

Thursday, 13 May 2021

1
2 (10.06 am)

3 LADY SMITH: Good morning, and we turn to the third day of
4 evidence this week. As you know, we finished the
5 current evidence for Loretto last night, and today we
6 move on to evidence in relation to the provision of
7 residential care for children at Morrison's school in
8 Crieff at the time that it was a boarding school.
9 Of course, it ceased being a boarding school a little
10 while ago.

11 I think the plan is still for us to begin with
12 a statement being read in, and then we will move on to
13 a live witness. So, Mr Brown, over to you.

14 MR BROWN: My Lady, it may be in fact that, time permitting,
15 we may do two read-ins. Today, as I indicated, may be
16 a shorter day, and this is, I'm afraid, a thread through
17 the Morrison's evidence. As distinct from Loretto,
18 there is much more read-in evidence, for a variety of
19 reasons, but we will just have to, I'm afraid, be as
20 flexible as we can.

21 I invite Ms Bennie to read the first statement.

22 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

23 MS BENNIE: My Lady, the first read-in bears the document
24 WIT.001.002.0817. The witness wishes to remain
25 anonymous and has adopted the pseudonym of Robert.

1 Witness Statement of "ROBERT" (read)

2 MS BENNIE: "My name is Robert. My year of birth is 1950.

3 My contact details are known to the Inquiry."

4 My Lady, in paragraphs 2 to 10 this witness tells us
5 about his life before going to Morrison's school. In
6 paragraph 7 he tells us it was his grandmother who
7 wished him to go to Morrison's Academy as she felt he
8 would get a good education there.

9 I resume reading the statement at paragraph 11:

10 "My granny bought me my uniform from a shop in
11 Crieff. I remember being in the shop trying it on and
12 then going off to the school. The school was ten miles
13 by bus, so my mother thought it would be better to wait
14 until I was six years old rather than almost five.

15 "The first year at Morrison's was in a junior
16 primary school. I went to Morrison's initially for
17 a half day. On my first day I remember getting dragged
18 out of bed in the dark, early, getting my uniform on,
19 and taken by my mother to the bus and taken to Crieff.
20 Then she took me up the road to the school.

21 "I was handed over to the primary 1 teacher and we
22 were introduced to the other kids. It was fairly laid
23 back. You were encouraged to be polite, open doors for
24 young ladies, the girls in the class. Everyone settled
25 in and got along. Classes were small. There were

1 things to stimulate your education, like plasticene and
2 bits of wood. You had to use your imagination which was
3 no bad thing. There was a large outside area, it was
4 grass and trees and you could go out and play. It was
5 quite safe because there was a big wall and a gate and
6 you were told where to go.

7 "The school was an old house with rooms converted
8 into classrooms. It was fairly basic. You didn't have
9 electronics, you had a blackboard. You had a teacher
10 sat behind a desk. They made you understand what you
11 were allowed to do and not allowed to do. The first
12 year I found was quite instructive. It was laid back.
13 I made a few friends, they didn't hit you.

14 "Once you were into primary 2, you had these kids
15 turning up, one or two to start with, then in year 3
16 slightly more. These kids were from the colonies or
17 other parts of the world. By this time you were aware,
18 by looking at maps, that a lot of the world was ruled by
19 the United Kingdom. That is what you were told. So
20 these kids arrived and they were totally lost.

21 "Even though Morrison's is a private school now,
22 when I went to it, it was a state-aided boarding school.
23 A state-aided boarding school in those days was one
24 which took kids but had no facilities to go on to should
25 they pass their 11 Plus. If you were in Perth and

1 passed your 11 Plus exam you went to Perth Academy. If
2 you failed, you went to Perth High School. In Crieff,
3 if you passed your 11 Plus you had nowhere to go. They
4 paid Morrison's to take these kids. If the headmaster
5 thought they didn't fit in, come year 4, he culled them.
6 Not a huge percentage but there was this cull. The
7 state-aided element of this dried up under Labour so the
8 school wanted more boarders. They don't board now.

9 "At an early age you were made aware of the
10 existence of boarders, they would tell you. These kids
11 would come, their mums would rent a house for a year,
12 put their kids to a school as day pupils, and then after
13 a year they became boarders.

14 "I have this recollection of a little girl asking me
15 if I would be her friend, wanting me to hold her hand
16 because she was totally lost. I met her at a reunion
17 many years later. A lot of these kids wouldn't know who
18 their parents were. They were away the better part of
19 the year. Because of the time it would take to get to
20 Hong Kong or Singapore they wouldn't go home in the
21 shorter holidays. They possibly went home during the
22 summer holidays.

23 "You rarely saw the parent of a boarder, therefore
24 they had an attitude. They congregated as boarders.
25 The very junior ones were boarding privately somewhere,

1 the more senior ones were boarded by the school. These
2 youngsters were there under the guidance of the
3 housemaster and the bidding of some older boy.

4 "The boarders who were juniors had an allowance like
5 pocket money. They would be let out under guidance of
6 someone older. Their access to Crieff was limited until
7 they were older in case something happened.

8 "As you got older you were allowed to approach
9 a boarding house and saw some of the antics there. We
10 considered them normal. There was a policy in the
11 boarding house that if you didn't eat your breakfast you
12 got it for your tea. This could be distressing for me
13 to watch it, and for the child going through it, and the
14 physical violence associated with it. I saw this.

15 "These kids were sent away from their parents from
16 the colonies or if they were in the forces. You had all
17 sorts of different people sending their kids to boarding
18 school. This was meant to produce a well-rounded
19 person. It didn't succeed terribly well because of what
20 they were subjected to, and they had no one to have
21 a one-to-one with.

22 "The boarding houses were locked at a certain time
23 of night, and opened in the morning. They went around
24 and counted who was in the beds. We had all ages in one
25 and there were several boarding houses. When you were

1 in school, to enhance competitiveness, you were in
2 a team, a house. Kids were in teams and there was
3 a boarding house for each team. The girls had this too.
4 The girls and boys were kept apart, although the schools
5 were adjacent to one another. I remember the deputy
6 head belting a boy because he was holding a girl's hand
7 in the street. That was bringing the school into
8 disrepute. They were both boarders. The one proviso to
9 this was when you were in Croftweit, the junior school.
10 Up to primary 3, boys and girls ran around together.
11 After primary 3, the boys and girls went different ways.

12 "It is all different now. There was an invisible
13 barrier. You couldn't speak to them, but in the morning
14 and at night the boys and girls who weren't boarders
15 would be on the bus mixing together.

16 "In the boarding houses it tended to be younger
17 pupils mixing with an older pupil looking after them.
18 The older ones would be working together because they
19 had exams, and they had to keep their own company to
20 enhance their maturity. As a day pupil we paid
21 a smaller fee than boarders. The school wanted more
22 boarders of non-British origin, and it was prestigious
23 for parents to get their kids educated in Scotland and
24 they expanded this part of the thing.

25 "I was in the cadets at school, the Officer Training

1 Corp, and having friends who were boarders you would
2 visit the boarding houses. There were boarders that had
3 difficulties and, because they had no one to talk to,
4 they would write to newspaper agony pages asking what
5 they should do. My friend got a girl pregnant, they
6 were both at the school but about to leave. They left
7 suddenly.

8 "The school didn't provide lunch so my mother had to
9 arrange for me to go to a cafe or guest house. Boarders
10 used to complain to me about the food. Nobody suffered
11 from malnutrition but I don't think a great deal of
12 thought went into it.

13 "We didn't think much wrong with the facilities
14 there, but when you think about it they were seriously
15 bad. There was no privacy. It was probably like being
16 in the Army or worse. There was a lack of decency. The
17 toilets, bathrooms and wash hand basins in the boarding
18 area had no screen, nothing. There was no privacy if
19 you had a wash, a bath or doing the toilet. In the
20 school there was a urinal and a cubicle so there was
21 a bit of privacy there.

22 "The uniform for starting as a junior was short blue
23 trousers, red knee-length socks, black shoes, Airtex
24 grey shirt, a blazer with a braid around it, an Airtex
25 vest, a hat and a tie. You had to have

1 a semi-waterproof blue overcoat. You couldn't bring the
2 school into disrepute. As you got older you were
3 allowed to wear long trousers. I was in front of
4 the headmaster for the way I was dressed but I wasn't
5 belted. I had a button missing. My mother had passed
6 away and I couldn't sew very well. My OTC uniform was
7 immaculate.

8 "I started in Croftweit. This was for primary 1, 2
9 and 3. In the first three years there was an induction
10 to reading, writing and arithmetic, how to interact with
11 other pupils, be polite, respectful, play games and work
12 as a team member. It was quite good. You had the
13 company of other kids the same age. It wasn't
14 overbearing. It wasn't threatening. It was quite
15 constructive. In your first year you only went to
16 school for half a day. This was fine. No homework, no
17 pressure really. That went on for all of the first
18 year. In the second year you moved on to a different
19 teacher. Your lessons moved on as well. You stayed at
20 school for the full day. I got the bus to Crieff in the
21 morning, and the bus from Crieff at night. It was
22 similar in the third year.

23 "I then went to the main building or campus for
24 primary 4 to 7. At this age you were still looked upon
25 as someone who couldn't wear long trousers, you wore

1 shorts. I was nine years old when I began in the main
2 campus. In the first year I had one teacher, she was
3 old school. I learned how to do joined up writing. She
4 was set in her ways but her classes were quite
5 interesting.

6 "When you went into the main campus you came across
7 male teachers, and the attitude towards your abilities
8 changed quite markedly. It was much more regimented.
9 Some teachers were far more authoritarian and took
10 delight in punishing kids with a leather belt. Their
11 overzealous behaviour ended up with me having my wrists
12 cut with a belt once.

13 "I moved on to primary 5 at the age of ten and had
14 male teachers. We had one form master, you had a desk
15 in his class, and you rotated to different teachers for
16 different subjects. The next teacher was one straight
17 out of teacher training, and he would give you lines,
18 hundreds of lines, usually for being slightly late. It
19 would take you six hours to do these lines. At the end
20 of the day he was learning, really. He didn't stay at
21 the school very long.

22 "In form 1 you were ready to get lined up to do your
23 O levels in form 4. In form 5 you did your Highers, and
24 you did your sixth year studies in form 6 for those
25 going on to further education. You were assessed as you

1 went along. Every term you had an exam and a report to
2 take to your parents. You got three of these a year.
3 You would get comments on them. The headmaster wrote on
4 the bottom of one of mine that I was indolent. I didn't
5 know what that meant at the time and I asked my mother,
6 who wasn't happy. She said I wasn't indolent.

7 " At the age of 12 or 13 we moved on from basic core
8 subjects. We were being behind up to what we do in
9 exams for technical, science and art subjects and the
10 workload got greater.

11 "The headmaster told the teacher that certain boys
12 were running at 30% in their exams and couldn't be
13 presented for O levels because he needed a certain
14 number of passes. He would tell them someone was
15 running at 45 to 50% and needed a quiet word. The
16 children were asked if they thought they could do
17 better, otherwise they wouldn't be presented for the
18 O levels. You needed five O levels or four O levels and
19 to be a good athlete to get into fifth year, to then get
20 a minimum of three Highers to get into university.

21 "The three main things the headmaster liked were
22 art, the classics and sport. It was the same headmaster
23 the whole time I was there. When I was in Croftweit, it
24 was the headmistress of the girls' school who ran it.

25 "You had to be fairly robust in the school because

1 if you and the teachers weren't connecting you had to
2 think of ways of learning sufficiently to get through
3 your exams. The teachers in the latter part of your
4 scholastic time were trying to help you through the
5 exams to attain the standards. Some in the middle were
6 sadistic and you wondered what the hell they were doing.
7 They didn't make you learn anything because you sat
8 there wondering what was going to happen next.

9 "The headmaster used to cull people during the
10 O level year. If you weren't academic or a good
11 sportsperson you were out. I was on the receiving end
12 of that, unfortunately. I broke my leg playing rugby,
13 my mother died that year. I sat my O levels, failed,
14 and resat them and passed, but he didn't want me there
15 even though you were paying to be there.

