
HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE INQUIRY

being heard before:

SIR ANTHONY HART (Chairman)

MR DAVID LANE

MS GERALDINE DOHERTY

held at

Banbridge Court House

Banbridge

on Monday, 11th May 2015

commencing at 10.00 am

(Day 119)

MS CHRISTINE SMITH, QC and MR JOSEPH AIKEN appeared as
Counsel to the Inquiry.

Monday, 11th May 2015

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2 (10.00 am)

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Speech re Timetable from CHAIRMAN

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CHAIRMAN: Ladies and gentlemen, before we start this

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morning's scheduled business, and because we are

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approaching the end of Module 4, I would like to take

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this opportunity to say something about the Inquiry's

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programme over the coming months.

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By the end of this module we will have completed the

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public hearings into five of the thirteen institutions

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that we announced in September 2013 that we would

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investigate. In addition, we had public hearings in

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September last year to investigate the way children from

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Northern Ireland were sent from Northern Ireland to

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Australia under the Child Migrant Scheme.

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Today we wish to announce that we are adding three

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more institutions to the list and one individual,

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bringing the total of homes and matters to be

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investigated to eighteen.

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Fort James and Harberton House, both statutory homes

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in Londonderry, will be dealt with together in Module 5,

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which will take place next month.

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It will be followed by Module 6, which will examine

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issues arising from the actions of Father Brendan Smyth

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in a number of homes in Northern Ireland, actions which

1 have been described by a number of witnesses who have
2 already given evidence to the Inquiry. This module will
3 follow directly after Module 5 and will complete our
4 schedule of public hearings for the first half of this
5 year.

6 At the beginning of September we will resume public
7 hearings with Module 7, during which we will hear
8 evidence relating to three of the institutions we have
9 already announced, namely, St. Patrick's Training
10 School, Lisnevin Training School and Rathgael Training
11 School. We are adding Hydebank Young Offenders Centre
12 to the list of institutions we are going to investigate,
13 and it will also be considered in Module 7, which we
14 anticipate will last until November.

15 It will be followed by Module 8, which will deal
16 with two homes runs by Barnardo's, Sharonmore and
17 Macedon, and that module will take us up to the end of
18 this year.

19 Well, ladies, and gentlemen, we are going to rise
20 for a few moments and hopefully we will then be in
21 a position to deal with whatever witnesses may wish to
22 place before us by way of submissions.

23 (10.15 am)

24 (Short break)

25 (10.45 am)

1 SISTER BRENDA (called)

2 CHAIRMAN: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Before we
3 start this part of this morning's proceedings can I just
4 remind everyone to ensure that their mobile phones have
5 been either turned off or placed on "Silent"/"Vibrate",
6 and I also remind you that no recording or photography
7 is allowed either in the chamber or anywhere on the
8 Inquiry premises.

9 Yes, Ms Smith.

10 MS SMITH: Good morning, Chairman, Panel Members, ladies and
11 gentlemen. Before we start with our first witness this
12 morning, Sister Brenda, there are a number -- it was
13 scheduled on the timetable this morning that we would
14 receive oral submissions from those against whom
15 allegations have been made.

16 We have been informed by a number of them that they
17 don't wish to make any written or oral submissions, and
18 those are NHB84, HIA147, HIA192, DL269, NL63 and SR148.

19 In addition, we have received written submissions
20 from a number of people who do not wish to make oral
21 submissions, and those are NL114, NL52, NL122, HIA430,
22 NL5 and NL4.

23 We have received no response to our invitation to
24 make oral or written submissions from DL209 and HIA363.

25 CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

1 MS SMITH: Now Sister has given evidence on two previous
2 occasions. So there's no need for her to take the oath,
3 Chairman.

4 CHAIRMAN: Yes.

5 Questions from COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY

6 MS SMITH: Good morning, Sister.

7 **A. Good morning, Christine.**

8 Q. As I've just indicated, you gave evidence in Module 1
9 and Module 2 to the Inquiry. Just to confirm you are
10 speaking on behalf of the Congregation in respect of
11 those matters that the Inquiry is dealing with, but you
12 yourself have had no involvement, either directly or
13 indirectly, with either of the two Belfast homes --

14 **A. That's correct.**

15 Q. -- that we're investigating in this module?

16 **A. Correct.**

17 Q. I'm just wondering, Sister, do you ever remember
18 visiting them?

19 **A. I think on one occasion when I was in -- stationed in
20 Dublin we came up for a visit, just a friendly social
21 visit.**

22 Q. But it wasn't as part of a visitation --

23 **A. No, no, no.**

24 Q. -- or anything like that?

25 **A. No.**

1 Q. And do you have any -- can you honestly recall any
2 impressions?

3 **A. I don't really recall now. I remember just going in the**
4 **back door of Nazareth House, but I can't really recall**
5 **anything about it.**

6 Q. Well, in Module 1 you gave evidence about the homes run
7 by the Congregation in Derry. On that occasion you gave
8 the Inquiry general information about how the
9 Congregation operates and you covered a number of
10 general matters as to how Sisters were assigned to
11 homes, what training they may have had and how homes
12 were funded. You described the semi-autonomous nature
13 of each of the homes. You will be glad to know that
14 I am not going to go over all of that ground again, but
15 your evidence was given on Days 35 and 36. That was
16 19th and 20th May of 2014, almost a year ago, bar
17 a week.

18 **A. Uh-huh.**

19 Q. You have made a number of statements to the Inquiry, not
20 only those dealing with general matters, but in this
21 module you have given at least one individual response
22 to every applicant who spoke about their time in either
23 of the two Belfast homes run by the Congregation. Just
24 to be clear, Sister, the Inquiry has read all of those.
25 Certain paragraphs of them were put to the witnesses, as

1 I'm sure you heard as we went through it.

2 **A. Yes.**

3 Q. So there's no need to go into any of the details that
4 are in those statements.

5 One other matter, though, about those response
6 statements, Sister, is in Module 1 on behalf of the
7 Congregation you gave an apology to those who were
8 either maltreated or hurt while in the care of the
9 Congregation. The point was made by me to you at that
10 time that that was by way of a generic apology on behalf
11 of the Congregation rather than an apology to
12 individuals, and from speaking to you I know that you
13 tried to address that in the response statements by
14 offering an apology to that individual for any behaviour
15 which fell below the acceptable standard, even though in
16 most cases you were not accepting all of the allegations
17 made.

18 **A. Yes. Sadly some accepted, and some didn't, but all we
19 can do is offer an apology.**

20 Q. So if I've read you right, that last paragraph in each
21 of those response statements was an attempt to redress
22 the lack of individuality of the apology. Is that
23 right?

24 **A. Absolutely, yes.**

25 Q. Well, Sister, in Module 1 you did address a number of

1 complaints made by those who spoke to the Inquiry. In
2 this module you have addressed each of those complaints
3 in those individual response statements, and while
4 certain complaints were accepted on behalf of the
5 Congregation, others were refuted.

6 Now I just wanted to talk a little bit about
7 a couple of complaints that we have heard of, because
8 many of the complaints were common to both Module 1 and
9 Module 2 -- sorry -- Module 4, as well as indeed Module
10 2, which covered both the Derry homes and the Belfast
11 homes. One of those was the humiliation of children who
12 wet the bed or the use of Jeyes fluid in bath water.

13 One of the complaints that seems to have had
14 a particularly lasting effect on those who have spoken
15 to the Inquiry was the separation of siblings and the
16 lack of encouragement for families to come to visit.

17 Now you gave an explanation on the last occasion
18 that in the early days it was normal to separate
19 children according to age and gender. You say that
20 efforts were made to maintain family relationships. Now
21 we know that in Derry the two homes were slightly more
22 physically distant than those in Belfast. Yet there
23 doesn't seem even with the Belfast homes that were in
24 relatively close proximity to have been any formal
25 attempt to ensure that siblings were kept in touch.

1 I was wondering was there anything you wanted to say on
2 behalf of the Congregation about that?

3 **A. Well, we have heard evidence here in court that some did**
4 **keep contact with their siblings on the way back from**
5 **school or they met them at school. So as -- formal**
6 **times, Sisters did bring the children from the House**
7 **down to the Lodge, because that's where the playing**
8 **field was, and having spoken to some Sisters, that**
9 **actually happened. How often I can't say, but certainly**
10 **it did happen according to Sisters I have spoken to,**
11 **because of the play area that was in the Lodge and not**
12 **in the House.**

13 Q. One of the things, Sister, we were talking about when
14 I spoke to you last Friday was the fact that we were
15 wondering when the movement actually took place from the
16 old dormitory-style institutional buildings to try to
17 make it into a more family group.

18 I am just going to call up a couple of extracts from
19 the Chapters of the Congregation. Just to be clear, the
20 Chapters are the --

21 **A. The highest governing body of the Congregation. That's**
22 **what the Chapters are.**

23 Q. They would meet once every six years?

24 **A. Every six years, yes.**

25 Q. The first one is from 1952. That's SNB-9863. This --

1 the "1" is cut off there, but it should be "1952". This
2 is the Superiors' Session of 4th September 1952, and it
3 says:

4 "A session was held for the Superiors, who were
5 asked to make any suggestions they considered necessary
6 for the welfare of the Congregation. A Superior read
7 a letter she had received from a Home Office Inspector
8 regrouping the children in smaller numbers and placing
9 each of these groups under the care of a special Sister.
10 The dormitories were to be divided and each group have
11 its own bedroom and living room. All meals to be taken
12 together in a common dining room."

