordinary pair of
21 pants were until I left Nazareth House.

22 "Girls had to use a piece of calico cloth as
23 a sanitary pad when they had their period. They had to
24 wash it out themselves and use it the next month. I was
25 too young to have to do that.

1 "We had to sleep with our hands crossed on our
2 chests. A nun would check us at night. There was
3 a great big dorm with about 50 to 80 beds. So there
4 were about 50 to 80 girls in it. A nun would look
5 through a window to check on us. You couldn't rise in
6 the night for the toilet.

7 "I took the blame once for another girl having wet
8 the bed. Never again. I was put in a cold bath, I was
9 given two Epsom salts as a new starter. I can't mind
10 the name of the girl I took the blame for. It was
11 terrible. I never did it again.

12 "Sometimes at dinner we were force-fed. We called
13 fat on the meat 'judge'. We were force-fed judge by
14 having it put down our throats while your nose was held.
15 It made you sick. Sometimes I was lying on the ground
16 when that was being done to me.

17 "I was left-handed. My left arm was tied behind my
18 back with a bandage. I had to use my right hand to
19 write. A left-handed child was a devil's child.

20 "For schooling, we learned in the home. We did not
21 go out to school, so I was a dumb cluck. The boys went
22 out to school, but the girls did not. There was
23 a teacher who came in called LKZ we called
24 her 'swan neck'. When she was angry, her neck went red,
25 so we called her 'swan neck'. I was battered for

1 calling her that once, all over the place.

2 "I'm a bad reader but not a bad writer. I wouldn't
3 say I was educated. Myself and my husband taught me.

4 "I can sew and crochet and knit now. I am skilled
5 at that. I have shown some of the items I made to the
6 inquiry.

7 "We had to darn socks for the boys. I'm a lovely
8 darning. The girls were educated in one big classroom.
9 It was partitioned to alter the size. All the girls
10 were educated together. I was hopeless at school, even
11 when I went to St Peter's after I ran away from
12 Nazareth House. I left school at 14.

13 "The daily routine at Nazareth House involved
14 getting up at 6.30 to 7 am. Then breakfast. We got an
15 egg on Easter Sunday. I never tasted a chip until
16 I went to my grandma's. For breakfast we had a plate of
17 porridge. Dinner was at 12 noon with soup to start,
18 followed by stew with judge. After breakfast we had to
19 go upstairs, make our beds and tidy up. There were
20 three beds in the sick room down the stairs. I would
21 make my sister's bed if she wasn't in the sick room. At
22 9 am we were in the classroom. We were there until
23 about 12 noon. There was no morning break and no play
24 time. We were allowed to play from 4 pm until 5.30 pm.
25 We didn't do any qualifications at all. Supper time

1 then bed was at 6 pm. Everyone was put to bed at the
2 same time. There was silence at night. The dorm was
3 dark with black curtains. You didn't know what a party
4 was or a birthday. We never got to go to parties
5 outside Nazareth House.

6 "When I ran away, I climbed out the window and down
7 the drainpipe. I was not an angel. I was a difficult
8 child, I did it my way. We had no choice but to polish
9 the floors until you could see your face in them. At
10 weekends we got out to the playground. When someone
11 taunted my sister, I battered her. Then I got battered
12 for doing that.

13 "On a Sunday we were made to go to church for about
14 two hours. We also had to go on a Friday evening maybe.
15 I wasn't a proper Catholic. You had no choice but to go
16 to church. On a Sunday we had breakfast, then church.
17 Dinner was later and we got to play for half an hour.
18 In the evening there was benediction and then bed at
19 7.30 to 8 pm. We had to go to confession with
20 a minister behind a mesh. That was once a week. I
21 wasn't interested in any of that.

22 "Once a nun threw a set of keys at my sister's ear
23 in church. It was Sister **LDZ** Blood was pouring
24 down my sister's face. I said, I'll have you for that.
25 A nun said they would get me. I have never had such

1 a hiding like that in my life. I was strapped down with
2 my hands restrained so I couldn't resist. I couldn't
3 use my feet or my hands. I was beaten and left like
4 that until I calmed down. I was about 11 or 12 years
5 old at that time.