16 "The headmaster had a disregard for what people
17 wanted to be. We can't all be artists, musicians and
18 sportspeople. He had a zero tolerance. His attitude
19 for running the school was what he wanted and what he
20 wanted to attain, not what the kids wanted.

21 "If you wanted to discuss anything with anyone you
22 had to go through the headmaster. The only time my
23 mother could speak to a teacher was at the end of
24 the term prize-giving day. Parents were allowed to go
25 to that, it was just a general thing. There was no

1 interaction between parents and teachers.

2 "There was no sex education, it was like girls were
3 aliens. We didn't know how to talk to them as you got
4 older. When I was at school you weren't allowed to talk
5 to them, it was crazy. I know it has changed now. I'm
6 not blaming this on the teachers."

7 My Lady, at paragraphs 49 and 50 the witness
8 discusses trips and also Christmas preparation, and
9 therefore I propose to resume reading at paragraph 51:

10 "People came to visit the school but not when we
11 were about. Once someone came to see what standard of
12 French we had attained, we would be asked things in
13 French and we had to translate. So there were people
14 who came around to see what you had attained. With
15 regards to people's welfare, I don't think anyone came
16 around.

17 "The headmaster was in charge of religious
18 instruction. You would gather in the assembly hall,
19 sing a couple of hymns and there was a reading. A chap
20 I was at school with, who was dyslexic, his sister was
21 the little girl who held my hand at the beginning of
22 school, told me at a reunion he was chosen to do
23 a reading by the headmaster and he couldn't do it. Why
24 he was asked I don't know. He should have got him to do
25 a dry run privately. Anyway, he couldn't do it. The

1 headmaster took him down to his study and gave him
2 a severe beating because he had let the school down.

3 "The [REDACTED] teacher was there before I arrived. In
4 those days we had to have prayers in the morning. Most
5 of us were Church of Scotland. My mother may not have
6 (inaudible) at the time and took me to the Episcopalian
7 church. The [REDACTED] teacher was a Plymouth Brethren.
8 His beliefs were completely contrary from anyone else
9 I knew. I was a member of the scripture union
10 and I spoke to a bloke who had been at Morrison's and he
11 was there in the era when the [REDACTED] teacher broke
12 a boy's wrist with the belt and he wasn't allowed to use
13 the belt after that. I don't know the name of the boy.
14 These people had one thing on their mind: if you
15 misbehave we will beat you, if you are stupid we will
16 beat you. It doesn't work like that. Even the
17 headmaster didn't want stupid people. He would tolerate
18 boarders more than day pupils.

19 "We couldn't join the Cubs or Scouts at school if we
20 were day pupils. They were usually run by the
21 schoolmaster. We were told to join our local group. We
22 had boxing at school but it was stopped because a boy
23 got brain damage. It was run by an economics teacher.
24 The headmaster wanted a criteria of high academic pass
25 rate and sport at international level.

1 "The girls had their own gym teachers. We had two
2 gentlemen who taught us to swim, play rugby, athletics
3 and gym work. Teaching was minimal. If you were caught
4 with a football, one of the [REDACTED] would take
5 a penknife out and burst it and say it's the wrong
6 shape. His favourite weapon was a gym slipper and he
7 would use it in the swimming baths on wet trunks. He
8 seemed to have some idea this would hurt more. If you
9 were doing life-saving, a heavy block was put on the
10 floor of the pool and you had to dive down and get it.
11 If you couldn't do it by the third time you got the
12 slipper. A lot of us got it. I thought why doesn't he
13 just take the time to explain things better. He is dead
14 now.

15 "There were some natural athletes and the sports
16 master paid more attention to them. He was a total
17 waste of time. He just tried to belittle boys. He was
18 sarcastic and tried to make you feel like shit. He
19 wasn't as bad as the other teachers, like the [REDACTED]
20 teacher or the [REDACTED] teacher, and he didn't play with
21 girls underwear or touch up little boys, he just wanted
22 to undermine you and express his authority.

23 "If the kids were a bit unruly then teachers had to
24 give out corporal punishment as a last resort to get
25 them to understand. I have seen a teacher belt a whole

1 class. We were a bit unruly and we were warned. 28
2 boys were belted. They all lined up, and the teacher
3 was knackered by the end. One teacher, a music teacher,
4 took off one of the tawes of the belt so it would hurt
5 more. He was crazy.

6 "Some of the kids were taller than the teachers.
7 Many of the boarders didn't know not to misbehave.
8 I think they had no parental guidance.

9 "Some of the teachers were fair. They punished you
10 but gave you fair warning, like the form head. You were
11 given a chance. Some were elderly and couldn't control
12 a class and were coming to the end of their careers.
13 Some were good and took an interest. What the criteria
14 for employing teachers was I have no idea.

15 "Abuse at Morrison's Academy. In the [REDACTED] class
16 I spent a whole year waiting to be hit with a thick
17 perspex ruler from the teacher. He was an extremely
18 violent teacher. I was fairly young at the time but
19 even now I would like to meet him. He died of a heart
20 attack before I could go and confront him. 50 to
21 55 years on it still disturbs me, the beatings I took
22 from that man. He was one of several in the school.

23 "We had a mix of teachers. Some were gay, some with
24 normal relations with women and some we were curious
25 about as to what their intention was. The teacher that

1 inflicted severe damage on pupils, such as the [REDACTED]
2 teacher who used the leather belt on someone and broke
3 their wrists. The [REDACTED] teacher wasn't allowed to use
4 the belt after he broke the boy's wrists, so he had
5 a habit of picking a boy up by the hair and kicking
6 their shins while their knees were bent, shouting at
7 them, telling them they were stupid. In fact some of
8 them were dyslexic and they couldn't understand. They
9 couldn't read. He thought if he beat them up they
10 wouldn't be stupid. It doesn't work like that.

11 "The headmaster was a bit sadistic if you had to go
12 to him for punishment. He would take a polished wooden
13 box out and give you the choice of what implement you
14 wanted him to beat you with. If he was provoked or
15 thought someone had let the school down, he would throw
16 you about his study. I never experienced that myself
17 but I heard about it. When you look back on it now, it
18 still disturbs you after all these years.

19 "I was 11 when the [REDACTED] teacher cut my wrist with
20 the belt for forgetting my homework. This was the first
21 time I had experienced extreme violence. If you were
22 thought to be lackadaisical he would hit you on the back
23 of the head with a ruler and say 'Waken up, laddie'. He
24 took the ruler from a friend of mine. This was his
25 first weapon of choice. He wasn't allowed to keep

1 a belt in his desk drawer so the pupil had to go to the
2 form head and ask for the belt and take it back to the
3 [REDACTED] teacher who would then beat you with it. The
4 [REDACTED] teacher would hit people on a daily basis 24/7.
5 I think there was one day when he didn't use the ruler
6 and I thought there was something wrong with him.

7 "The [REDACTED] teacher was okay to a point, and then on
8 any given day he would run up and down in a tirade and
9 pick on someone he thought was stupid, and pick them up
10 by the hair and kick them in the shins. At the end of
11 the day he knew what he was doing. If he kicked them
12 too hard he would have broken our legs.

13 "My mate from [REDACTED] had marks on his wrists
14 from getting the belt from the [REDACTED] teacher, and his
15 dad approached him at his house and there was an
16 altercation. He was so incensed that the man had used
17 excessive force on his son.

18 "Girls of a certain age in the [REDACTED] class had
19 a male teacher who used to interfere with their
20 underwear. The girls told me this on the bus home to
21 Crieff.

22 "I came into contact with the [REDACTED] teacher
23 when I was 13. He was extremely [REDACTED]-orientated. [REDACTED]
24 [REDACTED] could do no wrong. I wasn't a victim
25 of the [REDACTED] teacher, another boy was. I witnessed it

1 a few times. He was a lovely boy, a good rugby player,
2 but he was a slow reader. He left Morrison's. The
3 [REDACTED] teacher would have been around his late 40s or
4 early 50s.

5 "One chap told me recently that another [REDACTED]
6 teacher was attracted to younger people. That came as
7 a shock to me. There is something not right there.
8 I don't think anything like that goes on now but you
9 never know.

10 "I was in a class and an adult tradesman touched my
11 leg and I was mortified. He was a carpenter or a
12 joiner. If this happened in school and you can't get
13 out of the way, that is not good. It is not funny.

14 "I told my mother about being belted by the [REDACTED]
15 teacher when he cut my wrists. I showed her what had
16 happened. She had a look but she didn't do anything.
17 I'm not blaming her. She was brought up with thinking
18 if you deserved the punishment then you take it. She
19 wasn't bad that way.

20 "One teacher asked me to show him and asked why
21 I had been belted. He seemed to be concerned. That was
22 the head of the junior school. He asked me a day or two
23 later. He had noted the marks. But that was it.

24 "I wanted to go to university after I left school so
25 I stayed on and I did my Highers in fifth form. I left

1 Morrison's with 10 or 11 O levels and four Highers. In
2 relation to some of the others, I did all right. I then
3 went to Edinburgh University and I got a degree in
4 agriculture.

5 "I came across a man after I graduated who was going
6 into the world of teaching and was useless. He annoyed
7 me and I asked him why he wanted to be a teacher, and
8 the betterment and fulfilment of the pupils never came
9 into what he told me. He wanted respect from other
10 people and I thought: you are going into the wrong job.

11 "There were some boys I knew from Morrison's who
12 couldn't hack university, because they couldn't do
13 normal things like cook tea, wash clothes, deal with
14 money. They were academically brilliant too. I see
15 people at reunions who were boarders and, because you
16 haven't seen them for many years, they can't open up.
17 The reunions I have been to have taken place since the
18 year 2000."

19 My Lady, I am moving on to paragraph 84:

20 "Morrison's taught me a lot of things. It wasn't
21 all bad. I thoroughly enjoyed myself in some classes
22 and in OTC. I have mixed feelings about the school.
23 Some of the boarders had a hard time of it, it caused
24 them problems in later life. I have spoken to them at
25 reunions. There was a degree of keeping the best and

1 leaving the rest. People shouldn't be treated like
2 that. As far as physical violence, yes, there were boys
3 who stuck your head down the toilet and pulled the
4 flush. There was bullying at the school. I was bullied
5 and I bullied kids. That was minor compared to what
6 else went on.

7 "I have never reported the abuse carried out at
8 Morrison's except for telling my mother and informing
9 the form head about being belted by the [REDACTED] teacher
10 when he cut my wrists. I don't know if there are any
11 records. I would love to see what there is, but I don't
12 know if they exist or if they have been shredded or if
13 the school would let me see them.

14 "I think a lot of these teachers didn't realise what
15 they did to some people. They should have had a better
16 understanding of humanity. People like the [REDACTED]
17 teacher, kids just sat in his class afraid. Why should
18 an 11 or 12 year old sit there and be afraid?

19 "I have no objection to my witness statement being
20 published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry.
21 I believe the facts stated in this statement are true."

22 My Lady, the statement is signed by Robert, and it
23 is dated 22 August 2018.

24 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

25 Mr Brown.

1 MR BROWN: My Lady, if I could now do the next read-in,
2 which is for Wallace, who was a day pupil at Morrison's.
3 He signed his statement on 9th November 2020, confirming
4 that he had no objection to it being published as part
5 of the evidence to the Inquiry, and he believes the
6 facts stated in the witness statement are true.

7 The document is WIT-1-000000546.

8 Witness Statement of "WALLACE" (read)

9 MR BROWN: Wallace was born in 1935 and lived with his
10 parents in Crieff. He is now 85.

11 Starting at paragraph 5, my Lady:

12 "I went to the primary school in Crieff. It was
13 a good school. I sat exams at 11 or 12. I think the
14 law changed so that you had to be given the chance to
15 move on to academia. I recall there were three of us
16 from the local primary who were moved on to Morrison's.
17 I was 12. It was 1947/48.