13 If we could just scroll to the next page, please --
14 that's 9864:

15 "Mother General said a beginning should be made to
16 carry out this grouping arrangement, and as more Sisters
17 are not available at the present time, secular help will
18 have to be employed."

19 Now I am just going to pause there, but -- so it
20 would seem that 1952 was the first time that the
21 Congregation had on its radar that the appropriate way
22 to deal with children was in family groupings.

23 **A. Yes.**

24 Q. Would it be fair to say, Sister, that whenever that
25 happened in individual homes, it would have been

1 a staggered ...?

2 **A. Most definitely, because the homes were so old and the**
3 **structure was so ... that it couldn't happen instantly,**
4 **and obviously money would be required to renovate the**
5 **homes to family group homes, and certainly in Northern**
6 **Ireland it didn't seem to be readily available that the**
7 **Sisters would have the money.**

8 Q. So it may have happened sooner in England --

9 **A. Certainly.**

10 Q. -- Scotland and Wales than it did in Northern Ireland?

11 **A. It did, yes.**

12 Q. There is one other line just here, Sister, which is of
13 interest generally to the Inquiry. It says:

14 "In boys' homes the Superiors should ask the bishops
15 to have boys of 11 plus sent to homes under the care of
16 Brothers."

17 That -- we have heard a lot that at age 11 boys
18 transferred from Nazareth Lodge to Rubane. We dealt
19 with that large -- some way in this module.

20 **A. I think the Sisters just felt really boys of that age**
21 **would need a man around and in those early days we**
22 **didn't have male staff. So that would be the reason for**
23 **that I would imagine.**

24 Q. Yes. Certainly this seems to have been the Chapter in
25 1952 that formed the decision to do that with boys.

1 One other extract from the Chapter, which is at
2 9865. This is from the 1970's Chapter. It is headed
3 "Works of the Congregation" and it is just talking about
4 children generally, but then -- and then it says:

5 "It was advisable to have Sisters trained as social
6 workers when personnel allows."

7 So certainly in 1970 the view was that children --
8 Sisters should be professionally trained.

9 "Babies.

10 It was thought that families should be kept together
11 wherever possible and even young babies should be in the
12 family group and not accommodated in the nursery
13 section."

14 So therefore we see another change in direction in
15 1970 with the babies who would have been separated from
16 their families, even though their families were in the
17 group session, it was recognised that it was better to
18 keep them all together from then on.

19 **A. Yes, but, I mean, we are talking a large number of**
20 **amount time here from '22 to '95. So in all those years**
21 **every decade would have a different view of how children**
22 **should be cared for. Like in the early days it was**
23 **quite normal for children to be in nurseries. In fact,**
24 **I actually worked in a residential nursery before**
25 **I joined the Sisters. That was for babies, and then**

1 **they progressed to toddlers and so it gradually went up.**
2 **So that was quite the norm in those days.**

3 Q. It essentially was -- I mean, I'm using these two
4 examples to show the development of thinking within the
5 Congregation --

6 **A. Yes.**

7 Q. -- as to how children should be cared for, and from 1952
8 the progress starts to be made to move towards family
9 group homes, and presumably by 1970 that was the norm --

10 **A. Yes.**

11 Q. -- but even then the progress is, "Well, let's move the
12 babies into these family group homes as well" --

13 **A. Uh-huh.**

14 Q. -- "to keep families together"?

15 **A. Where possible, yes.**

16 Q. Moving on to -- you will remember that there was --
17 I think it was around 1954, Sister, that there was
18 a Ministry of Home Affairs' document that has been
19 referred to previously in this module. I meant to check
20 the actual reference for that page, but neglected to do
21 so, but you remember there was an entry in I think it
22 was the Nazareth Lodge inspection maybe saying that the
23 Congregation was opposed to family group homes. It may
24 have been -- I can't remember the date, but from
25 recollection I think it was about 1954. I see

1 Mr Montague is nodding at me. So that would be right.
2 So even though the Chapter had decided in 1952 that this
3 was the way forward, in Northern Ireland the comment was
4 that Hammersmith was resistant to that.

5 I just wondered is that -- you know, was it perhaps
6 the Congregation here was resistant to it and might have
7 just told the Ministry that Hammersmith was resistant to
8 it?

9 **A. Could be possible, yes. Could be possible, and another**
10 **thing, I think the big thing was they didn't have the**
11 **money to renovate the house. That was the big issue.**

12 Q. Moving on then to another topic that we have heard
13 about, many have complained to the Inquiry about the
14 lack of education that they received, and the Inquiry
15 has quite clearly stated that it is not looking at the
16 standards of education provided by the Congregation in
17 schools, but the issue of judging or pigeon-holing
18 children, if I could put it that way, raised by many in
19 evidence we have heard suggests that only those who were
20 perceived to be able were encouraged in their education.

21 I mean, there was one girl, who didn't
22 take the opportunity to go to grammar school that was --
23 she was being encouraged to do, although there was
24 an issue there of the fact that it wasn't discussed with
25 her in advance that this was the reason she was changing

1 school, but others appear to have been written off as
2 educationally subnormal, if I can -- I mean, I know I am
3 putting it in stark terms -- I mean, that's reflective
4 of the evidence they gave to us -- when it was clear
5 with maybe greater encouragement they might have
6 achieved more. Others stated there was no homework done
7 in the childcare side of the home.

8 Is there any comment you want to make about any of
9 that, Sister?

10 **A. Well, Christine, knowing lots of our teachers, there**
11 **are -- one thing they are keen on is education,**
12 **education, education. The remedial class that SR134 had**
13 **I would have presumed would have come from her**
14 **experience and her expertise in that field and that's**
15 **why she was given the remedial class.**

16 Obviously later on inspectors would have come in and
17 educational psychologists, but in the early days I would
18 have presumed it was because Sister had an expertise to
19 try and bring these slow learners, or whatever the name
20 was, to bring them along, and certainly without a doubt
21 they would have had homework. As I say, our Sisters
22 were very keen on education.

23 **Q.** So can I take it from that, Sister, that you are not
24 accepting that children were pigeon-holed in the way
25 they have described?

1 **A. Pigeon-holed, I don't really like that word, but I think**
2 **were assessed in some form or some way by our teachers,**
3 **Sister teachers, and presume that they were put into the**
4 **appropriate class as was thought fit at that time and**
5 **hopefully -- hopefully they were encouraged. I mean,**
6 **I couldn't imagine SR134 just sitting back and letting**
7 **them do what they like in the class.**

8 **Q. Well, one other complaints -- other complaints that were**
9 **more specific to the Belfast homes rather than across**
10 **the four homes were, for example, the inspection of**
11 **underwear and the inadequate preparation for puberty.**

12 Now in respect of this aspect in statements you have
13 said that this was a difficult topic for Sisters to deal
14 with, and obviously earlier generations may have found
15 the whole topic difficult, but surely in some of the
16 homes dealing with mixed age groups there was
17 something -- this was something that clearly needed to
18 be addressed as children got older.

19 We have been told by yourself that many of the
20 Sisters were trained as nurses and I was wondering could
21 their medical training not have been put to good use in
22 preparing children for puberty and the developmental
23 changes that was going to bring about?

24 **A. Well, you've got quite a few questions in there,**
25 **Christine. I think the examination of underwear for**

1 whatever reason in those early days, nobody seems to
2 know why it was done. It was done, but certainly we
3 don't -- certainly don't think it was done to humiliate
4 children. As I say, why it was done nobody seems to
5 know. Just custom and practice or something. I really
6 don't know.

7 Sex education, as you know, even my own mother, she
8 wouldn't even talk about sex, an old Irish woman, and,
9 you know, it was a taboo subject. If you think in
10 relation to the church and their view of women -- and
11 I hope I don't start a row here -- but anyway women had
12 to go into church before they could go back to the
13 sacraments and everything after they had a baby. So
14 there was a suppression here of women and sex and the
15 whole idea of sex and sex education.

16 In those days, yes, Sisters would be very shy to
17 talk about sex, because it wasn't really understood in
18 the purity that it's meant to be. It was shunned as
19 a bad thing. So in latter years then it would have been
20 the key workers that spoke to the children or they were
21 given "My Dear Daughter" books and things like that,
22 yes.

23 As for Sisters in the nursing wing, we were very --
24 especially in days gone by, you just minded your own
25 unit, and there was a great -- I won't say secret --

1 guarding of your unit and sometimes you didn't know what
2 was going on in the other units. So unless a Sister was
3 really particularly friendly with one of the nurses who
4 may have gone over to speak to the children -- it could
5 have happened. I'm not saying it did; I'm not saying it
6 didn't. It could have. It may well have happened.

7 Q. Generally what you are saying was that the way Sisters
8 dealt with this issue was really no different to how the
9 matter was dealt with in society at this time?

10 A. **Absolutely. Absolutely.**

11 Q. If I might explore little bits with you, Sister, about
12 the religious life versus the work life of the
13 Congregation. You know that I did speak to some of the
14 Sisters as they came forward a little bit about how
15 their religious observance and obedience to the rule
16 impacted on child practices.