6 "We were beaten in a way that would not leave marks.
7 I blame them for having had to have a hip and knee
8 replacement. I was always hit on the left side. That
9 was where I suffered the leg injury. That was the only
10 time I was badly hurt.

11 "I never knew what it was like to have new shoes.
12 You just got anybody's shoes. They were picked out from
13 a row of shoes. If they fitted you, you wore them.
14 Sometimes I could hear a baby cry in the mornings. I'd
15 wonder where the baby came from. Then I saw a little
16 newborn baby in the nursery. I only saw babies on two
17 or three mornings. I think now these were nuns' babies.
18 Babies stayed in Nazareth House. They would be in a cot
19 in a special room. Once they left the nursery, they
20 never went back again. I don't know what happened to
21 them.

22 "I was always in trouble. I was always in the
23 middle of it if there was any trouble. Probably every
24 second day I was punished. I would be made to do
25 without shoes or a meal. I would also get belted.

1 "I am asked about sexual abuse. I was not sexually
2 abused and I do not know of any sexual abuse having
3 taken place.

4 "I saw others being beaten, for example for walking
5 about at night and getting caught. Once another girl
6 and I decided to take a walk at night. We were taken
7 upstairs, we were belted outside the toilets with a big
8 belt. We were hit around the body and on the backside.
9 We were hit without clothes on. I heard about others
10 being beaten. I saw children bleeding and shivering out
11 of baths. It was Sister **LDZ** Sister **LJJ** was
12 a gem. She had us when we were baby girls. She worked
13 in the nursery and then she was transferred.

14 "My daughter confirms that I was unable to be
15 demonstrably affectionate as a mother towards my
16 children. I blame this on my own experiences in care at
17 Nazareth House. For example, there were no cuddles, no
18 love, no affection. However, my children were well
19 looked after, protected if they were in trouble, and
20 given the best of everything. They were never slapped.
21 I was a good mother to all of my children. I wouldn't
22 hear a bad word against them.

23 "When we were getting washed at Nazareth House, we
24 had to strip together. At about age 8 or 9 or 10,
25 we would only be able to change our underwear on

1 a Friday night. You could wear the same clothes for
2 a fortnight if your new clothes were not ready.

3 "On Christmas Day we were given a gift each. On
4 Boxing Day they were taken away for distribution the
5 next year to those a year younger; for example, a doll
6 or the like. I didn't even know what a pair of slippers
7 were."

8 Staying on that page, my Lady, I'm going to move on
9 to paragraph 50. That's at page WIT.001.001.4103:

10 "There was a row of sinks in one place at Nazareth
11 House. There was a toothbrush and a tumbler at one
12 sink. We shared them. I had Gibbs toothpaste in
13 a round tin. I had Imperial Leather soap. My mother
14 would bring me these. As soon as my mother went away,
15 they would be taken off me. We would have a bath maybe
16 twice a month. Bed-wetters would have a cold bath every
17 morning. That wasn't the way to deal with the problem.
18 There were three baths in a row. There would be a queue
19 at each one. One person would be in the bath while
20 a nun watched from a chair. There was no privacy."

21 My Lady, I will then move on to paragraph 53 on the
22 following page, WIT.001.001.4114, where the witness goes
23 on to speak about when she left Nazareth House.
24 The register for Nazareth House has the date of her
25 leaving as being [REDACTED] 1945.

1 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

2 MS MACLEOD: "My mother had to take my sister out of
3 Nazareth House when I ran away. My mother had to
4 deliver the home's clothes back. She always cast it up
5 on me for costing a fortune. My stepbrothers and
6 stepsisters were not in Nazareth House.

7 "My time in the vault at Nazareth House haunted me
8 for a long time after it. The nuns wore habits, not
9 cloaks. They carried sticks under their habits. All of
10 the children were treated in the same way. I was often
11 told I was the ringleader. Magistrates would come to
12 Nazareth House. I would say now it was a lawyer. I was
13 never seen on my own by them but you would get to play
14 anything you liked that day. It was not the normal
15 routine. The nuns knew they were coming in advance so
16 the children were all happy that day. Our clothes were
17 changed and we were tidy. Once the visitors were away,
18 we were back to polishing floors.