18 "I looked forward to starting Morrison's as a day
19 pupil. I didn't visit before starting there, however
20 I was already aware of the place. The reputation was
21 that it was a step-up from other schools so I was quite
22 pleased to going. My mother took us to Valentines on
23 the High Street to get my clothes. The school uniform
24 was red stockings, dark blue short trousers, a rugby
25 shirt and rugby trousers.

1 "The main building was built in around 1860. It was
2 very large. The girls' school was separate in
3 a standalone building which was 50 yards or so from the
4 main building. The boys and girls were very much
5 segregated. I had no reason to go to the girls' school.
6 The pupils may have been aged from around ten to school
7 leaving age and there were round 20 children to each
8 class.

9 "The boarding houses were all over the place. One
10 of them was across from the old Ritz cinema in Crieff.
11 It was called Croftweit. One of the other boarding
12 houses was called Benheath. There was also a boarding
13 house called Academy House. I wasn't ever in the
14 boarding houses.

15 "The school ethos wasn't explained to us when
16 starting the school. The pupils weren't allowed to mix
17 with the local children. If there was anything on after
18 school I kept out of it. In my time, the only playing
19 field was on school grounds. We played rugby on
20 a piece of ground called Dallerie. We played cricket in
21 school grounds. You had to take part in rugby. It was
22 a form of violence but it was supposed to be just play.
23 The violence was from other boys on the field. I was
24 told I was good at rugby by the referee. He would
25 compliment me on my play because I was fast, but it

1 became evident that I would never be allowed to
2 represent Morrison's in games against other private
3 academies so I gave it up, which I could do as it was
4 an after school event, it wasn't part of the curriculum.

5 "Pupils were not encouraged to venture below a line
6 east to west which was on the High Street to keep away
7 from the commoners. This was not that unusual at the
8 time as my parents themselves laid down town boundaries
9 to keep me away from the housing schemes.

10 "There were three of us from Crieff primary school
11 who were day pupils."

12 Turning to the staff:

13 "Most of the staff were okay. There were two or
14 three who weren't very good. Mr Hubbard, the science
15 teacher, was one. We used to call him Mother Hubbard.
16 He was an alcoholic. He would leave us in the room
17 unattended while he disappeared for most of the period.
18 There would be Bunsen burners on. He would come back
19 with a scarlet face and smelling of peppermint. In
20 hindsight, he couldn't control his disease, but the
21 school protected him. He was seen as one of their own.

22 "I didn't have any problems in my first year at the
23 school, however myself and the other two local boys were
24 referred to as tradesmen's children. I think we were
25 the first batch to be going to the school from that type

1 of family background.

2 "Crieff depended on Morrison's to a certain extent
3 because it provided people with employment. It wasn't
4 just a school, it was a significant source of
5 employment. There may have been as much as 70 or 80
6 people employed in total. There was a change of rector
7 after my first year. That is when things deteriorated.
8 I also won a prize for maths at the end of my first year
9 and I don't think it went down very well either. There
10 was an attitude that no tradesman's child should be
11 doing better than the fee-paying children. We were seen
12 as the lower echelons of society. I think this had
13 something to do with the change of rector.

14 "Everybody went by their surname. He was a bad one.
15 He used to come down the middle of the main corridor,
16 which ran the full length of the school, with his gown
17 flowing. The pupils had to part to let him through.
18 I can't remember the name of the rector before him.

19 "Discipline. I had an arrangement with one of
20 the boarders on a pro forma basis. He received comics
21 from his parents and I would give him two and sixpence
22 so that, when he had read them, he gave them to me.
23 I subsidised him for a few copies in advance and I
24 requested my money back if the arrangement were to stop.
25 Indeed, after the new rector came, the arrangement did

1 stop suddenly. I asked the boy about it and he said
2 something like, "Oh, I can't give you them anymore". He
3 also said he had to live and keep in with his other
4 boarders and he had been told to stop. We got into
5 a bit of an argument. Someone must have told the
6 headmaster because he sent for us to his office. I got
7 two strappings on each hand with the tawse and I didn't
8 get my money back. My palms were sore for quite a while
9 afterwards. The boarder was simply reprimanded,
10 presumably because he was a boarder. I was the injured
11 party as well. I think things just went downhill after
12 that happened. There was a real shift at this time.

13 "There was a [REDACTED] teacher. He was quite young,
14 probably aged around 25 to 30. He used to parade around
15 with a two and a half foot cane. If you passed him and
16 he didn't think you were walking fast enough you got
17 whacked with the cane on the backside. He was very
18 aggressive. I think they had to bring woodwork and
19 metalwork into the school curriculum. They built a
20 prefab outside the main building. As a result, they
21 brought in a woodwork teacher. I can't remember his
22 name. He had formerly been an RAF serviceman. One day
23 the whole class were tormenting him, saying things like,
24 "We have servants doing what you are trying to teach
25 us". They would refuse to do as he was instructing them

1 and he had no control over them. He was getting the
2 same attitude from the pupils that I experienced. He
3 told me that he had been ostracised by the other
4 teachers from the outset and the pupils had followed
5 suit, I think because he hadn't come into teaching the
6 traditional way.

7 "I found that upsetting to talk about because it
8 always brings back to me a line of thought, which is
9 still with me, regarding my future brother-in-law who
10 returned from a Japanese prisoner of war camp to Crieff
11 as basically a living skeleton. The daily newsreels of
12 Dachau, Buchenwald and many others started appearing in
13 the papers and cinemas in 1945. They were fresh in many
14 people's minds. There was no censorship then and I was
15 at Morrison's thinking, "Why am I here with such
16 despicable, ignorant people, both pupils and teachers,
17 who can show such inhumanity to a former RAF serviceman
18 fighting on their behalf?" They evidently thought we
19 were not in their class.

20 "I don't know if the rector kept a record of
21 discipline. There wasn't a code of discipline. It was
22 just a case of the teacher thinking that you should be
23 disciplined. The only teacher who carried a cane was
24 the [REDACTED] teacher. The others just used their hand to
25 discipline you. It would be a slap. If it was

1 something more serious, you were sent to the rector and
2 got the tawse. That was the standard procedure. The
3 [REDACTED] teacher stood out because he was so proud of his
4 cane. He had a name for it, [REDACTED]. The staff were
5 a law unto themselves. I can't remember any external
6 inspections at Morrison's.

7 "Prefects were the older pupils. If the prefects
8 didn't like you, they would throw cricket balls at you
9 when you came to the net. I was made to stand at the
10 nets while they threw balls at me. I used to dodge
11 them. The teachers didn't bother to get involved. Some
12 of the younger kids had to do what they were told.
13 I was aware of some of the younger ones who couldn't
14 stand up for themselves. They were under the control of
15 the prefects. They were known as 'fags'. I kept out of
16 it. There were no school meals. Boarders went back to
17 their own boarding houses. I lived approximately
18 [REDACTED] from the school gate, so I went home at
19 lunchtime."

20 Moving on to abuse at paragraph 30:

21 "If your stockings slipped down you got a belt
22 across the backside or a slap around the head. The
23 staff used to take great delight in mocking you, for
24 example, if you couldn't pronounce a word or something
25 like that. It didn't matter where you were in the

1 school, the beltings would take place. Other things
2 would be getting a thump on the way back from the
3 blackboard at the front of the class.

4 "I used to get changed out of my uniform as soon as
5 I got home because, if a teacher saw you in town and
6 your socks were down, you would get into trouble. You
7 had to be tidy because you were representing
8 Morrison's Academy in the town. It was a well-respected
9 school in those days.

10 "Leaving Morrison's. I just cut myself off. It got
11 to the stage where I didn't mix with anyone. My parents
12 had acquired an old garage which had a store above it.
13 I found a way of getting in through the back window.
14 I always made sure that the latch was off so that
15 I could get in. I spent my days in there reading. It
16 had big tyres, so I would hide in the tyres. It was my
17 hiding hole. If I had French or swimming, something
18 I wanted to miss, I would hide. I don't think anyone
19 noticed I wasn't there. It felt as if the whole school
20 was picking on me. I don't know if it was just me
21 feeling sorry for myself, but I was aware of being under
22 the thumb. I was aware that I shouldn't be there.
23 I wasn't supposed to be there. It was the same for the
24 woodwork teacher.

25 "I didn't stay at the school for as long as I was

1 supposed to. It was so bad. I was aiming to get to 16
2 to get out of there. My mother knew by then that there
3 were various problems. I spent a lot of time helping
4 her in the office. No one asked me what was wrong. It
5 completely demoralised me. In the end I didn't speak to
6 any of the other children.

7 "I left school in 1951 and ended up working with my
8 father."

9 Going on to paragraph 36:

10 "I then took a job down the coal pits. I married
11 three years later and then moved to England. After many
12 years we came back to Scotland. I worked hard all my
13 life, taking opportunities where I could, and making my
14 own way through life using life experience skills."

15 The witness then talks about his sister, who went to
16 Morrison's too:

17 "She got married at 18 to one of the teachers. He
18 was about 20 years older than her. She had a lousy
19 life. She became involved with him while she was still
20 at the school. She managed to get in touch with me
21 around the time her marriage broke down. Her husband
22 went on to marry one of the other teachers. My sister
23 just deteriorated after that.

24 "In terms of impact, the impact on my education
25 affected my future in terms of jobs and careers.

1 I think, if I had been given the opportunity, I would
2 have been able to use my skills, particularly in
3 mathematics, in a different way. I might have gone on
4 to university to study mathematics. I feel that, if
5 I had been given the opportunity, I might have gone
6 a different way.

7 "I feel aggrieved about my time at school. I have
8 never made any effort to have friends. It has always
9 just been my own immediate family. I felt that I had to
10 insulate myself from hypocrisy and was unable to trust.
11 Therefore, I didn't get involved with people other than
12 day-to-day necessity for work.

13 "This is something that continues to this day.
14 Perhaps because of the insecurity I still feel based on
15 my first real perception at Morrison's of what life
16 held, that you basically could trust no one. I feel my
17 experience at Morrison's in terms of deceit, hypocrisy
18 and violence coloured my outlook on life. I felt
19 joining the Academy was a step-up when in fact it was
20 the opposite. I have not reported anything which took
21 place during my time there to the police.

22 "I have concerns about the school now. My concerns
23 relate to the control and influence which the management
24 have in relation to building and planning in Crieff
25 concerning the school. The basic attitude of the school

1 is they are better than others. They think that they
2 are superior. I think, because of my experience there,
3 I cannot stand injustice, especially in relation to
4 young children. I don't have any records from my time
5 at school.

6 "I don't think anything I have learned can help the
7 Inquiry. My hope would be that the management of the
8 school improved. I don't think the governors from my
9 time should have been in charge of looking after
10 children. I think I should have been given more
11 opportunity during my time there."

12 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

13 MR BROWN: My Lady, could I suggest that we break now? The
14 next witness should be arriving around now for
15 introductory purposes and may, I think, take us beyond
16 what might be the usual break, so we may just have the
17 break now.

18 LADY SMITH: If that works for you, I think it works for me,
19 Mr Brown.

20 (10.47 am)

21 (A short break)

22 (11.13 am)

23 LADY SMITH: Mr Brown.

24 MR BROWN: My Lady, the next witness is Polly.

25 LADY SMITH: Thank you. (Pause).

1 Good morning, Polly. Could we begin by you raising
2 your right hand and taking the oath, please.

3 "POLLY" (affirmed)

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

5 Polly, you will see there is a red folder in front
6 of you. That has a hard copy of your statement in it,
7 which you are welcome to use if that would be helpful to
8 you. The parts that we are looking at will also come up
9 on the screen in front of you if you find that easier to
10 read, so just make yourself familiar and comfortable
11 with both of them as suits you.

12 Otherwise I have nothing to say particularly at the
13 moment, or questions to ask you, but please don't
14 hesitate to let me know if there is anything that is
15 bothering you or any queries you have. Our job here is
16 to make it as easy for you to give your evidence as
17 possible. If you are ready, I will hand over to
18 Mr Brown who will take it from there.