17 I was wondering what your view is. What was the
18 priority for the Congregation?

19 A. **Well, obviously we are religious Sisters and our first**
20 **and foremost commitment is to our religious life, but --**
21 **it's hard for you to get an understanding -- our**
22 **religious life is -- well, we have dedicated our life to**
23 **God, but through our prayer life -- we believe that our**
24 **ministry is a flowering of our prayer life and in no way**
25 **whatsoever did it interfere with religious life and**

1 professional life. It just didn't happen.

2 You know, it sounds like the Sisters were always
3 running off to church. Not so. If a Sister was --
4 obviously we had our time off and that's when we went to
5 our community exercises, but if something was happening
6 in a unit, if -- I don't know -- just say two children
7 were fighting or a social worker came in just at the
8 time when the Sister was due to go to church. She
9 wouldn't have said, "Oh, hold on. I can't see you now.
10 I will see you when I come back". She would have
11 stayed. Her common sense would prevail. She would stay
12 and sort out the issue or see the social worker or see
13 the relative or whatever. Then she would go off to her
14 church. So there's no way that our religious life
15 interfered. In fact, it enhanced our mission, our
16 ministry.

17 Q. Sister, I am going to look at a couple of documents that
18 we looked at when I spoke to you on Friday. The first
19 of these is a record of visitation in 1987. That's
20 SNB-12589. If we can scroll down there to -- this is --
21 sorry -- just pause and go through it just to give
22 an example of what a visitation record was like. If we
23 can scroll up to the top, please, just a moment. It is
24 the Report on Visitation of Nazareth Lodge, which took
25 place between 3rd and 13th November 1987. The council

1 meeting took place in connection with the visitation on
2 November 11th. So SR 229 , who was the Superior;
3 SR 230 , who was the first local counsellor; and
4 SR 52 , who was the second local counsellor;
5 and SR 231 was also present. So that was
6 at the council meeting that took place presumably.

7 **A. Uh-huh.**

8 Q. Just without reading everything out, "The observance of
9 rule and religious spirit" is the first thing that is
10 dealt with.

11 **A. Yes.**

12 Q. "The bursar's remark and the bursar's store" is then
13 reported upon. "The Sisters' part", which is the part
14 of the convent that was exclusively for the use of the
15 Sisters, and "The chapel". If we can scroll on down
16 then, please, "Linen room and laundry", "Books ordered
17 to be kept". Those are recorded there. Then
18 "Employments":

19 "The children are in three groups:

20 Bethlehem 1: boys 7, girls 5.

21 Bethlehem 2: boys 7, girls 6.

22 Sacred Heart: boys 4, girls 9.

23 Total: 18 boys, 20 girls.

24 Then it reads:

25 "The children are well cared for by the three

1 Sisters and staff, who are patient and dedicated. They
2 do all in their power to enable the children to grow and
3 develop in the best possible way. Their spiritual needs
4 are well catered for. A few of the older children are
5 trained in independent living. They do their own
6 budgeting, cooking, et, and a separate section of the
7 house is set up for this purpose. Many of the children
8 are difficult to manage, coming, as they do, from very
9 disturbed background. Great credit is due to the
10 Sisters involved in this work, but they should always
11 remember that their spiritual life be given first place.
12 They are reminded of this at the weekly meeting with the
13 Superior."

14 Now it seems to be that the visitator is saying,
15 "Okay. You are doing this work, but don't forget about
16 your religious life".

17 **A. And proper. So that's what visitation is all about,**
18 **making sure the Sisters are keeping to their dedicated**
19 **life, but also to make sure the children or the old**
20 **people are cared for. I mean, that's what you would**
21 **expect in a visitation.**

22 Q. But you wouldn't read this as saying then that the nuns
23 are to put their religious life above their work?

24 **A. Not above, no; in conjunction with.**

25 Q. Just another 1989 document then. Again it is

1 a visitation of Nazareth Lodge at 12602. Again it's
2 a similar report. If we can scroll down to the
3 "Employments" again. Yes. Just reading the middle of
4 that:

5 "The work is very demanding and time-consuming.
6 Still the spiritual life of the Sisters should always be
7 given priority. Sufficient staff should ensure that
8 this is so."

9 Now might that mean that in '87 and '89 the
10 visitor is of the view that, you know, these children,
11 who are difficult children -- teenagers with emotional
12 problems they are described as in this report -- might
13 it be that because they are taking up that amount of
14 time, that the visitor felt that the Sisters were
15 neglecting their religious side of their lives?

16 **A. Well, I would say to that remark, Christine, that if**
17 **that was the case and a visitor came to the house and**
18 **saw that the Sisters for whatever reason were not**
19 **fulfilling their religious obligations and, as you can**
20 **see here, she has said, "Ensure that there's enough**
21 **staff so that the Sisters can fulfil their obligations",**
22 **I would -- that's what I would read into that, but, as**
23 **I say, that's a nature of a visitation is to ensure that**
24 **the Sisters are keeping to their religious life.**

25 Q. Okay. Just scroll on down, please. I think there may

1 be another section of this report ... over the page.

2 Yes. In the "General remarks" it said -- maybe it
3 wasn't in this one. It might have been in the other
4 one. There was one when we were looking at it, Sister,
5 in one of the records where it basically was saying that
6 the -- it might even have been the one in '87 -- that
7 the Congregation would seriously have to consider
8 whether this work continue. You remember we were
9 looking at that on Friday?

10 **A. Yes, yes.**

11 MR MONTAGUE: It is on the previous page.

12 Q. Previous page. Sorry. Just scroll back up, please.
13 12602. Yes.

14 "The future of childcare in this house will have to
15 be considered."

16 Again is that a recognition that the job the
17 Congregation were finding themselves doing was maybe not
18 what they ought to be engaged in?

19 **A. May I ask what year that was, please?**

20 Q. That's 1989.

21 **A. '89, yes. I think the children that were coming in then**
22 **were very troublesome children and the numbers were**
23 **dwindling. So I would imagine, you know, obviously --**
24 **maybe the house wasn't viable. So if the house isn't**
25 **viable, then you've got to look at other means. That's**

1 **what I would surmise from that report.**

2 Q. But, I mean, this is in the context of the children and
3 the future of childcare in this house will have to be
4 considered, because essentially the children are
5 time-consuming. The work is very demanding and
6 time-consuming, and the Sisters are not able to give
7 their spiritual life the priority that it needs, and
8 therefore maybe they are not the best people to be doing
9 this work anymore. Is that a view that you would accept
10 at this time do you think?

11 **A. Well, I would still see that the children that were**
12 **coming in were more troublesome and maybe the Sisters**
13 **couldn't manage them, plus the numbers were dwindling.**
14 **So, therefore, the house wasn't viable.**

15 Q. I am going to move on to another topic, Sister, and
16 that's the physical chastisement of children. Now it's
17 been accepted by you on behalf of the Congregation that,
18 although the Congregation had a policy of no corporal
19 punishment, that was not always adhered to. Now the
20 evidence of witnesses and what we have seen from police
21 material suggests that there was a significant number of
22 Sisters who applied corporal punishment in a variety of
23 ways, some using implements, some just using their
24 hands, and there was some degree frequency in respect of
25 some of those.

1 Now while instances have been reported that when
2 Sister -- that Sisters maybe lost their temper, and
3 certainly that was the view that you gave in a statement
4 for Module 1, but that may be insufficient to explain
5 all of what the Inquiry has heard, Sister, that, you
6 know -- losing your temper is one thing, but there seems
7 to have been more a systematic use of corporal
8 punishment in respect of certain times and certain
9 Sisters.

10 In view -- I was exploring this with you the last
11 day. One of the vows the Sister takes is obedience and
12 obedience to the rule, and if it is a rule of the
13 Congregation that corporal punishment is not to be
14 administered, then how does that sit alongside the vow
15 of obedience?

16 **A. I think obviously there's been overwhelming evidence**
17 **that some Sisters, some Sisters, did use excessive**
18 **punishment on children, which we acknowledge and are**
19 **sorry for.**

20 How it sits with the vow of obedience, it's
21 a very -- it's a wee bit of a tricky question, because
22 I wouldn't see that as going against our vow of
23 obedience, because our vow of obedience is our own
24 personal religious life, not so much our professional
25 life, if you understand, but I have to admit if that's

1 **the slant you want to put on it, then yes, yes.**

2 Q. I just wondered, Sister, you know, obviously to
3 explore -- I know the vouch of obedience is about
4 obeying --

5 **A. Just, for instance, Christine, a vow of obedience,**
6 **I wouldn't be sitting here if I wasn't under obedience,**
7 **I can tell you that, but as for, you know, the little --**
8 **well, it's not little; I know it's not little --**
9 **smacking children, incidents like that, Sisters are only**
10 **human beings and, you know, incidents happen, and**
11 **unfortunately we admit that some Sisters were excessive**
12 **in their punishment.**

13 Q. I just wonder did they think that that policy was not
14 regarded -- was not binding on them in some way, or
15 perhaps it was seen as unworkable because of the need
16 perhaps to control large numbers of children?