19 "The only good thing that I learned in
20 Nazareth House was how to sew. Not all the girls were
21 interested in learning. It kept me out of trouble.
22 This is now my hobby. I have made knitted and crocheted
23 baby blankets by hand and I have shown examples to the
24 inquiry, as I have said.

25 "I did complain to the nuns about things, but others

1 complained more than I did. The nuns told me I didn't
2 have a mother who wanted me and that no one loved me.
3 My mother did come to see us once a month from when
4 I was about 7 years old. There was always a nun there
5 when my mother visited, so I could never tell her. My
6 mother decided to put both my sister and myself into the
7 home. That was even though the couple in Glasgow wanted
8 to adopt me. My mother didn't want to just put one of
9 us into the home, so it was both.

10 "I think the nuns were frustrated and they thought
11 I could take it. My sister could not have survived
12 beatings like I suffered. I never went to the police.
13 I thought about it, but they would say I asked for it.

14 "My daughter comments that I was a great mother to
15 her. I was not an affectionate mother. I don't know
16 what it was as a child to get a cuddle or to sit on
17 someone's knee, nor to have a special day. My kids
18 always got that. That's why I'll help other people with
19 money and food. I would rather give food now than money
20 to make sure kids and their parents are fed.

21 "One time a letter was sent to my mother about my
22 sister being ill. I was sent to deliver the letter.
23 I must have been about 9. That was my first time out of
24 Nazareth House. I was given instructions on how to get
25 there. I had no trips and no holidays. I didn't even

1 know what a cup of tea was. I had never tasted one.

2 I had never been on a tram either.

3 "I saw a bit about INCAS in the News of the World
4 newspaper. I answered the invitation to get in touch
5 with them because the article was true. INCAS contacted
6 me after the News of the World article. I went to one
7 meeting when I was able before my hip and knee were
8 done. I stayed with a lady in Glasgow for a couple of
9 nights. Frank Docherty of INCAS has written to me a few
10 times. He's helped me a bit. I met two or three people
11 from Nazareth House."

12 My Lady, I'll now move on to paragraph 66 on the
13 final page of the statement at WIT.001.001.4117:

14 "It will be fine for me to read the statement over
15 with my family when I am sent it by the inquiry. I am
16 content that it can be published with the names
17 redacted.

18 "I have no objection to my witness statement being
19 published as part of the evidence to the inquiry.
20 I believe the facts stated in the witness statement are
21 true."

22 And my Lady, the statement was signed by Lucy on
23 15 July 2016.

24 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much. So what's the plan now,
25 Ms MacLeod?

1 MS MACLEOD: I think the plan now is for that to conclude
2 matters for today. Tomorrow we have two witnesses
3 coming to give oral evidence. We had planned to have
4 a third witness come to give oral evidence tomorrow, but
5 because of a family car accident abroad --

6 LADY SMITH: I'm sorry to hear that.

7 MS MACLEOD: -- that witness has had to be rescheduled for
8 later on in the programme. So there will be two oral
9 witnesses and one or two read-ins, depending on the
10 time.

11 LADY SMITH: And are the first two oral witnesses the first
12 two on the planned schedule?

13 MS MACLEOD: Yes, they are.

14 LADY SMITH: So it's the two who were always planned for
15 tomorrow morning and read-ins, insofar as we can manage
16 it, for the time that remains.

17 MS MACLEOD: Yes.

18 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much for that.

19 I'm going to rise today until 10 o'clock tomorrow
20 morning when we will resume hearing oral evidence from
21 further witnesses. Thank you very much.

22 (3.30 pm)

23 (The hearing adjourned until 10.00 am
24 on Thursday 26 April 2018)

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MR CHRISTOPHER DAVID BUCHAN BOOTH1

 (sworn)

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