19 Mr Brown.

20 Questions from MR BROWN

21 MR BROWN: My Lady, thank you.

22 Polly, good morning.

23 A. Good morning.

24 Q. As you have just heard, you have the statement in front
25 of you on the screen and in the red folder, whichever is

1 easier.

2 If we can go to the very final page, page 31, last
3 paragraph, you will see at 139:

4 "I have no objection to my witness statement being
5 published as part of the evidence to the Inquiry.
6 I believe the facts stated in this witness statement are
7 true."

8 And obviously you signed the document on
9 10 November 2020, I take it having read the statement to
10 confirm what is in that last paragraph?

11 A. Absolutely.

12 Q. Yes. Thank you.

13 Your statement is in evidence, so we won't need to
14 go over every aspect of it. Obviously I want to touch
15 on a number of areas that you have reflected upon but if
16 we could just start with some basic background.

17 You were born in 1970. And I think as we see in the
18 earlier pages of the statement, whilst you were born in
19 the west of Scotland your early life was spent in
20 North Africa because of your father's employment. As
21 you say, you started schooling in Benghazi. This is
22 when Colonel Gaddafi was in power. So was that a fairly
23 different sort of experience, do you think, from most
24 children of the time?

25 A. Yes. I had done one -- maybe one, one and a bit years

1 of primary where I was born, and then suddenly moved
2 over, and so the whole dynamic was very, very different
3 from Scottish education.

4 Q. Right.

5 A. Smaller as well.

6 Q. You will see there is a microphone. You are quite
7 softly spoken.

8 LADY SMITH: You can move the arm of that microphone to
9 whatever would be the best position for you.

10 MR BROWN: It's just that obviously we want to make sure we
11 hear what you are saying. Also you should be aware --
12 normally, were it not for COVID, there would be
13 a stenographer typing everything, but they are working
14 remotely. So just they can hear everything.

15 A. Okay.

16 Q. Thank you.

17 You had a brother obviously, an elder brother. How
18 much older was he than you?

19 A. About three years older.

20 Q. And as you say in paragraph 3, in 1978, when you were
21 eight, he goes to Scotland and starts at Morrison's
22 Academy, and you followed him a year later?

23 A. Correct.

24 Q. In 1979. I think at that stage, aged nine, you go into
25 primary 5?

1 A. Yes, 5.

2 Q. Just given the difference of being brought up at
3 a primary school child in Libya, were you in part
4 pleased to be away from Libya?

5 A. I was, yes. I hadn't enjoyed it as a child.

6 Q. I think, from what you have said away from the
7 statement, you saw some fairly grim things?

8 A. It was a very difficult period in that country's history
9 which I realise now. When you live through it you don't
10 realise it then. So, no, I was pleased to be out of the
11 country.

12 Q. In terms of -- if we go on to page 2, you say that your
13 parents chose Morrison's:

14 "... as it was one of just a few co-ed boarding
15 schools in Scotland and it meant both me and my brother
16 could go to the same place."

17 Was that something you were aware of? He goes off
18 to school, and did you know in your last year in Libya
19 that you were to follow him?

20 A. Not particularly as to when I would go. I didn't even
21 understand really what they were talking about.

22 I really didn't take it in. I just thought I was going
23 to the same school, I hadn't really taken much in.

24 I didn't know when I was going. It was very much

25 a swift decision as to when I left the country. I got

1 half a day's notice and had to leave.

2 Q. Would you then return to family in Scotland and then
3 progress ...

4 A. We did. We stayed with family to get me ready, get sort
5 of trunk and everything, clothing and everything I
6 needed, and then I went to school.

7 Q. I don't think you had ever seen the school beforehand?

8 A. Never.

9 Q. Your parents, I think you would understand, had been
10 some years earlier --

11 A. Correct.

12 Q. -- and selected it?

13 A. Correct.

14 Q. Was that something you had understood really at an
15 earlier stage before the year you went?

16 A. No. We never discussed it. Obviously it was something
17 my parents had discussed but, no, I didn't know.

18 Q. Had you seen your brother since he had started? He had
19 gone for a year.

20 A. Oh, yes, I saw him on holiday, the Christmas holiday.

21 Q. Can you remember what reports he was coming back with
22 about school?

23 A. He'd just changed. He just wasn't quite my brother. He
24 was just a bit brutal.

25 Q. All right --

1 A. Name-calling, you know, as brothers.

2 Q. As siblings might do?

3 A. Siblings I think, yes. He had grown up a bit.

4 Q. Yes. I think you detail in paragraph 5 you remember
5 putting your trunk together, and your mum telling you to
6 take a book, and you say:

7 "I was such a happy-go-lucky little girl at that
8 age, unless they prepared me I wouldn't have taken it
9 in."

10 Did you really have no sense of what was coming?

11 A. Absolutely none. I was just trying to cope with staying
12 back in the UK, having -- like I said, when we first met
13 I hadn't really been wearing shoes for the best part of
14 five years. Just putting on an anorak, which I put on
15 a lot when I came back, I found that just enough.

16 I just zoned out. I didn't really think about it, no.

17 Q. The formality of a school uniform, was that novel too?

18 A. Not that people wore a school uniform, because obviously
19 I had worn that before I went to Libya, just for a wee
20 short time, but I hadn't worn it for a long time so,
21 yes, it was novel again to have to wear all these layers
22 of clothing.

23 Q. Thinking back to your first day, you attend and go into
24 a boarding house called Knockearn. And if we go to
25 paragraph 14, we will look at this then come back to

1 some of the detail of the house in a moment, but your
2 parents take you to the school for the first day. You
3 obviously set out:

4 "There might have been a staff member at the front
5 door to greet us as we arrived. There was a
6 housemistress and a matron for the boarding house.
7 I don't remember if there were older girls to welcome
8 us, they were probably doing their own thing. It was
9 all smiles because parents were there."

10 On that first day, did you fully understand that
11 your parents were going to leave you?

12 A. No. That penny dropped the minute they walked out the
13 door.

14 Q. So you hadn't been aware of that really.

15 A. I really didn't take it all in. It was a bit like you
16 were going through the Famous Five, it was all a bit of
17 an exciting adventure, because I read a lot of that
18 when I was younger, and suddenly they walked out the
19 door and that is when you realise they had gone.

20 Q. Had they prepared you for that at all, your parents?

21 A. No. I think they were in bits as well. I don't think
22 it was easy for any party actually.

23 Q. But in terms of the staff who were present, obviously
24 you are going to Morrison's school, we understand you go
25 into Knockearn house. Presumably on that first day

1 really the first contact you have with authority, and
2 I don't mean that in a pejorative sense, is the house
3 staff?

4 A. Correct.

5 Q. What steps were taken by them to ease your passage into
6 this new environment?

7 A. I really don't remember. They were very nice and just
8 took us to our dorm, and we were just spending time
9 unpacking. They were very friendly and told us it was
10 bedtime. Yes, I wouldn't say there was any
11 confrontation and it all seemed quite light-hearted.

12 Q. I think you make the point in paragraph 15 that
13 obviously you were meeting your new room mates in the
14 dorm, you have to build your bed, and two of your room
15 mates are from Pakistan, the other girl's parents lived
16 in Gambia. So you were all children coming from other
17 parts of the world, roughly?

18 A. Yes, which was actually one of the uniting factors for
19 us going forward for a long time, was that we actually
20 understood where we all came from but nobody else could.

21 Q. What do you mean by you all understood where you came
22 from?

23 A. When you have lived in foreign countries, maybe Arab
24 countries, for example, or Pakistan, you understand the
25 culture, the noise, the smells, what people wore. Just

1 all that -- the way life was. So you could -- when
2 somebody would mention something, we actually could have
3 empathy with each other and say "Oh, yes, I can relate
4 to that". Whereas if you were to say that to somebody
5 who was always living in the UK, they can't relate to
6 your experience. So we had that bonding factor.

7 Q. Yes. Do you know if that had been considered in the
8 choice of who you shared that first dorm with?

9 A. Probably now. But probably not, I think we were of
10 similar ages. I think that is why we were put together.

11 Q. I think if we go back to page 2, paragraphs 8 and 9, in
12 Knockearn there were 24 girls in the boarding house with
13 about five dorm rooms. You were in initially a room of
14 four but, as you say, in P7 you went into the big dorm
15 room with about ten and you hated it. Why did you hate
16 the big dorm room?

17 A. Well, P7, I was growing up a bit, there was absolutely
18 no privacy. And by that point in time the etiquette at
19 night was you closed -- the housemistress would close
20 the door and you were meant to shut up and go to sleep,
21 but if anyone decided to have a chit-chat, which was
22 normal, girls do, then we would all get into trouble.
23 And I just hated that, oh God, what is coming tonight?
24 Whereas in a smaller room it didn't happen so much, you
25 had less chance of people having conversation. So that

1 is why I hated it. And there was no privacy.

2 Q. We will come back to that.

3 In terms of the staff, within the boarding house we
4 understand there was a matron, a housemistress -- this
5 is paragraph 9 on page 3 -- and also a prep tutor. The
6 prep tutor visited?

7 A. Correct.

8 Q. But the other two lived in?

9 A. That is right.

10 Q. You go on to describe the housemistress, who was the
11 first housemistress, because there was change I think.
12 Is it fair to say, perhaps like other aspects of life,
13 it very much depends on the personality of the person
14 you are dealing with? The first housemistress was
15 smiling in front of the parents, you say, and she wasn't
16 without humour at the start but that changed. When
17 did it change?

18 A. She had periods of moods most of the -- certainly the
19 first year I would say she was probably fairly stable,
20 but after that the moods started, and it was a bit like
21 a rollercoaster, up and down, so you never really knew
22 when she was going to be moody, then other times she
23 could be extremely nice to you. It wasn't a personal
24 thing with people, it was just she was moody, so if you
25 were in her way you would get the shouting or get told

1 off or whatever it was.

2 Q. What about the matron?

3 A. She was quite a kindly lady, actually. I don't really
4 have any other memories of her, other than standing
5 ironing relentlessly and just trying to smile at us.
6 She was probably the kindest person there. She didn't
7 have any powers to shout at us or anything like that,
8 she was just there to make sure we turned out to school
9 nicely.

10 Q. Was she an older woman?

11 A. I always saw her as -- she looked a bit like my granny
12 so, yes, she probably was. She might not have been of
13 that age, probably late 50s maybe. Near the end of her
14 career anyway.

15 Q. Aged nine, you presumably thought she was ancient?

16 A. I did.

17 Q. How things change.

18 A. Yes. She was older, definitely an older lady. She was
19 older than both of the housemistresses.

20 Q. In terms of your time at Morrison's, did you get the
21 sense the matrons tended to be older ladies who perhaps
22 might be expected to play the role of a grandmother
23 figure?

24 A. No, no, because other boarding houses had different
25 dynamics. I think it was just who they could hire.

1 Q. Do you know if she was, the matron, just a local lady?

2 A. No, because she lived -- she lived there in
3 accommodation, so I don't think -- I really don't know.

4 Q. It's just your comment about it depended who they could
5 hire.

6 A. Some houses had younger staff, younger matrons. She
7 eventually left, this lady. I think she retired, maybe,
8 and was replaced. Everything always used to happen over
9 the summer holidays, you would go away and somebody new
10 would come in, and a new matron came in and when I had
11 left it was a very young lady.

12 Q. You were talking about some of the details of the
13 boarding house. I think you say in the statement it was
14 a former residential house --

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. -- that had been converted, quite a big house, a
17 traditional stone Scottish house?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. You mention in your statement the curtains in your room
20 were nice, your first room, and it was freshly painted.
21 But overall what was the state of the building?

22 A. It was quite shabby, to be frank, but then you had 24
23 girls in and out of it, probably hammering it. But,
24 yes, it wasn't homely, it was utilitarian. My first
25 dorm was probably the prettiest of them all.

1 Q. On a practical level did that change? Did it ever
2 become more homely?

3 A. No.

4 Q. I think in terms of routine, at page 5, paragraph 19
5 onwards, you set out the daily routine that you would
6 have, which is being woken by a bell, getting washed and
7 dressed, and then walking as a group to the refectory
8 for breakfast. We understand the refectory was a focal
9 point for all the different houses?