17 **A. Well, I can't give you the answer for any particular**
18 **Sister. Everybody is to examine their own conscience.**

19 Q. Well, it was certainly never written down, but it was
20 a complete and utter understanding amongst the
21 Congregation that you didn't hit children.

22 **A. Absolutely. Absolutely, yes.**

23 Q. I suppose then if they did do that, then they were not
24 only in breach of that policy, but I suppose the
25 corollary of that is then they were not obeying those

1 people who were in charge of the Congregation.

2 **A. Yes.**

3 Q. I wondered, Sister, if there was any sort of --

4 I suppose in modern terms we'd call it a disciplinary

5 procedure. How did the Congregation deal with those

6 people who disobeyed the policies of the Congregation?

7 **A. Again we're speaking in two different lights here. You**
8 **know, breaking of vows, you know, personal vows, is**
9 **a different from professional disobedience, if you like,**
10 **and I don't know anyone personally that was ever**
11 **reprimanded or -- well, I do actually, one, and she was**
12 **just taken away from the children and given other work.**

13 Q. So that was really the default position? If it was
14 discovered --

15 **A. Yes, yes.**

16 Q. -- that a Sister was assaulting children, then that's --
17 she was just taken away from childcare?

18 **A. If the higher Superiors they heard of any Sister abusing**
19 **a child in any fashion, yes, she would be reprimanded,**
20 **might -- she certainly would be hauled in and taken to**
21 **task for such actions.**

22 Q. We have heard, Sister -- and again I am going to use
23 names, because it is easier rather than using the
24 designations -- but we have heard that appears to be how
25 SR18 was dealt with in respect of NL164, that she was

1 taken off childcare, or she accepted --

2 **A. Sister resigned.**

3 Q. -- herself -- yes, I was going to say she accepted that
4 it was time for her to go --

5 **A. Yes.**

6 Q. -- from that ministry, as it were.

7 **A. She has acknowledged herself she was at the end of her
8 tether, yes.**

9 Q. The other example is SR62, who we know was taken out of
10 Nazareth Lodge after a complaint had been made to her or
11 certainly the Mother Superior had matters brought to her
12 attention, and SR62 was taken away for a while and then
13 came back to work on reception in the home.

14 **A. Yes. She didn't go back to work with the children.**

15 Q. That issue -- and I will come back to that in more
16 detail, Sister -- because the issue of physical
17 chastisement of children raises issues of governance.
18 For example, what was known about what these Sisters who
19 were clearly not obeying the policy were doing and
20 really what ought to have been known? We have heard
21 that much of what was done to children was done openly
22 in front of children, in front of other staff and indeed
23 in front of some other Sisters, although Sisters have
24 said themselves that what went on in each other's
25 groups, they didn't really know what went on in each

1 other's groups or what the staff in those groups were
2 doing.

3 So that comes back, Sister, or leads me back to the
4 question of supervision and what degree of supervision
5 there was. Would you accept that the degree of autonomy
6 that was given to each group was maybe not a good idea?

7 **A. Certainly, yes. I think in earlier days there was no**
8 **supervision that we know today, no formal supervision**
9 **other than the Superior walking around, and if she saw**
10 **something, I'm sure she corrected it, and, as you say,**
11 **each unit was autonomous in their own right really, and**
12 **I shouldn't imagine any Sister would want the Superior**
13 **to know that she was smacking children. I'm quite sure**
14 **of that, and if that was the case that the Superior did**
15 **find out, the Sister would certainly be taken to task.**

16 **Q. Well, do you think yourself, Sister, that other Sisters**
17 **would have known what was going on in the other groups?**

18 **A. Sometimes yes, they would have, because obviously**
19 **sisters are like family. So they talk among each other,**
20 **but, you know, like in latter days we did have**
21 **supervision, organised proper supervision, not that we**
22 **have -- we didn't have in those days, though.**

23 **Q. Well, the Mother Superior would have had ultimate**
24 **responsibility for what went on in the home --**

25 **A. Yes.**

1 Q. -- but it does appear -- it doesn't appear that she
2 spoke to the Sisters in any sort of regular way or had
3 staff meetings or joint meetings with the group of
4 Sisters who were in charge of children together, for
5 example.

6 **A. I can only speak -- my experience is they did. They**
7 **certainly did, but maybe in days gone by they didn't,**
8 **but they certainly would have, and we would have had**
9 **regular meetings with the Superior and the Superior**
10 **would certainly talk to the Sisters.**

11 Q. I suppose then, Sister, what I am asking you is whether
12 or not you accept there ought to have been a system
13 which ensured greater control over what went on in the
14 groups?

15 **A. Obviously looking back now -- hindsight is a great thing**
16 **-- yes, certainly, yes.**

17 Q. And a system that would have ensured a greater
18 consistency of approach by those groups?

19 **A. Absolutely, yes.**

20 Q. That leads me on to look at two incidents that we have
21 heard about. We know from this module we have had much
22 more in terms of contemporaneous documentation in
23 respect of these homes compared to the Derry homes, not
24 only police material as a result of investigations that
25 were carried out following on from what had happened in

1 Rubane, but also most children from the 1960s onwards
2 seem to have had social work involvement and we have had
3 social services records.

4 So I am going to look at two matters in particular.
5 One involved SR62. That arose from a complaint by SR29
6 to Margaret -- by NL 20 , who was working in
7 the home. She complained -- a member of staff
8 complained to SR29.

9 I just pause to say, Sister, that we have from time
10 to time mentioned about complaints to the police, and it
11 is true to say that in respect of SR62 ten people
12 complained to the police about her treatment of them,
13 but certainly in late 1979 it would appear that NL 20
14 NL 20 or, as she was known, NL 32 complained
15 to SR29 about SR62. She said in her police statement
16 that she told Sister that SR62 had been hitting children
17 and was wandering through the dorm naked. Then, as
18 I have said, SR62 goes away for a few months and then
19 returns to work in the reception area.

20 Now SR29 was interviewed by police, as you know, in
21 2012. She told police that when staff approached her,
22 she reported it to the Mother Superior, SR 63

23 SR 63 and confirmed in her evidence to the Inquiry
24 that she had done that, but she said that staff only
25 told her they had concerns about SR62 and they said they

1 were worried for the well-being of children in the unit.

2 Now whatever she knew or whatever SR 63

3 SR 63 discovered when she investigated, that caused
4 her to remove SR62 from childcare.

5 **A. Well, I believe if SR29 told SR 63 , SR 63**

6 SR 63 would not have the authority to remove SR 62

7 So she obviously told the Regional Superior and it would
8 have been the Regional Superior that would have removed
9 SR62, yes.

10 Q. But would it have been the case that SR 63 would
11 have spoken directly to SR62, first of all, before
12 informing the Regional?

13 **A. I would certainly like to think so, yes.**

14 Q. So she -- whatever she discovered in speaking to SR62
15 caused her sufficient concern --

16 **A. Yes.**

17 Q. -- to elevate the matter, as it were, to Mother
18 Regional?

19 **A. Most certainly, yes, yes.**

20 Q. And then she is, as I say, removed from childcare. Now
21 we know at that time there was no apparent report to
22 either police about the matter or to Social Services.
23 This was clearly relevant to the care of children. It
24 was something that would you accept ought to have been
25 reported at that time?

1 **A. Absolutely, yes.**

2 Q. The other thing that -- we have received -- there is
3 a document which we were looking at. This was the
4 investigation that was subsequently carried out in later
5 years by SR143. I know that you were present when that
6 was opened to the Inquiry last week, but the document is
7 at SNB-51778, please, if we could just call that up.
8 This is a note of SR143's investigations that she
9 carried out. 51778.

10 You recall, Sister -- and I just going to summarise
11 -- that there were three people by this stage who were
12 making complaints about their treatment in the home and
13 they were NL97, NL 145 and HIA210. The Chief
14 Social Work Adviser in the Department had asked SR143 to
15 carry out investigations. She did that and then she was
16 asked to carry out further investigations, which she did
17 do. She is writing to Mr Armstrong in July 1986 saying
18 that she has:

19 "... conducted exhaustive inquiries about this
20 matter and have interviewed the following people."

21 You see there that one of the people she interviewed
22 was NL 32, and if we can scroll on down, the other
23 was SR29, and if we can scroll to the next page, she
24 also interviewed SR62 herself.

25 **A. Yes.**

1 Q. If we can scroll on down, please, to the next page, and
2 she said that she:

3 "... saw each person individually and conducted the
4 interview informally so as to set the interviewees at
5 ease. Conducted them in a format to take account of the
6 complaints raised specifically in the letter of 27th
7 May '86."

8 She goes on to say that:

9 "In respect of the allegations that SR62 had punched
10 HIA210 on the nose, none of the persons interviewed
11 could substantiate this statement and equally none of
12 the persons interviewed had ever seen any evidence or
13 incident which suggested that this had taken place."

14 Now I am going to pause there, Sister, because this
15 is quite clearly careful language:

16 "... none of the persons interviewed could
17 substantiate this statement and ... none of the persons
18 interviewed had ever seen any evidence or incident which
19 suggested that this had taken place."

20 So it is not a question of seen and heard or heard,
21 but it is just seen.

22 "None of the persons interviewed could throw any
23 light on the allegation that NL97 was struck by SR62 and
24 as a consequence banged his head off a wash-hand basin.
25 SR62 expressly denies that this ever happened."

1 Then if we can scroll on down, there is somebody
2 recalling an incident involving two boys where one gets
3 black eyes. Then:

4 "None of those interviewed had any knowledge of
5 beatings as described. All acknowledged that a child
6 might get a smack on the back of the hand and ^{NL 66}

 said on one occasion she saw SR62 give HIA210 a
8 slap on the hand with a wooden spoon."

9 Then they also saw giving him a box on the ear once
10 because he gave cheek and answered back, but nobody ever
11 witnessed somebody being locked in a cupboard.

12 If we can scroll on down:

13 "None of those interviewed could substantiate the
14 allegation that HIA210 was made to sleep in the
15 bathroom. They said they didn't believe such
16 an incident could take place.

17 None of those interviewed could substantiate the
18 statement in respect of cold baths being used as a
19 punishment.

20 None of those interviewed had ever witnessed nor
21 been aware of any child being deprived of food.

22 No-one was aware of the alleged incident in respect
23 of serving and eating of liver.

24 I also put as a general question to all those
25 interviewed had they ever witnessed any beatings,

1 brutality or abuse of the children in the home. They
2 all responded they had not. Several mentioned that
3 a child could be smacked occasionally on the hand for
4 misbehaving, but that such an event was very rare."

5 Mention of the wooden spoon. So it goes on, but it
6 is clear from a statement that the Inquiry has received
7 this morning that whatever was said to SR29, she was
8 spoken to by SR143, because she has given a statement.
9 If we can look at that. I hope it is in the bundle by
10 now. It is SNB-2295. Yes, it is. Now I know that
11 Sister has not signed the statement, but she is aware of
12 the content and will sign it when she has the
13 opportunity. She looked at the correspondence from
14 SR143 regarding the investigation carried out about
15 allegations against SR62:

16 "I have previously spoken of concerns raised with me
17 by staff from SR62's group. I reported these to the
18 Superior, SR 63 and I recall SR62 stopped
19 working with children and returned to work in the
20 parlour. I was not involved in any discussions at the
21 time SR62 stopped working with the children and cannot
22 give any evidence about what was done at that time.

23 I do recall speaking to SR143 about the allegations
24 some years after these events. I was in Dublin at the
25 time. I told her all that I could recall about the

1 events, including telling her that I had reported the
2 concerns raised by the staff. I cannot recall giving
3 SR143 the names of the staff, but I note from her letter
4 that she had spoken to them, so I may well have passed
5 on that information.

6 I did tell her that SR62 had stopped working with
7 the children after those complaints. I do not recall
8 the conversation I had in any detail. If SR143 had
9 asked me about the events or if I had witnessed any
10 behaviour, I would have said that. I had not -- I had
11 not seen anything which caused me concern and my only
12 information came from the concerns raised with me by the
13 staff. I can say that I would have taken any concerns
14 I had to the Superior, had I witnessed anything."

15 So there seems to be some issue as to what exactly
16 SR143 might have been told in the sense that we know
17 from the police statement that NL 32 later gave to
18 the police she said she told SR29 more detail than SR29
19 has recalled being given.

20 **A. I don't think she was -- she just recalled the staff**
21 **telling her that there were concerns about the welfare**
22 **of the children, but I -- she doesn't say that they told**
23 **her anything other than that and she said she reported**
24 **it to SR 63**

25 Q. Yes, I appreciate that. What I am saying to you,

1 Sister, is that certainly NL 32 told the police in
2 1995 or 6 I think it was that she had witnessed welts on
3 a child's back and that that had been caused by SR62.
4 Now whether she actually told SR143 that or not is
5 unclear.

6 **A. I can't comment. I wouldn't know.**

7 Q. No, I appreciate that, Sister. I am not asking you to,
8 but it clearly suggests that SR143 did speak to these
9 people. She either did receive that information from
10 them and didn't pass it on or else they were not giving
11 her that information. You would accept that it was one
12 of the two?

13 **A. Well, if she did have the information, she should have**
14 **passed it on. There's no doubt about it, but I can't**
15 **comment whether she did or whether she didn't.**

16 Q. No, I appreciate that, Sister. Certainly SR29, SR29,
17 has said she told her what she did know --

18 **A. Well --**

19 Q. -- and if she gave her the name of the staff members who
20 were expressing concerns and she interviewed them, then
21 assuming that they did tell her what they later told
22 police, then that would have been information that she
23 ought to have passed on?

24 **A. Absolutely.**

25 Q. But we don't know for sure whether that happened or not.

1 **A. Don't know.**

2 Q. The other matter was in 1974, Sister. Sorry. I was
3 just wondering if she didn't pass on -- if she did have
4 that information and she didn't pass it on, could you
5 explain why she might not have?

6 **A. Sorry. Who are we talking about now?**

7 Q. SR143. If SR143 in 1986 --

8 **A. SR143.**

9 Q. -- had been given the information that was later given
10 to the police and didn't pass that on, can you offer
11 an explanation as to why she might not have done so?

12 **A. Well, all I can say is, you know, we are family, and**
13 **maybe she was trying to protect Sister, but that's just**
14 **my summing up of it. I don't know why -- why she**
15 **wouldn't have, but she should have given that**
16 **information.**

17 Q. Even though by this time SR62 was no longer involved --

18 **A. Yes.**

19 Q. -- she was retired and no longer involved in childcare?

20 **A. Absolutely, yes.**

21 Q. Now the other matter just I was going on to was 1974.
22 That involved SR18 wanting to move a child, HIA62, from
23 Nazareth House to Derry.

24 **A. Uh-huh.**

25 Q. The social worker for the child didn't think that was

1 a good idea.

2 **A. Uh-huh.**

3 Q. Her school and her family were all in Belfast. The
4 child, when she was told that she was being moved from
5 Nazareth House, asked if she could go to Nazareth Lodge,
6 where SR153, who'd previously cared for her, was. We
7 know that SR153 spoke to the Mother Superior in Nazareth
8 Lodge, who agreed to take the child. Then SR18 and
9 SR199 are recorded as not being happy about that. Then
10 SR31 -- and I am summarising, you appreciate, Sister,
11 but you know the incident I am talking about --

12 **A. Yes.**

13 Q. -- SR31 then informs the social worker that the
14 Superiors were agreed that she should not -- that a
15 child could not be moved from one Nazareth home to
16 another, and that was backed up by the new Mother
17 Superior. Now.

18 Now I am suggesting that episode demonstrates
19 a number of things. One of the first things is that the
20 policy of moving Sisters from one home to another
21 without any regard for the children that they were
22 looking after could have a detrimental effect on that
23 child and the break in continuity of care might have had
24 on the child itself psychologically and also on the
25 child's behaviours. We heard an example of that with

1 SR30 and HIA41, as you know.

2 So I am just -- would you accept that that policy of
3 moving Sisters displayed a lack of understanding of what
4 was in the best interests of the child?

5 **A. Yes, yes, yes, but I think Sisters, especially in the**
6 **earlier days, were moved round quite constantly actually**
7 **for a number of reasons really. You know, one could**
8 **have been made Superior or one could have gone to**
9 **a course. So, you know, one vacancy makes place for**
10 **another one. So there would be reasons why they -- they**
11 **wouldn't just be moved round willy-nilly. There would**
12 **be a reason why they were moved, and also -- in actual**
13 **fact I firmly believe, especially in the early days, one**
14 **of the reasons was that they wouldn't form any lasting**
15 **attachments.**

16 Now looking back, yes, certainly it was detrimental
17 to the children, but don't forget in all -- even social
18 workers moved around frequently. So in any organisation
19 there's always movement, but having said all that, there
20 was usually a senior Sister who was left in post for
21 quite a long time and didn't get moved. So there was
22 some kind of stability and obviously the staff would be
23 there. So they just -- you know, but I take your
24 meaning that, yes, it was bad for the children.

25 **Q. Does this incident always display -- also display**

1 a refusal to accept the challenge to the authority of
2 the Sisters and the Congregation by social workers?

3 **A. It may well have done, yes, yes. It may well have done.**

4 Q. Particularly the social worker and by someone within the
5 Congregation indeed who was perceived to be soft on
6 discipline by the other Sisters. That challenge
7 wasn't -- SR153's willingness to take this child was --

8 **A. I think any Sister would do their best to help any child**
9 **and I think Sister -- the new Superior obviously was led**
10 **by SR31, who was there a long time and was first**
11 **counsellor and had a big sway on things.**

12 Q. She clearly wielded a great degree of control in this
13 situation.

14 **A. Absolutely, yes.**

15 Q. As you've indicated, she wasn't the Mother Superior.

16 **A. But she was first counsellor.**

17 Q. She was a counsellor and her status as first counsellor
18 I think you were describing it to me was as a Deputy
19 Superior.