10 A. All the boarding houses, except one boarding house
11 didn't go to breakfast there because they were just too
12 far away logistically, that was Benheath. The rest of
13 us all went in different time frames.

14 Q. Again, thinking back to the very beginning, did you have
15 a sense there were houses --

16 A. (Overspeaking) -- totally naive as to the whole
17 structure.

18 Q. Just one of these things, that you picked up knowledge
19 as you went along?

20 A. Absolutely.

21 Q. And eventually you had a whole picture?

22 A. Exactly.

23 Q. So children would be arriving from houses unknown and
24 then you would discover where they were from and the
25 dynamic for them?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. The house you mentioned that was too far away to come to
3 the refectory, do you know how long it would take to get
4 from that house to the school?

5 A. Yes, probably 15 minutes. My best friend lived in that
6 house, and we used to go back at lunchtime, so we ran
7 it. It was probably 15 minutes to walk.

8 Q. So those pupils would have to ...

9 A. It would have been a 25-minute walk to the refectory,
10 because the refectory wasn't part of the school complex,
11 it was another building.

12 Q. Going back to your daily routine, the impression you
13 give is, to read your own words:

14 "We were left to our own devices."

15 Paragraph 19.

16 "We had to shuffle around the showers and the baths.
17 It was freezing in the winter as there was just one
18 night storage heater upstairs for four big rooms. On
19 a Sunday we got a short lie-in in the mornings. At
20 night we had a bath and then we went to bed and were
21 told it was lights out and if we made any sound there
22 would be trouble. Overnight there was no one on waking
23 duty."

24 A. No, I expect because they lived in the premises, not in
25 the sense that you would get in a hospital, you have

1 waking staff, no.

2 Q. Was the house locked, do you know?

3 A. Yes, it was locked.

4 Q. It was locked?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. But the housemistress, her home was in part of the
7 building. Could you get access to that easily?

8 A. You could actually, because upstairs it was like a fire
9 door that would go into her premises, although it was
10 maybe not a fire door so it was locked at times, and
11 there was also access downstairs. She was kind of like
12 at the far end, tacked on.

13 Q. What did you understand about her availability and when
14 it would be appropriate to go and see her?

15 A. She never actually -- to be fair, she didn't have
16 a closed door, but it wasn't policy amongst us to go and
17 see her, just -- when she'd close the door, she'd close
18 the door. And actually we didn't want her in our lives,
19 so we weren't happy to go and see her. It was only if
20 someone was really sick or something that we'd actually
21 bother to ...

22 LADY SMITH: Did she also have an office within the house
23 for --

24 A. I'm not aware of an office.

25 LADY SMITH: So nowhere that you knew you could go in the

1 evening, for example, if --

2 A. No, it would be her sitting room.

3 MR BROWN: You touch in a little more detail about

4 the washing and bathing on page 6, paragraphs 26 to 27.

5 Again, was there any -- you say:

6 "There were quite a few toilets downstairs. A lot
7 of the time some of us had a shower or bath the night
8 before and we weren't going to the showers in the
9 morning. It was mainly the seniors going for the
10 showers in the morning."

11 Did that just happen, that was --

12 A. It was the way it was, that was just routine.

13 Q. You go on at paragraph 27:

14 "Having a bath in the evening was on a rota every
15 two days. I shared with somebody and sometimes we were
16 in the bath at the same time and sometimes one after the
17 other. At one point we all got boils on our legs
18 because we were sharing bath water. There were probably
19 two or three girls using the same water. Then we had
20 baths removed and more showers installed. That was
21 a revelation."

22 That was around P7 --

23 A. Correct.

24 Q. -- so in your third year at the school?

25 A. Yes.

1 Q. Did anything change after the episode with pupils
2 getting boils?

3 A. Yes, we were really encouraged to take the shower and
4 very few people ever had a bath. I was getting more
5 senior then and I really never went back to the baths
6 after that. You kind of block out what the juniors are
7 doing when you become more senior because you are just
8 trying to focus on your own time as opposed to -- so
9 I don't know whether the younger girls, whether they had
10 baths.

11 The other thing was that, as seniors, you didn't go
12 upstairs when the juniors were getting ready, because
13 that was their time to get ready, so I don't really know
14 if they had baths after that.

15 Q. That distinction between junior and senior, was that
16 something that was organised?

17 A. No, it just happened. You knew you were becoming senior
18 as you got older because you got different -- what is
19 the word -- privileges.

20 Q. I think we see that, this is paragraph 22, at the outset
21 you were buddied with an older pupil. Was that from P5
22 onwards, or was that just at the very start of your
23 school career, someone would show you the ropes,
24 effectively, or was it an annual thing?

25 A. It was an annual thing. Every year you had new intake

1 and leaving, and you just got buddied with somebody
2 younger than yourself. So as I got older I got younger
3 people to buddy with. The idea was you showed them the
4 ropes and your experience and looked after them.

5 Q. Again that, I take it, was regulated by the
6 housemistress?

7 A. It was on a list, yes, yes. I think it was fairly
8 randomly put together.

9 Q. Did it help?

10 A. Not always, no. If you got buddied with the wrong
11 person it could be difficult.

12 Q. What was your experience?

13 A. Mixed, mixed. I think I was lucky. Sometimes I got
14 some nice seniors that chatted to me, and then other
15 times you just got ones that just felt they had a bit of
16 power over you, so they would make you do all the duties
17 while they just did whatever they wanted to do.

18 Q. In that sense, obviously a common theme about boarding
19 schools in the public consciousness is the idea of
20 fagging, which is Tom Brown's School Days at its most
21 extreme. What was your experience of that at
22 Morrison's?

23 A. Oh, it went on. I would say the word was used in boys'
24 houses, it never filtered into our house. It went on in
25 our house but we were -- it wasn't to the degree it went

1 on in boys' houses. But, yes, you had to take --
2 seniors would want you to do things for them, yes.

3 Q. Presumably in due course did you become a senior and --

4 A. I did become a senior. I left when I was 15, so
5 I wasn't quite as senior as some of the others by the
6 time this was going on, but I'm afraid, because I had
7 gone through it, I took a very different view on the
8 matter. And I continue with that in my life today.
9 I don't like that behaviour.

10 Q. So how did you behave which was different from the way
11 you had been --

12 A. I did my duties, I didn't impose them on other people,
13 and I supported people when they had problems.

14 Q. Within your year group, for example, because you were
15 getting progressively senior, was that a change amongst
16 all the pupils or did you stand out as being different?

17 A. I stood out a bit, but I think we were all -- by that
18 point, most of the girls I went through with had been
19 with me since I had started, and I think we were all
20 beginning to look around and think: this isn't very
21 nice. So we were all a bit more lax with people.

22 Q. This presumably is the beginning of the 1980s?

23 A. Correct.

24 Q. Was there any input from the school in that regard to
25 try and diminish the idea of performing tasks for older

1 pupils by younger pupils, or was that something that, as
2 you say, you just didn't want to do?

3 A. There was no input. We had duties to do and they had to
4 get done. Houses have to run. Some of them were fairly
5 acceptable, doing the ironing and that kind of thing,
6 cleaning the kitchen. So, no, the school just let it
7 run, certainly in our house.

8 Q. So there was no direction, in other words, from the --

9 A. No, not that I am aware of.

10 Q. -- housemistress?

11 A. Oh, none.

12 Q. We'll come back to that in a moment. You were talking
13 about the boys' houses, and obviously this would be
14 presumably anecdotal from meeting -- talking to boys in
15 school, or just meeting them --

16 A. (Overspeaking)

17 Q. -- boys' houses were different?

18 A. The boys' houses were different. I got it from my
19 brother, because he was obviously in one of the boys'
20 houses, and from some of the boys in my year at school.

21 It is quite a community when you are actually in
22 boarding school and, as boarders, for us we were very
23 different to the day pupils, so we tended to talk as a
24 group. They probably felt isolated, I don't know. So,
25 yes, I heard it. We all talked.

1 Q. Was your perception, from all this talk, that fagging
2 was somehow more of a factor in the boys' houses?

3 A. Yes, we used to ask "Who have you got?" And they would
4 tell us and say, "Oh God, I got this person this year".
5 Yes, it was very open among us. I certainly found it
6 that way.

7 Q. Did it seem to be harsher than the girls' houses?

8 A. Yes, I think it was.

9 Q. Was there complaint, I suppose is the simplest --

10 A. Yes, I think some of them, they didn't like the senior
11 they got, because the senior was quite -- more a bully,
12 I would say.

13 Q. I think, going back to chores, though, and this is
14 paragraph 44 at page 10, you have talked about ironing
15 and everyday tidying, that was just part and parcel of
16 the school house life?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Was it the pupils who were doing much of the domestic
19 chores?

20 A. No, it was a mixed bag. When I say ironing, we had to
21 do some shirts on a Sunday, we had to iron 24 shirts on
22 a Sunday, but they were ironed by someone else the rest
23 of the week. We had to make sure the washing went over
24 at the weekend, we had to make sure the kitchen was kept
25 clean, and just generally there weren't things lying

1 around. There were cleaners coming in to generally
2 clean but there were certain things we had to do.

3 Q. You talk in paragraph 44 about one chore that clearly
4 was not popular, which is the boarding house bucket with
5 antiseptic in it, and that is where the pants went. Was
6 this effectively just washing them in the antiseptic?

7 A. I think -- well, they went in there and then went over
8 to get washed, I guess that was to stop bugs or
9 whatever. Rather than them all going in a washing bag,
10 they went in there. It was the only piece of clothing
11 that did go in that bucket, everything else went in
12 a bag somewhere I think.

13 Q. You describe it as revolting.

14 A. It is revolting.

15 Q. Did that ever change?

16 A. No.

17 Q. Okay. In terms of washing clothes, was that done for
18 you, or was that one of the chores the girls undertook?

19 A. At first it was done by us, but as I became senior I was
20 allowed into the wash room, which was separate to the
21 house, it was an outhouse, and occasionally I could do
22 my own things, but mostly there was -- that was probably
23 done for us.

24 Q. Lastly on the domestic side, you talk about going to the
25 refectory for food. Broadly I think, whilst puddings

1 were good, to use your description of the spaghetti
2 bolognese, it could be "rancid"?

3 A. Oh yes.

4 Q. Although the ladies in the canteen were friendly?

5 A. They were lovely. The ladies did their best with what
6 materials they had, I think.

7 Q. Right.

8 Moving on to the school itself, and this was
9 paragraph 31. Obviously daily -- you were aged 7 -- you
10 were walking from Knockearn to the school, and the
11 school, from reading matters, paragraph 32:

12 "The education I received was very good."

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Obviously we all have experience of teachers who are
15 better than others, some who are outstanding. In your
16 experience certainly some were very good indeed?

17 A. Some were excellent and I still retain -- I am still
18 fond of some of them to this day because I know how much
19 they have done for me in terms of education.

20 Q. But I think we also see that you worked very hard, you
21 were a diligent pupil?

22 A. Diligent in the sense that when I came back from Libya,
23 my education in Libya had been dire, I couldn't subtract
24 and I was at the bottom of class and I didn't like this,
25 and I didn't like the boarding house, so I decided

1 I might as well throw myself into education, and that is
2 why I became diligent. It is not because I am an
3 evangelist on this, I just had the opportunity to
4 disappear into that side of my ...

5 Q. I think, from what you say elsewhere in the statement,
6 that was also a device to detach from other aspects of
7 your school life?

8 A. Absolutely, yes.

9 Q. We will come back to that.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. But would you agree you were quite a serious child?

12 A. I have always been a serious person, yes.

13 Q. It's just --

14 A. As a child and now.

15 Q. It's just that at paragraph 35 you obviously talk about,
16 at the end of the summer term of your first year, you
17 got friendly with a young boy and you whack him with
18 a ruler, as children do, and you obviously feared when
19 the teacher became involved that you were going to be
20 disciplined?

21 A. Correct.

22 Q. In fact what she says is that that is the first time she
23 had seen you laughing the whole year?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. So there was an element of fairly recognising perhaps

1 there was a need for some humour?

2 A. I think she was probably relieved to see -- yes, that
3 I had -- I'd just sit. I sat all year and just listened
4 and gave no emotion, because emotionally I didn't know
5 what to do. We were shouted at in the boarding house,
6 and then told you must behave all rules and all this
7 kind of thing. Then you go to school and the dynamic
8 was a school, so it was slightly different. But
9 I didn't get that, I just thought I had to be this cold
10 person the whole time. So when I got caught with that
11 and I was laughing, she obviously saw it as very
12 different to my normal behaviour.

13 Q. In terms of focusing on work, being quiet, you
14 acknowledge that that was in part a device for other
15 things, to avoid other things. Tell us about that.

16 A. Sorry, could you just repeat that?

17 Q. Of course. You were talking about obviously you became
18 a diligent pupil, because you tried to learn, but
19 I think elsewhere in the statement you talk about that
20 being essentially a device because it kept you away from
21 other things. You just focused on work, were quiet,
22 diligent?

23 A. Absolutely. Keep your head down. I enjoyed learning,
24 to be honest I enjoyed the learning, so reading textbooks
25 -- I would read textbooks from two years above

1 me, I would just sit and read them, because it kept you
2 out of the way of other people. If someone saw you
3 reading a book they just ignored you and you kind of
4 disappeared into the background.

5 But I actually quite liked getting better marks so
6 there was a win/win. That was my win, it was for me,
7 whereas at the same time it kept me out of trouble. So
8 I very quickly realised that dynamic was a good one, and
9 just continued with it.

10 Q. You have talked about the win of getting good marks.
11 What about the other win of keeping out of trouble?
12 What do you mean by that?

13 A. When you have 24 girls in a room socialising, and
14 they're shouting and shrieking, squealing, and all sorts
15 of normal things are going on, and then the
16 housemistress storms in and shouts at you because she
17 doesn't want the noise or something has just got up her
18 nose, then you got into trouble. At least if I had been
19 sat in the room it was occasionally noticed "You're not
20 involved". But that came with its own problems, because
21 then I was seen as a goody two shoes. So I used to
22 just -- there was no win, but there was a win. You just
23 had to -- it's all a game and just trying -- by the end
24 of P5 I had kind of worked out the dynamics of the game.

25 Q. You talked obviously about your hearing from the boys

1 that the boys' houses were -- I think the word you used
2 was "bullying" as between seniors and juniors. What was
3 the position in your house as regards bullying? Did it
4 exist?

5 A. Of course it did, people did bully. There was no one to
6 talk to, you just had to take it.

7 Q. Should we understand this is seniors bullying younger
8 pupils?

9 A. No, it's everybody bullying everybody.

10 Q. It's not just hierarchical, it's just there was
11 a bullying culture?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Again should we understand the win/win you described of
14 just trying to keep your head down, if that's right?

15 A. Because then I wasn't involved, and I couldn't be seen
16 to be involved, so therefore I couldn't be pulled in.
17 And often I would be asked "What is your opinion?" And
18 I'd say "Oh, I don't know. I am reading". And that --
19 I was listening but I didn't get involved. That is
20 the game.

21 Q. So it was just a device by you simply to try to avoid
22 attention, is that fair?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. What sort of things would be done in terms of bullying?

25 A. You would have things stolen out your room. You would

1 have money -- as soon as you got your pocket money you
2 would go outside and it's nicked off you. I have
3 obviously alluded to what happened to me in terms of my
4 bed, having the hot water bottle emptied over it and
5 then having to just sleep and get on with it. It is not
6 easy when it's freezing cold in Crieff.

7 It was just endless drip, drip, drip. Names. "I'll
8 tell on you". Just the usual -- the usual stuff
9 actually. The usual bullying. Tripping you up, all
10 that kind of stuff.

11 Q. You also mention at paragraphs 47 and 48 pupils being
12 locked in a cupboard, and I think this is a cupboard
13 halfway up the stairs, as we read in 48 on page 11, and
14 you would be locked in there with other pupils laughing
15 on the other side of the door?

16 A. It was a game. It was a cleaning cupboard, it kept the
17 Hoover and cleaning products and that kind of thing, so
18 it wasn't very nice, and a bit scary, but everybody got
19 locked in it at some point. I am sure -- I hold my hand
20 up, I probably laughed on the other side as well, just
21 to -- in the heat of the moment. We all did it.

22 Q. You all did it?

23 A. Oh, yes.

24 Q. Yes, it was --

25 A. It did die out eventually, though, to be fair. That was

1 probably in the first few years, and then after that it
2 did sort of lose its appeal.

3 Q. Why did it lose its appeal? Because it seems that if
4 you are all doing it to one another, it is learned
5 behaviour. Why did it stop?

6 A. I think the group that came in with me -- as you
7 alluded, it was the 1980s -- we were beginning to see
8 more things coming on and beginning to say "This isn't
9 right", and we didn't like it. I think -- I never liked
10 it, so I eventually, by probably S1, thought why
11 am I doing this? It's exactly what I can't stand. I
12 think we, as a cohort, were beginning to change.

13 Q. In terms of the staff in the house, would they have been
14 aware this was going on?

15 A. Probably not.

16 Q. Probably not? Is that simply because they weren't
17 there?

18 A. Correct.

19 Q. Again, so we understand, obviously you have 24 girls
20 living in the house all in their various dorms, some
21 bigger than the others. You have the matron, you have
22 the housemistress, and twice a week a visiting tutor.
23 On a day-to-day basis in the evening, other than "It's
24 time to put the lights out and be quiet", how much
25 interaction was there with the matron and the

1 housemistress, for example?

2 A. The matron was about obviously when you got -- hovering
3 when you got up. I don't remember who was at breakfast.
4 But the way the house was constructed, as I said, the
5 housemistress was at one end and tended to stay a lot in
6 that end, and the matron spent a lot of time in the
7 kitchen and the hot room, which was the drying room next
8 to it.

9 At the other end, which had the common room, the
10 bathrooms and then the stairs which went upstairs, and
11 the boot room, they didn't have a clue what was going
12 on. Well, they weren't there, so they couldn't see.

13 Q. Did anyone ever, in your experience, complain to either
14 the matron, the housemistress or the tutor about the
15 conduct of --

16 A. No. That would have been called clipping, and you didn't
17 clipe on your own. That was the way it was.

18 Q. Was anything said formally by any of the support
19 staff -- housemistress, matron, tutor -- about coming to
20 tell them if there were problems? Was that ever
21 canvassed with you?

22 A. Possibly occasionally they might have said "If you have
23 any problems come and see us", but it was the last thing
24 in the world you would have ever done because you didn't
25 trust them that what you were taking to them wouldn't

1 come back at you at some point. It wasn't the culture
2 to take anything to anyone, which is why probably for
3 years I just bottled it up.

4 Q. There is a distinction, obviously, between boarding
5 house and school. Is it too simple to say school was
6 actually quite good whereas the problems you faced were
7 in the boarding house?

8 A. Correct. I loved going to the school. The school was
9 tough, I mean the teachers were like any teacher, they
10 were tough. But going to the school was like a release,
11 because it was mixed, it was boarding, it was day pupils
12 and it was co-ed, so it was mixed. And as the years
13 went on I found mechanisms not to go back to the
14 boarding house. I'd go to the library, go and do sport,
15 anything that meant after school I didn't go back to the
16 house. I could avoid being in the house, be there as
17 little as possible.

18 Q. But in terms of you wouldn't clipe, what you are saying
19 in the boarding house, it just wasn't done. What about
20 in the school? Did you feel you could tell anyone in
21 the school about it?

22 A. No. No. I would definitely say that era there were
23 definitely no channels to take anything to anybody.
24 I didn't have an appointed member of staff that was
25 someone I could go to and I am not aware of anyone that

1 I would have taken something to.

2 Q. It is just you talk about the fact you found ways not to
3 go back to the boarding house. Was that ever noticed by
4 the teaching staff that you were --

5 A. No, because it was quite -- so library, different
6 teacher; sports, different teacher. It was very mixed,
7 so they probably didn't join me up and think she is
8 never going back, and nobody at the house ever bothered
9 to think twice. Just as long as I was at tea, that was
10 all they were interested in.

11 Q. In terms -- I think you go on to talk about healthcare
12 in a number of ways, but just one aspect, which is
13 paragraph 70, page 15:

14 "Nobody spoke to us about changes to expect during
15 puberty, we were just told not to go anywhere near boys
16 or have a boyfriend. We had to rely on each other to
17 deal with periods. We couldn't get into the town until
18 the weekend to buy any sanitary products. I wasn't
19 aware of matron helping girls with the supply of
20 sanitary products."

21 Did that ever change or --

22 A. Not when I left. It was still persisting by the time
23 I left.

24 Q. There was simply no --

25 A. Unless you went --

1 Q. -- guidance?

2 A. There was no guidance. It came from seniors.

3 Q. So pupils were explaining to pupils what was happening?

4 A. Yes. The problem is when I have read that again, I have
5 thought that sounds as if my mother wasn't involved or
6 my parents weren't involved, but they didn't know it was
7 happening to me because it happened when I was away from
8 home. Perhaps if I'd been at home it would have been
9 different, but nobody spoke to us about it, so I spent
10 a whole day sitting in this situation in a classroom.
11 It was quite horrendous.

12 Q. I think a different area but perhaps some similarities
13 in terms of response or lack of, paragraph 77
14 bed-wetting. You talked about having water poured over
15 your bed. That is different:

16 "There was bed-wetting in my dorms and we never told
17 anybody about it. Girls just turned the mattress over
18 when no one else was in the room and the staff didn't
19 know. You just didn't show weakness. I possibly did,
20 although I don't remember doing it. I'm sure I wouldn't
21 have got away lightly."

22 The staff, they never raised the prospect with you
23 or the potential this could happen?

24 A. No. Our beds were changed every two weeks. We
25 physically had that as a routine, to change the beds

1 every two weeks, and it was every two weeks it was
2 changed. We didn't put bed stuff in the wash. You kept
3 the washing down as much as possible.

4 Q. You liked the school but discipline was obviously
5 a factor within the school, as well as presumably within
6 the boarding house. You talk about discipline at
7 paragraph 78:

8 "The school could be brutal too. There were severe
9 punishments but it was manageable. There were also day
10 pupils at the school and that toned down the boarding
11 house issues."

12 How did it tone down the boarding house issues?

13 A. Because you got released from being with the same people
14 24/7, so you could have different friends, and that
15 meant release, and it meant the dynamics in the
16 classrooms were slightly less exhausting, again being
17 with the same people. It just helped.

18 Q. In terms of discipline, I think as we see at
19 paragraph 80, we are still in the days of corporal
20 punishment?

21 A. Absolutely. It was the norm in Scotland at the time, so
22 again none of us thought that was not to be expected.
23 That was the ultimate end, you know, if you didn't stop
24 it you knew the belt was coming.

25 Q. Was that felt just to be one of those things?

1 A. I am afraid it was.

2 Q. You talk obviously then of the bottle issue, where it is
3 poured over your bed. Is there anything else? Because
4 you talk about bullying on page 18 in a number of
5 different ways, people's heads being flushed down the
6 toilet, though that didn't happen to you?

7 A. No, I didn't get that.

8 Q. Just to be clear, this is in the boarding house?

9 A. Oh, yes. This would not be in the school. I didn't
10 experience it in the school.

11 Q. By the sounds of it, you were spending your time just
12 trying not to be noticed?

13 A. I did. Yes.

14 Q. But by the sounds of it, things were beginning to change
15 as you progressed because your year group was evolving
16 in terms of your outlook, it wasn't simply repetition?