20 **A. Well, especially to a new Superior, who wouldn't know**
21 **the ins and outs of the house whereas SR31 was there**
22 **a long time. So she was well grounded and obviously had**
23 **big clout.**

24 Q. Well, Sister, I am going to leave that for the moment
25 and then ask you a little bit about the Monitoring

1 Committee and the Management Committee. Now I know that
2 this is clearly outside your knowledge, because it is
3 not necessarily something that happened in other homes
4 in which you were involved --

5 **A. No. That's right.**

6 Q. -- but you gave a statement of 23rd March 2015 in
7 response to a request about the Monitoring Committee and
8 how it was set up and so forth, but when we look at your
9 statement, it is clear that what you are describing is
10 not, in fact, the Monitoring Committee but the
11 Management Committee that was set up in 1987. I know
12 from speaking to you that you relied very heavily --

13 **A. On Mr Kinder.**

14 Q. -- information given by Mr Kinder in respect of that.
15 He is going to give evidence to the Inquiry. So we will
16 be able to explore more about that with him.

17 But just going back to the Monitoring Committee, it
18 was set up in October 1984 in advance of the
19 Congregation giving evidence to the Hughes Inquiry. The
20 Management Committee came much later after the Hughes
21 Inquiry report. So I know I am giving you this
22 information --

23 **A. Yes.**

24 Q. -- but I am just going to look at a couple of things
25 that were said by the Congregation to the Hughes Inquiry

1 so that the Panel have these.

2 The first page I am going to look at is 50043. This
3 is a letter to the Solicitor to the Inquiry, to the
4 Hughes Inquiry, from the Congregation's -- in fact,
5 I think it is written by SR143 -- no -- SR220, who was
6 Mother Regional at the time.

7 **A. Uh-huh.**

8 Q. You will see that she has addressed a number of issues
9 that had been asked of the Congregation at this time.
10 For example, she gives the management structure and the
11 description of the home. At this stage it is Nazareth
12 Lodge, because Nazareth Lodge was the only home that
13 featured in the Hughes Inquiry. Nazareth House did not,
14 because the Inquiry was looking at the homosexual abuse
15 of boys in homes in Northern Ireland. So -- but it does
16 say here that:

17 "The home in Belfast is known as Nazareth Lodge.
18 Sisters began their work there in 1900. Nazareth Lodge
19 presently provides a pleasant home for approximately
20 forty children and the cost of running the home is
21 approximately 300,000 per year."

22 It goes on to talk about staffing and it says:

23 "The ultimate responsibility for the home rests with
24 the Mother Superior (Sister-in-Charge), who is appointed
25 for a period of six years by the Mother General, who is

1 based in Hammersmith, London."

2 **A. That's wrong to begin with.**

3 Q. That's wrong.

4 **A. Yes. Superiors are appointed for a period of three**

5 **years and may be reappointed for another three years.**

6 **So that's six years in total. Then for exceptional**

7 **circumstances, which might be and usually is if there's**

8 **building going on in the house, then they are appointed**

9 **for a further three years, which would be nine years in**

10 **total.**

11 Q. It talks about in addition to the eighteen caring staff,

12 the Sisters, the houseparents looking after between ten

13 and fourteen child in each group, further supportive

14 staff in the house, catering, cleaning and laundry, etc.

15 Then the next page, if we can scroll down to

16 "Line management structure" and -- oops! -- it says:

17 "An outline of the management structure is attached

18 together with a small booklet about the Order."

19 We will look at the outline that was attached,

20 because you make the point it is even incorrect:

21 "As the structure shows, while the Mother Superior

22 is directly responsible to the Mother General in

23 Hammersmith, the Order has a Sister designated Mother

24 Regional, who is based in Dublin. Her function is to

25 monitor the well-being of the Order's eight houses in

1 Ireland and her inspectorial role in this regard has
2 been carried out by visiting Nazareth Lodge on a regular
3 basis, approximately fifteen to twenty times per year.
4 She would be the person who would assume responsibility
5 for complying with Article 4(2) of the 1975 and Young
6 Persons (Voluntary Homes) Regulations.

7 Mother Regional's visits to Nazareth Lodge are
8 sometimes unannounced and on some of those visits she
9 stays overnight or for a few days at her own
10 discretion."

11 It goes on:

12 "The Sisters as a result of recent events in
13 childcare and before they knew they were involved in the
14 Inquiry saw as an emerging problem the possible
15 difficulty of a child being able to confide in those
16 with direct daily contact. With this in mind the
17 Sisters considered that additional monitoring was
18 necessary and have asked three persons to act in
19 a monitoring capacity within the home and to visit the
20 home regularly. The persons have been chosen because of
21 their social standing, their interest in the welfare of
22 children and in addition their professional background
23 will help them to undertake the task. The monitoring
24 team includes the General Practitioner to the unit

25 NL 123 a retired social worker in the

1 Department of Health & Social Services ([REDACTED] NL 35)
2 and the headmaster of the local school ([REDACTED] NL 42)."

3 Now that was a Monitoring Committee, Sister, that
4 was set up essentially whenever the Congregation knew
5 they were going to have to answer certain questions in
6 the Hughes Inquiry, because we know it was only set up
7 in October 1984, and it was in 1985 that evidence was
8 gathered by Hughes in public sessions.

9 Now if I can just then go to 50046. Sorry. Just
10 before that, the "Monthly visits" there, it just said:

11 "Please see (iii) above",

12 which is about the monitoring team and Mother
13 Regional.

14 Now this is what -- the management structure that
15 was given in evidence to the Hughes Inquiry.

16 Sorry.

17 "Monthly visits.

18 Please see (iii) above."

19 If we could go back then to 50046, Mother General
20 and counsellors; Sister-in-Charge, Nazareth Lodge;
21 Mother Regional. You made the point to me, Sister, that
22 this is incomplete, because Mother Regional would have
23 had two counsellors --

24 **A. Two counsellors, yes.**

25 Q. -- and the Sister in charge of the home would have had

1 two counsellors.

2 **A. Would have two counsellors, yes.**

3 Q. Then there were the groups, the three groups, the
4 houseparents and assistant houseparents, and then the
5 Medical Officer/General Practitioner, NL 123
6 is recorded there. That's essentially correct?

7 **A. Yes.**

8 Q. But then into this mix then is this monitoring team --

9 **A. Yes. That's right.**

10 Q. -- which is not recorded there either obviously, because
11 at that stage it had really only been set up.

12 In evidence to the Inquiry the Inquiry heard, first
13 of all, from SR220, who was the Mother Regional at the
14 time. I am just going to look at a couple of parts from
15 her evidence. She was -- she gave evidence -- I can't
16 recall the dates I'm afraid. I don't have that down.
17 If we look -- it was in mid-1985 when she gave evidence.

18 If we look at SNB-50093, and at this stage she is
19 answering questions from Mr Cahill, who was the counsel
20 engaged by the Congregation on their behalf. She says:

21 "In the beginning we were completely voluntary and
22 had to build the services through our own efforts and
23 voluntary contributions from the people of Belfast. In
24 the early 1970s the Department Health & Social Services
25 began to take an interest in us and give us grants and

1 the different area Boards pay us a per capita rate which
2 in the beginning was small and as time went on it
3 increased and now we receive £147 a week towards the
4 maintenance of the children and the buildings."

5 Now even this was incorrect, Sister, because we know
6 that Social Services' involvement was much before the
7 1970s and there was a per capita payment being paid
8 quite early on --

9 **A. In the '60s.**

10 Q. -- in Nazareth Lodge's history. She said that the
11 running the home, everything connected with the home in
12 that year cost £350,000 to run the home.

13 She made the point that 3662 children had gone
14 through the home since the beginning of the century.
15 That was in 1985.

16 Then if I can just go to another page of her
17 evidence and that's at 50096. She is cross-examined by
18 Mr Kennedy, who was Counsel to the Inquiry. 50096.
19 Yes. If we can scroll down, he is asking her about her
20 familiarity with the legislation governing the use of
21 voluntary homes. He said about the regulations that
22 came in in 1975 and he asked:

23 "Q. So when did you first read those?

24 **A. In the mid-'70s I would say."**

25 **He asks:**

1 **"Q. Are copies of these regulations kept in each**
2 **house?**

3 **A. Yes, in each house.**

4 Q. And do Sisters have access to them?

5 **A. They do, yes.**

6 Q. But it would appear, Sister, that even though
7 the copies were there, they may not have been reading
8 them."

9 He goes on:

10 "Q. Are they encouraged to read them?

11 **A. They are encouraged to read them, yes. We have**
12 **meetings where we discuss those things."**

13 **Now those meetings would have presumably been the**
14 **Mother Superior and the counsellors, or would they have**
15 **involved all of the Congregation?**

16 **A. I would have thought they would -- I would have thought,**
17 **Christine, they would have involved the Sisters with the**
18 **children too.**

19 Q. Okay. Mr Kennedy goes on:

20 "There is perhaps, it might have occurred to you,
21 a possible conflict in the administration structures in
22 that the Act and regulations seem to envisage a certain
23 management structure whereas you have inherited and
24 operate the structure of government, if I may call it
25 that, which is referable to the nuns. Isn't that right?"

1 **A. Yes.**

2 Q. For example, in regulation 4, which is on the
3 second page, we have some duties cast upon the
4 administering authority. Can you help the tribunal:
5 what is your view as to the identity of the
6 administering authority with reference to Nazareth
7 Lodge? Is it the Order generally, or is it the Sister
8 in charge here, or is it the Mother Regional? Who is
9 the person who would take decisions over the head of the
10 Sister in charge, if that should ever become necessary.?

11 **A. Well, our top management is in Hammersmith. We**
12 **get our directions from there, but whenever a house is**
13 **situated we follow the regulations of that area in the**
14 **Eastern Board.**

15 Q. Who is the administering authority?

16 **A. The Mother Superior deals with the day-to-day**
17 **business of the home, but she has to refer things to**
18 **Hammersmith in London and she has to refer things to me**
19 **as well, where big decisions would be made."**

20 It goes on to explore what she means by that. Then:

21 **"Q. Supposing a complaint were made by someone or**
22 **an allegation were made that the administering authority**
23 **of that home on the Ormeau Road were not carrying out**
24 **their job properly -- I'm not suggesting that is the**
25 **situation -- who would answer for that? Who would meet**

1 **the allegations?**

2 **A. There would have to be an investigation. It**
3 **would have to be investigated straightaway.**

4 Q. But who would regard themselves as the person
5 being criticised? Who is the person within the Order,
6 the person or persons to whom this Order would be made
7 for answers or for improvement? Would it be the Order
8 in London, the Order in Dublin or would it be the Mother
9 Regional in Dublin? Who is the person or persons to
10 whom one would look?

11 **A. I suppose Dublin first.**

12 Q. Dublin first?

13 **A. Yes."**

14 Then what Mr Kennedy was trying to do was to tease
15 out from SR220, "Just who did have responsibility here?"
16 To be frank, Sister, and maybe you can or can't accept
17 this, she seems to be somewhat unclear as to who
18 actually was in charge.

19 **A. The Superior obviously is in charge of the house. The**
20 **Regional Superior -- the house Superior would be**
21 **accountable to the Regional Superior, and if there was**
22 **something untoward going on in the house, then it's the**
23 **Regional Superior's duty to inform the Superior General.**

24 Q. If we can just scroll on down, she then goes on to say
25 in answer to Mr Kennedy:

1 "Q. Well, then it would look as if the Mother
2 General in London is the administering authority from
3 that point of view."

4 If we can scroll down to the next page:

5 "A. Yes.

6 Q. And, of course, you know that the Mother
7 Superior as the person in charge has got certain duties
8 with regard to the compilation of records, etc. Isn't
9 that right?

10 **A. Yes, that's right.**

11 Q. So that the administering authority in the case
12 of Nazareth Lodge is in London?

13 **A. Yes.**

14 Q. And how often would she visit Belfast? Is there
15 any fixed time?

16 **A. Well, she makes a big inspection once every
17 three years. There is a regional inspection once every
18 three years as well as these monthly visits."**

19 She was asked whether written reports were given.

20 **"A. They were oral reports."**

21 Now we know that that changed and you have provided
22 us with typed visitation reports. Certainly those go
23 back to 1971. So in 1985 it wasn't just oral reports
24 that were being given of the visitation. There were
25 actually written reports being given.

1 **A. That's correct, yes.**

2 Q. So SR220 wasn't correct about that either.

3 **A. I think she was getting a bit muddled up or something.**
4 **I don't know.**

5 Q. Now if we go to the next page, which is 50100, just if
6 we can scroll through to the bottom of that where he is
7 talking about the regulations, he says:

8 "Now under regulation 4(2) the administering
9 authority, and I quote:

10 '... shall make arrangements for the home to be
11 visited at least once in every month by a person who
12 shall satisfy himself whether the home is conducted in
13 the interests of the well-being of the children, and
14 shall report to the administering authority upon his
15 visit, and shall enter in the record book referred to in
16 Schedule 2 his name and the date of his visit'."

17 SR220 was asked:

18 "Now is there a record book or was there a record
19 book that would fulfil that particular requirement kept
20 at Nazareth home?

21 **A. No, there wasn't, but there are some entries**
22 **where Mother Regional has signed her name or at least**
23 **somebody has made a record of Mother Regional visiting**
24 **on certain dates, but every date isn't written in."**

25 **This would have been in the foundation books of the**

1 home, Sister, that these things would have been
2 recorded.

3 "Q. Well, now it has to be done according to this
4 once every month.

5 A. Yes, I know that. We didn't notice that before,
6 but we know it now."

7 What she is saying there, Sister, is, "We had these
8 regulations. We had them from the mid-'70s, but ten
9 years later we are only just discovering what's in
10 them".

11 A. All I can say to that is I know for a fact that
12 Regionals go round. That's their job. That's what
13 they're there for, to go round the houses, and, you
14 know, very often they would go round the houses and not
15 sign the book and that's a fact. They weren't too good
16 at signing books. Only latterly they started to make
17 sure they signed books.

18 Q. I think the point that I am making here, Sister, is that
19 until the Hughes Inquiry started to look into what was
20 happening in these homes it was quite clear that the
21 Congregation were going on and doing things as they had
22 always done them in accordance with the rules of the
23 Congregation and the hierarchy of the Congregation with
24 not a great deal of regard to what the law was saying
25 they ought to have been doing. Would that be fair

1 comment?

2 **A. I think it's a fair comment, yes.**

3 Q. It was really only after the Hughes Inquiry comes into
4 being that they actually have to take stock of what they
5 were doing.

6 **A. Yes, I agree.**

7 Q. If we can scroll on down to the next page, it talks
8 about -- Mr Kennedy was talking about the written
9 submission that I just looked at from Mr Donaghue or --
10 sorry -- the letter to Mr Donaghue -- I beg your
11 pardon -- from SR220. He is asking her about who has --
12 in the letter it says that she would be the person who
13 would assume responsibility for complying with Article
14 4(2) just there at the top of that page. Mr Kennedy
15 says:

16 "Now, if I may say so, with respect, SR220, you are
17 putting that rather shyly, suggesting that she might be
18 regarded as the person who fulfils that duty rather than
19 that she does fulfil it in accordance with the letter
20 and spirit of the regulation. Would that be correct?"

21 Asked:

22 "Q. How often does Mother Regional visit?"

23 **A. Once a month or oftener. In 1984 I visited**
24 **thirteen times.**

25 Q. In 1983?

1 **A. I haven't a record of 1983. I had a record of**
2 **1984 in a desk diary that I have."**

3 **So again this is indicative of the fact that if she**
4 **had not kept her own diary, nobody would know how often**
5 **she had visited Nazareth Lodge in 1984 --**

6 **A. Correct.**

7 **Q. -- because nobody knows how often it was visited in**
8 **1983.**

9 Then he puts to her what is recorded in the Social
10 Work Advisory Group inspection of the home and they say
11 in that just below D there:

12 "'There is no Management Committee for the home and
13 full responsibility for the staff and children is vested
14 in SR143, the Mother Superior. She is also responsible
15 for all aspects of the running of the home and for the
16 Sisters of Nazareth who live there. In addition to the
17 Sisters who work in Nazareth Lodge, there are some
18 others who work in the local schools and a few retired
19 nuns. SR143 is accountable to the Mother Regional, who
20 is based in Dublin. The latter visits the home three or
21 four times a year'."

22 SR220's response to that is:

23 "A. Yes, I saw that, but that is not correct."

24 **A. I would agree with her there, yes. She probably visited**
25 **more often, but it is not recorded.**

1 Q. Although you will recall SR148, when she gave evidence,
2 she has a recollection of Mother Regional visiting three
3 or four times a year.

4 **A. Yes, but I lived in Dublin and I know the Regional went**
5 **round more often than that.**

6 Q. She does say she doesn't know how they got the
7 impression that Mother Regional only visited three or
8 four times rather than, as you have said, fifteen to
9 twenty. She says:

10 "I don't know how they got that impression, because
11 nobody is surprised to see me in Nazareth Lodge at any
12 time."

13 Is it possible, Sister, that if Mother Regional came
14 up, she might only have gone and spoken to Mother
15 Superior and the other nuns might not have known she was
16 there? Is that how that impression might have been
17 formed?

18 **A. No, I don't think so, no.**

19 Q. Just one other -- again this is from the
20 cross-examination of SR220 by Mr Kennedy at 50104. He
21 is talking about the Sister in charge. He goes on to
22 talk about the role of the Sister in charge. He asks
23 the question there:

24 "Q. But she is at the top of the tree in the home
25 and she has to make a decision, which she can hardly

1 decide purely by overhearing a discussion amongst those
2 who are inferior to her in rank. I'm talking about
3 people above who can say, 'This is our direction. This
4 is our advice. This is the way you should handle it',
5 in other words, take away from her the burden of
6 decision to a certain extent. Do you think a Management
7 Committee would be of some assistance to her?"

8 Her response to that is:

9 "We think these three people that we have engaged
10 now will be a help in things like that. They have" --

11 **A. Sorry, Christine. May I --**

12 Q. Sorry.

13 **A. -- add the Superiors were always on the phone to the**
14 **Regional. So, I mean, she did have somebody to bounce**
15 **ideas off. She was not just left on her own, nor is any**
16 **other Superior left on their own. The Superior,**
17 **Regional Superior, is always there and always available.**

18 Q. And she had her two local counsellors, who she could
19 turn to as well.

20 **A. And the two local counsellors, yes.**

21 Q. I think what Mr Kennedy is putting to her is, "Well, you
22 know, what if you need advice outside of the
23 Congregation? Who do you have to turn to?"