17 A. I would say our year group was quite -- becoming very
18 anti-rules and regulations as we progressed, and I think
19 certainly the behaviour of some of the other girls in
20 the house was breaking down. Certainly after I left
21 I completely enjoyed the freedom that I had got. So
22 I think we were beginning to realise this wasn't all
23 normal. Also TV was more prevalent than perhaps
24 previous years, and we were hearing more and more of
25 what was going on out in the real world from the day

1 pupils and realising, wait a minute, they are going to
2 cinema, they are going and doing this. Why can't we do
3 this?

4 So I think the whole atmosphere was beginning to
5 change amongst us. And we were growing up.

6 Q. So you are really saying, if I can ask you to agree or
7 disagree, horizons were broadening within the boarding
8 house?

9 A. They were, yes.

10 Q. Was that something, as distinct from when you joined in
11 P5, and the time you left, had there been, not thinking
12 just about your year group, would you say there had been
13 change over the period you were at school?

14 A. I definitely would. Acceptance was going, this
15 acceptance of how -- I would call it deference, it was
16 changing. We were definitely not accepting. And we
17 were beginning to say amongst ourselves, why are we
18 doing this?

19 Q. You have talked about change there of pupils. Was
20 there any change in the approach of the housemistress?

21 A. No.

22 Q. So that was a constant?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. I think you say that there were two housemistresses in
25 your time, the first who started off well but mood

1 swings progressed. Did her behaviour get progressively
2 worse?

3 A. She was incredibly thunderous by the end. I was
4 relieved to come back and find a new housemistress.
5 In fact, I was dreading going back, and I finally walked
6 in and there was this new lady there. I didn't even
7 care who it would be, it was just not this thunderous
8 moods and shouting and ... yes.

9 Q. In terms of the first housemistress and her descent into
10 becoming more thunderous and aggressive --

11 A. It was verbally aggressive, yes.

12 Q. -- was there any channel, even if you had been willing
13 to, that you could have raised this with?

14 A. No. No, there was no one to talk to about it. We all
15 could see it happening, we didn't understand why she had
16 changed -- I don't know. But there was no one to talk
17 to. I occasionally told my parents but I didn't want to
18 bother them.

19 Q. What was their response, your parents?

20 A. To be fair to them, they did call the school on a couple
21 of occasions and ask what was going on, and got short
22 shrift.

23 Q. Can you expand on what "short shrift" meant?

24 A. Told everything was okay, she was perfectly good.

25 I never got the full -- they just -- over a period of

1 time, by the time I said I wanted to leave, my father
2 was more accepting of it, and particularly because he
3 had confronted the school on a couple of things and had
4 decided it wasn't quite the same place it had been.
5 I don't really fully know what was said, but I know they
6 weren't impressed and they had complained.

7 Q. I think you say in your statement one of the things your
8 father was put out about was the fact the headmaster was
9 forever away in the Far East?

10 A. Correct.

11 Q. Was this trying to drum up business?

12 A. I would have thought, yes. And that is acceptable. But
13 my father felt he was paying these fees and this man was
14 never there. Also the fact -- just to take it away from
15 me for a minute, my brother was in senior school at this
16 point and his education -- my brother actually left with
17 very poor educational results, he has since rectified
18 that, and my dad was fuming, so to see the headmaster
19 away all the time just didn't impress him.

20 Q. Going back to that first housemistress, you think your
21 parents complained but got short shrift. So you were at
22 least telling them --

23 A. Occasionally telling them, just saying she was moody and
24 shouty. But a common response to my parents was "Well,
25 there are 24 girls in the house. She is going to have

1 to have discipline".

2 Q. Did anyone ever come in and inspect the house, from
3 your --

4 A. I am never aware of that. I never saw an inspector to
5 ask whether they came in when we weren't there, but we
6 never had an inspector.

7 Q. What about other members of staff? The headmaster of
8 the school, for example. Did he ever come near the
9 boarding house --

10 A. I don't think so. I would probably have remembered it.
11 No.

12 Q. Was the house its own little community which had any
13 oversight, as far as you were aware?

14 A. I would -- no, we had no oversight. We were -- we were
15 kind of in a community, because there was our house and
16 two boys' houses in this big space, and we shared the
17 same prep room, although it was cordoned off. Nobody
18 ever came in. We didn't come across each other's paths,
19 and nobody seemed to come in from anywhere else, no.

20 Q. In terms of the second housemistress, was that a change
21 for the better then?

22 A. It was an immediate change for the better. I come back
23 to the point about an office. She had an office, she
24 had converted the downstairs bathroom into an office,
25 which if you had -- you could go and speak to her

1 occasionally. The problem was she was so much older
2 than -- Mrs BPP was quite a young lady, but
3 Mrs Richardson was a lot older, she was near to
4 retirement, and it just didn't feel -- I couldn't relate
5 to her, so I very rarely went.

6 Occasionally I would go in, just an administrative
7 thing. Nothing to do with feeling I could go and talk
8 to her, it would just be something that I needed done.
9 But no, nobody -- the culture wasn't there: my door is
10 open. But she did change things.

11 Q. Such as?

12 A. There wasn't the same shouting that went on and telling
13 everybody off. We had a set of rules which at first we
14 mostly all followed, because she was very pleasant. To
15 be fair, again, she was quite pleasant for a while.
16 Quite strict, but strict is okay when you know where you
17 are and it's fair across the board, but after a while
18 she got quite moody as well and just -- maybe we were a
19 difficult cohort, I don't know, but it just -- almost as
20 if they didn't enjoy it after a while, actually. Maybe
21 they didn't enjoy looking after us. Everybody just
22 seemed to be so pleasant at the start and then quickly
23 people shouted at you.

24 Q. I think on page 19, paragraph 89, you say:

25 "Ultimately, the pressure on staff was probably

1 considerable and they can't handle it, and there are
2 girls doing things which are sometimes naughty and they
3 can't handle it."

4 A. Do you know, if you have -- I think to myself: if I have
5 five different things juggling in the air, and you have
6 five people misbehaving, it must have been difficult,
7 and so maybe that is why, as me standing there watching
8 it, I thought it was channelled to all -- I didn't see
9 the full picture perhaps when they were getting angry.

10 Q. Going back to the first housemistress, I think you set
11 out at some length on pages 20 to 21 that particular
12 problems were encountered because of her religiosity, if
13 I can put it like that?

14 A. Correct.

15 Q. We see that in paragraph 94 she was taking everyone in
16 the boarding house to see someone called Luis Palau,
17 who was a faith giver, but you rang your mum and said
18 you didn't want to go, so you didn't go --

19 A. That is one occasion when my mum intervened,
20 particularly because my parents had gone to see
21 Billy Graham in Glasgow, probably in the 1960s, it must
22 have been the 1960s, and they were shocked. It wasn't
23 something that resonated with them, so she was adamant
24 that I was not to go, and she did phone up and told
25 Mrs BPP that if I went there would be trouble. But

1 she never told the school, she just told the
2 housemistress, so I didn't go.

3 Q. Were the school aware that the rest of your housemates
4 were being bussed to Glasgow --

5 A. I have no idea. I very much doubt it.

6 Q. Did your fellow housemates have any choice in the
7 matter? You obviously ...

8 A. I did, because I, about that point, stood up and said
9 no. No, the rest of them had no choice.

10 Q. I think as we see in paragraph 95, page 21, the
11 following day she was telling everyone that they had
12 dedicated their life to God, and how dare they 24 hours
13 later give it up again, so she gated everyone.

14 A. Yes. That was probably one of the lowest points of
15 standing listening to it all, and I was told to leave
16 the room at one point because I hadn't taken the oath to
17 God. But that was seen as a heathen, though, so that
18 made it worse as well. I was shouted at as well for not
19 believing in God and all this.

20 Q. Again --

21 A. It was just a horrendous experience.

22 Q. Obviously you told your mother that you didn't want to
23 go, so you didn't. Did you tell anyone else in the
24 school about this?

25 A. No.

1 Q. What was the feeling in the house about it? All the
2 other girls who had gone on the coach and were then
3 being condemned for not following through?

4 A. We were all in tears, to be quite frank with you,
5 because it was just -- we all knew this was not going to
6 go away, we were going to get dragged -- I wasn't,
7 because I hadn't been involved, but they were dragged to
8 prayer meetings and it didn't go away. In fact that is
9 why -- this was near the end -- that is why, when we
10 came back and she had gone all of a sudden, I think
11 everyone thought, thank God, that's gone, and we don't
12 have that religion anymore.

13 Q. I think you set out at paragraph 98, bottom of 21 to 22,
14 perhaps some of the background to her increasing mood
15 swings and the pressure she was under. Again, was there
16 any sense of oversight from the school as this
17 disintegration was going on?

18 A. I have none, I don't think so. Obviously at some point
19 she did leave, but she was allowed to stay to the end of
20 term. There wasn't an intervention after this event, it
21 was basically summer -- when I say end of term, I mean
22 the summer term, so it was allowed to go for the whole
23 of that year, and then obviously it was intervened.

24 I don't know whether she resigned. To this day,
25 I don't know what happened. She just wasn't there.

1 Q. Were you aware of her getting any support?

2 A. Yes, to be fair, she probably didn't.

3 Q. This was obviously when you were in junior school still?

4 A. Yes, just as I was finishing it.

5 Q. You have talked about how things were getting, as you
6 got older, better, a little bit better, in the boarding
7 house, is that fair?

8 A. Yes, because you got more privileges so you could ...

9 Q. All right. But then obviously you become a senior girl
10 and, as you say at paragraphs 111 and 112, there is
11 development, albeit you are not being told anything
12 about it officially, and there are comings and goings
13 between boys and girls. And, as you say, there was
14 a senior girl in your boarding house who was going out
15 every night, and eventually she fell pregnant?

16 A. I am pretty sure she did, because she just suddenly
17 left.

18 Q. Again was there any effort on the part of the boarding
19 school staff to police that or ...

20 A. I don't -- in that girl's situation, I don't even think
21 they were aware that she was climbing out the window at
22 night, and I think they would be tremendously surprised
23 to know it was me letting her back in, only because my
24 bed was near the window and I kind of knew if I didn't
25 I would be up for it too, so ...

1 Q. Looking to paragraph 112, you say:

2 "The school would be horrified if they knew that, by
3 the time I was in fourth year, several of the senior
4 girls in my house were having sex."

5 So were the school naive, do you think?

6 A. Just unaware of what we were doing. Yes, I think they
7 were naive by that point. They hadn't stopped to
8 consider or watch people's behaviour. They didn't know
9 us.

10 Q. Again, I have asked you a number of times about things
11 improving as time went on, did they get to know you any
12 better as time went --

13 A. No. The day I left the school I went to see the
14 headmaster to say goodbye and he didn't even get my name
15 right.

16 Q. Obviously we talked about your brother, who had gone
17 a year ahead, he was three years older. We talked
18 obviously about siblings, and perhaps by the time you
19 start he really doesn't want to engage with you?

20 A. Fair enough.

21 Q. You're his little sister. There were benefits, as we
22 read from your statement, because he was fanciable?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. So there was prestige by association, is that --

25 A. On and off, yes.

1 Q. It made life easier?

2 A. It did make life easier for me. I didn't ... yes.

3 Q. Did you have much contact with him?

4 A. Not a lot, no. Certainly not when I was younger, in the
5 primary. Certainly maybe by secondary, because the
6 secondary school was different to primary, so we were
7 crossing paths in classes and things, so maybe then but
8 not beforehand.

9 Q. I think you said earlier on in your statement that the
10 school didn't seem to realise you were siblings?

11 A. Uh-huh.

12 Q. That was in the context, so far as your statement is
13 concerned, of being put into sporting houses for some
14 sort of competitive side as distinct from boarding
15 houses. Did the penny ever drop that you were siblings?

16 A. No. No. No, I don't think so.

17 Q. Not so far as you were aware from a practical --

18 A. It definitely didn't. My mum went to a parents evening
19 once with the chemistry teacher. He taught both my
20 brother and I and he had never even noticed. We are
21 very similar in looks but he had never put it together,
22 so they never knew.

23 Q. But I think, and you have talked about this, as a child
24 you were a [REDACTED] redhead perhaps, and your brother
25 was a [REDACTED] redhead too and, as we see on page 26, that

1 meant he stood out and was clipped on by an elder --

2 A. Correct.

3 Q. -- who seems, from what you have said, to complain at
4 every opportunity about the school. But the school
5 phoned your parents to say they were going to belt him
6 for drinking?

7 A. Correct, and they did belt him. Six on each hand.

8 Q. What did your parents think of that, do you remember?

9 A. They were quite keen my brother finished that term.

10 They were quite happy. He was at the end of fifth form,
11 he didn't do sixth form.

12 They thought it was appalling. I think that is when
13 my father started to realise, come on, cut him a bit of
14 slack, I probably drank at that age. I mean, we are
15 talking lager or shandy or something ridiculous. It
16 was -- my parents actually thought that was normal
17 behaviour. And, yes, okay, there are school rules, but
18 the response was a little bit over the top.

19 Q. He is at the end of his fifth year. What year would you
20 have been at that stage? Second or third?

21 A. Third. That is when I asked to leave.

22 Q. That is what I was wondering.

23 A. So my brother left having had that incident. I spent
24 the summer at home with my mum and begged never to go
25 back. I had to go back for a term, that was the rule,

1 and I left on [REDACTED] 1985. I [REDACTED] so
2 I could go into a new school.

3 Q. I think, as we know, you then went to a local college?

4 A. After that school, yes.

5 Q. After that school.

6 A. I did my A levels.

7 Q. And went to university?

8 A. Correct.

9 Q. You talk at some length about the impact being at
10 Morrison's has had on you, at page 28, paragraph 125
11 onwards. Does it still have impact?

12 A. I wouldn't be sitting here if it hadn't.

13 Q. When you heard about the Child Abuse Inquiry, what was
14 your response?

15 A. Well, at first I hadn't heard Morrison's being part of
16 it, so I thought -- I thought my experience was of no
17 interest. Then I heard Morrison's mentioned and
18 I thought, you know, maybe my experience is just part of
19 a bigger picture, maybe that is useful.

20 Q. Obviously we can read what you have said in your
21 statement about having anxieties about your own children
22 and how they should be treated, and you are quite clear
23 you wouldn't want your children to go to boarding
24 school?

25 A. Uh-huh.

1 Q. You end up at paragraph 132 saying:

2 "I think about my Morrison's school experience every
3 day."

4 A. Correct.

5 Q. Even now?

6 A. Even now. Things come up. Please don't interpret that
7 as being always negative, because some of it is to do
8 with schooling. I think about the schooling, I think
9 about some of the teaching staff. But, yes, it's never
10 left me.

11 Q. So there is good and bad?

12 A. Yes. Yes. Yes.

13 Q. Education good. Boarding house ...?

14 A. It lacked emotion, and that is why I think about it
15 every day. Emotionally it has left me ... resistant to
16 emotion, shall we say?

17 Q. Is that the device we have talked about earlier on,
18 about just stepping back and reading, as an example,
19 just avoiding --

20 A. I do get involved in things but I generally don't. I am
21 very considered in my choice of involvement in things.
22 I don't relish friends, particularly. I don't trust
23 people. And that won't change. I was very open with my
24 husband about my experience when I met him so that he
25 was aware, because I can be quite withdrawn at times.

1 And I have got a very good technique to just shut off to
2 people sometimes. I had to make him aware that it's not
3 personal, it's me, and I still do it.

4 Q. You talk in your statement obviously about lessons to be
5 learned. We can read those. And also your hopes for
6 the Inquiry. You make the point that bullying in school
7 persists, and you mention the fact that your son --

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. -- was bullied?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. But you go on to say:

12 "I spotted it quickly and my husband and I were able
13 to deal with it quickly and we removed my son from the
14 situation he was in. He had me to talk to and that was
15 the big thing. I was there to listen to him. Nobody
16 listened to us in boarding school."

17 A. Correct.

18 Q. Is that the essence of it?

19 A. That is the essence of it, you need to listen. Even if
20 a child is shouting and is troublesome, they are still
21 saying something. There is something there and you need
22 to listen. And actually if they are shouting at you,
23 they are talking to you, whereas we were seen as being
24 troublesome at that point and we shouldn't be shouting.

25 MR BROWN: Thank you very much indeed. I have no further

1 questions for you.

2 A. Thank you.

3 LADY SMITH: Are there any outstanding applications for
4 questions of Polly? (Pause).

5 Polly, that does complete all the questions we have
6 for you today. Thank you so much for deciding to come
7 and engage with us. Your statement, which is part of
8 your evidence, and everything you have told us today is
9 indeed very helpful in assisting me to build the picture
10 of Morrison's when it was a boarding school, so your
11 time has not been wasted, I can assure you of that, and
12 I'm now able to let you go. Thank you.

13 A. Thank you.

14 (The witness withdrew)

15 LADY SMITH: Mr Brown.

16 MR BROWN: My Lady, to conclude today there are two very
17 brief read-ins. These are by way of emails from
18 Morrison's pupils which, given the nature of the
19 pandemic, became a way of gathering information.

20 LADY SMITH: Of course, yes.

21 MS BENNIE: My Lady, the first statement appears at document
22 reference MOR-00000079. As indicated, this statement is
23 in the form of a letter which has been prepared by the
24 witness and addressed to the school. It is dated
25 16 November 2020. The witness has indicated that he

1 wishes to remain anonymous and has adopted the pseudonym
2 of Bill.

3 Witness Statement of "BILL" (read)

4 MS BENNIE: "I spent 15 years as a boarder at
5 Morrison's Academy, from 1950 until 1965, mostly in
6 boys' boarding houses.

7 "I started at Newstead in the early 1950s. A woman
8 used to take in kindergarten boarders of both sexes.
9 She called it a children's hotel. It welcomed the
10 children of colonial parents. I was there for four
11 years until the age of 7, even starting my first day at
12 school from there, at Croftweit, aged 5. I can remember
13 very little from this period, except a general memory of
14 warmth and kindness.

15 "From the age 7 until 14, I was at Whinmount in
16 Drummond Terrace. The houseparents were in charge.
17 There were about 25 boys of all ages. During the entire
18 seven years there, there was not the slightest hint of
19 anysexual abuse or inappropriateness either between the
20 boys or with any adults. We kids loved gossip and
21 shared dormitories and confidences. I am quite certain
22 I would have known.

23 "Whinmount, however, was very strict and would be
24 viewed as brutal if present day mores and expectations
25 were to be applied. Caning was a routine punishment

1 administered by the housemaster only, but probably too
2 often and too randomly. This was a different era with
3 different standards. The housemaster was a retired
4 [REDACTED], not the best choice for
5 childcare, you might think.

6 "The food was simply dreadful. Because it was
7 a privately run establishment the school had no
8 influence of the catering. Eventually, aged 14,
9 I persuaded my parents to have me moved. They agreed,
10 as much because they worried about poor nutrition.
11 I went to Ogilvie House, which was an official boarding
12 house. Interestingly, my move encouraged a wave of
13 complaints and within a year Whinmount was closed down
14 by the school and all the kids were moved elsewhere.
15 I suspect the rector was unaware of how bad it had been.

16 "By 1960, society in general was becoming more
17 enlightened and the school acted very quickly in
18 response to the complaints. I think the house had been
19 operational from about 1949 to 1961. Ogilvie House
20 seemed like paradise in contrast, excellent food and
21 a very caring housemaster and mistress. I was there for
22 four years until I left aged 18. All were kind and
23 supportive. There was very little bullying and a much
24 kinder atmosphere as the 1960s moved on.

25 "Once again, I can report with confidence that there

1 was never the slightest hint of any sexual abuse or any
2 improper behaviour. By this stage I think I was old
3 enough and wise enough to suspect it, had it occurred.
4 In this I can only offer my honest opinion.

5 "There was one episode at the school which needs to
6 be reported. It had nothing to do with my experiences
7 as a boarder, this was a daytime issue. In the 1950s
8 one of the primary schoolteachers had a reputation for
9 inappropriate behaviour. He would ask pupils to remain
10 behind after class, and one had to be smart as well as
11 resilient to avoid his wandering hands. Sharing this
12 with peers back at the boarding house was not only
13 amusement but provided considerable support. Those were
14 the days when complaining to adults was unheard of but
15 boarding children had an advantage. Adversity had made
16 them worldly wise and, in addition, they enjoyed
17 an instant support group.

18 "Worryingly, the teacher also became a Cub master
19 and, at one point, my class master. He had taken
20 a liking to me. It made me feel a bit vulnerable but
21 happily I successfully resisted any advances. Then
22 quite suddenly he failed to return after a Christmas
23 holiday. Word got about that the school had found out
24 about his proclivities. We heard no more of him. That
25 was quite a relief to me, I remember. I was about ten

1 years old.

2 "None of these experiences have traumatised me in
3 any way. My association with the school has been a warm
4 and positive one."

5 My Lady, the statement is signed by Bill.

6 The second statement bears the document reference
7 MOR-00000081. My Lady, this is a statement which
8 is in the form of a letter from the applicant, Alasdair
9 Liddle. It is addressed to the school and dated
10 28 March 2021.

11 Witness Statement of ALASDAIR LIDDLE (read)

12 MS BENNIE: "I joined the Academy House of
13 Morrison's Academy in September 1950. The house had
14 a house captain. Within days of arrival, the house
15 captain announced a boxing match between the new boy,
16 me, and another, a competent boxer or fighter. I was
17 young, shy, inexperienced and completely lost in
18 an unfamiliar environment. Moments later, one of my
19 front incisors was punched out. I held it in place
20 until promptly seeing the local dentist who drilled out
21 the contents and then filled the tooth. Unfortunately
22 it remained darker than the others until a decade ago.

23 "At prep on Sunday evenings the house captain's
24 regular trick was to remove the bulb of a wall light in
25 the upper common room and introduce a small coin

1 balanced on the end of a pencil into the socket and then
2 having the light switched on, resulting in all the
3 lights fusing, thereby disrupting any study or homework
4 preparation.

5 "On another occasion during prep, he heated a poker
6 in the stove until red hot and then approached me
7 menacingly until the poker was inches from my nose. As
8 I tried to ignore him, which clearly infuriated him, he
9 removed one of his slippers, took out filthy, smelly
10 insole, and ordered 'Eat that or I will brand you'. Had
11 I been a little braver, I might have shouted or screamed
12 for help. The other prefects and senior pupils did
13 nothing to help me, and with this red hot poker inches
14 from my nose I tossed this disgusting object into my
15 mouth and swallowed it. Fortunately I survived.

16 "On another occasion, when out for the routine
17 Sunday walk, the house captain, smoking as he did
18 regularly, came up behind me and stubbed out his burning
19 cigarette on the back of my leg beneath the kilt. An
20 excruciating sore, then scar, remained with me for a
21 very long time after.

22 "Finally, shortly before he left, he demanded
23 a penknife from me. This had been given to me by my
24 parents as a gift when I left home for Morrison's. The
25 penknife was embossed with a list of British kings,

1 queens and relevant dates. The house captain demanded
2 it from me as he was taking his history exam that day.
3 I do not know whether the exam was higher or lower
4 history but the inference was clear. However, he never
5 did return it to me.

6 "These are some of my recollections of my first year
7 in Academy House. I have now had a burning hatred for
8 the house captain for almost 70 years, as I am sure you
9 will understand.

10 "There were other instances of bullying or downright
11 criminal assault, but my saddest memory is the total
12 absence of help from the prefects and my senior
13 colleagues. I assume that they were all too terrified
14 of the house captain.

15 "The following three years in Academy House were
16 more pleasant and in my last year I became house captain
17 and hopefully treated the rest of the pupils decently."

18 LADY SMITH: Thank you very much.

19 So, Mr Brown, that completes the evidence that we
20 are presenting today, is that correct?

21 MR BROWN: It does, my Lady. Tomorrow I should say that
22 I anticipate the same sort of timescale. We have two
23 live witnesses and potentially a very brief reading.

24 LADY SMITH: One statement still to read.

25 I am going to rise now until tomorrow morning at

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