24 That's there SR220 is saying, "We think that these
25 three people now will be able to help us with that."

1 He goes on:

2 "They have no specific statutory remit or no
3 particular function in the Order. They are purely
4 something that has been created. They don't have a
5 clear statutory duty in the running of the home, for
6 example. They could just say, 'Well, that's a problem
7 for yourself. Decide it whatever way you think fit'.
8 Does that not leave her very much alone and without
9 support from above in a temporal sense?

10 **A. She always gets support from her higher**
11 **Superiors",**

12 **as you have been saying.**

13 **Then just going down to the bottom of that page at**
14 **G:**

15 **"Q. You referred a moment ago to the monitoring**
16 **team which has been set up -- this is again in**
17 **paragraph (iii) on the second page of your original**
18 **submission -- and you give the names of those three**
19 **persons. When was that instituted?**

20 **A. Last October.**

21 **Q. Could you tell us briefly how it was decided and**
22 **who made the decision to have this assistance?**

23 **A. On account of this Inquiry we decided it might**
24 **be necessary to have someone outside the home to come,**
25 **that the children might be able to talk to them about**

1 **any problem they might have that they would not be able**
2 **to speak about with people who had direct contact with**
3 **them. That was the reason we started this group.**

4 Q. That seems to suggest that the provision or the
5 attendance of these three people would in case -- be in
6 case any of the residents wanted to discuss something
7 with somebody from outside?

8 **A. Yes.**

9 Q. But you had said that the Sisters considered
10 that additional monitoring was necessary and these
11 people were to act in a monitoring capacity. Who were
12 they going to monitor?

13 **A. The children I suppose and staff.**

14 Q. Lay and religious?

15 **A. When they visit the unit, they see the**
16 **houseparent and the assistant houseparents and they see**
17 **the children and they can form their own opinion."**

18 She is asked to repeat that.

19 "Q. First of all, who selected these three people?

20 **A. We selected them ourselves, SR143 and myself, on**
21 **account of their professional background and their**
22 **caring for children.**

23 Q. May I take it they were suggested by SR143 and
24 you endorsed the selection?

25 **A. Yes. I knew the teacher, yes, and I knew the**

1 doctor.

2 Q. According to this they visit the home regularly.
3 How often is regularly?

4 A. Twice a month at least and the doctor visits
5 once a week.

6 Q. He is visiting under his duty as a medical
7 officer. Is that right?

8 A. Yes, both. He talks to the children too. There
9 are three units and each of the people have a unit
10 each."

11 If we can scroll on down:

12 "Q. The submission seems to stress the essential
13 monitoring duty that they perform. Are they monitoring
14 the whole of the child services being given? Are they
15 monitoring the lay and religious staff?

16 A. Yes, each one in whatever group they are
17 assigned.

18 Q. How do they do that?

19 A. I suppose by talking to the people whom they
20 meet.

21 Q. Do they feel free to talk to anyone?

22 A. Yes. Lay staff, children or whatever. Yes,
23 they can talk to anybody.

24 Q. Having made an assessment, do they meet together
25 and make a report?

1 A. Yes. The three of them meet on their own and
2 write a report, and they are doing a report, which we
3 have not received."

4 He makes the point that:

5 "Q. It is nearly nine months since they were
6 appointed. How regularly would you foresee that this
7 body would make a report?

8 A. We were reckoning once every six months."

9 But nine months on there is no report forthcoming
10 from them, Sister. So, I mean, we will hopefully hear
11 more about the Monitoring and Management Committee in
12 due course, but it seems that this was something of
13 an ad hoc arrangement set up to try to address the fact
14 that the Congregation really hadn't been meeting the --

15 A. Standards.

16 Q. -- statutory requirements.

17 A. I agree.

18 Q. Now I am just moving on, Sister. There is a couple of
19 other issues. I just want to talk about the workload.
20 I mean, evidence suggests that it wasn't satisfactory to
21 accept -- expect that those who taught in the schools
22 also cared for children. We know that that gradually
23 changed in Nazareth Lodge. I have already made mention
24 of the fact that SR30 was relieved of her duties for
25 childcare to concentrate on teaching in the mid-'70s,

1 but I was wondering why it took so long for the
2 Congregation to come to the realisation that this was
3 too heavy a burden for the Sisters?

4 **A. Christine, I don't really know, to tell you the truth.**
5 **It was always the case that the Sisters in school cared**
6 **for children as well as far back as I can remember.**
7 **Maybe with all these new rules and regulations coming**
8 **out then the Congregation decided, you know, "We should**
9 **take some of this off the teaching Sisters and just let**
10 **them teach and get childcare Sisters to look after the**
11 **children".**

12 **Q.** I mean, from the evidence it would appear that those
13 people who had that double jobbing, as it would be known
14 now, would appear to have had little support in terms of
15 time off or training and supervision, and they were just
16 expected to shoulder that burden, certainly until the
17 later years.

18 **A. I think all Sisters worked very hard in our Congregation**
19 **and we had little time off in those days in any work**
20 **that we were in, and certainly, you know, I remember we**
21 **didn't have -- we had no days off at one time and we**
22 **just had like community days out. Then it went to half**
23 **days, and that was across the Board for any Sister no**
24 **matter where she worked, and then gradually it was a day**
25 **off, and that's the way the Congregation went.**

1 Q. We heard from SR52 that, in fact, in the early days you
2 weren't allowed to go home except maybe once every --

3 **A. That's true.**

4 Q. -- eight years.

5 **A. Nine years. That's right.**

6 Q. That then changed to four years.

7 **A. Then gradually went down. Now they're home every hand's
8 turn.**

9 Q. So the picture is, Sister, of a very over-burdened work
10 force.

11 **A. I agree, yes.**

12 Q. With no time off.

13 **A. Little time off. I wouldn't say no time off. Little
14 time off.**

15 Q. Certainly very little, and very little break in their
16 routine to allow them to recharge the batteries.

17 **A. Yes.**

18 Q. I also think -- perhaps, given that, it is perhaps
19 understandable that they found it excessive, and I am
20 just going look at a 1981 visitation entry at SNB-12555.
21 Scroll down through this, please, and I will find the
22 part of it.

23 **A. Do you know, having said that, we had our holiday time
24 and we had our retreat time, which was obviously
25 a period of rest as well. So although we did work hard,**

1 we did have recreation time for ourselves. Like, you
2 know, if the children were out at school, then the
3 Sisters were free, you know, to have a little catch-up
4 for themselves.

5 Q. This is just an entry, Sister, from the 1981 visitation.
6 It says:

7 "At this stage there are 56 children, 26 girls, 30
8 boys. Children well cared for. Seem very happy,
9 well-mannered and friendly. One or two present problems
10 on account of their backgrounds. Fostering is being
11 resorted to here, as in other countries."

12 That sort of suggests that, you know, fostering is
13 something new, but this is 1981, and fostering had been
14 the preferred option from certainly 1950 onwards.

15 **A. Yes.**

16 Q. Then it goes:

17 "It is recommended that children have a cooked
18 breakfast before going out to school",

19 but if we can scroll on down to the next page --
20 now I think we are going to have to rotate this, because
21 the typed part is -- if we could rotate that, page,
22 please, so that we can read the typewritten part of it.
23 That's actually the page -- the next page that needed to
24 be rotated, the -- yes, that one ending in 56. If you
25 can rotate that 180 degrees, please, clockwise.

1 Page 12556, if that page could be rotated 180 degrees.
2 It doesn't seem to want to work. It seems to keep
3 going back to the preceding page.

4 CHAIRMAN: Just read it out for us.

5 MS SMITH: Yes, I will certainly do that. In fact, I will
6 get the hard copy and then we can read from it.

7 CHAIRMAN: It seems to say:

8 "One Sister in charge of a group is past it."

9 MS SMITH: Yes. I just wanted to ask you a little bit about
10 that, Sister. This is in the section "General remarks"
11 and it was Mother SR 189 who had -- there. We have
12 it now. It says:

13 "Three children are on the permanent staff here.
14 This is run by the diocese ..."

15 Sorry. That's "The children's home". Then "General
16 remarks":

17 "One Sister is past caring for a group of children
18 and she will be taken from it. In October 1977 there
19 were five groups and one had to close down on account of
20 staff problems. This should be reopened with new staff
21 when alterations are made, as this might encourage the
22 Department to send more children. This will mean two
23 groups with housemothers (not Sisters) but they will be
24 supervised by a Sister."

25 I just wondered, Sister, about the "Sister past

1 caring for a group of children", what might be meant by
2 that by SR 189 ? Is that that she ...?

3 **A. She might be too old or she might feel herself that she**
4 **can't cope with them anymore.**

5 Q. That would be the reason why she would be just stood
6 down?

7 **A. Yes. No, she wouldn't be stood down. She would be --**
8 **there would be a discussion as to what she would like to**
9 **do next, but she certainly would be taken from the**
10 **children.**

11 Q. Just one of the other things that I wanted to put in
12 context, Sister, was that, you know, we have had various
13 information from social workers about the difficulties
14 they had in Northern Ireland during the Troubles, and
15 I am just going to look at a couple of the entries that
16 are in the council books for the home about some of the
17 things that were happening in the background to the
18 childcare, if I may.

19 One is at 12503. This is a 1969 entry. If I can
20 get the -- yes. On the first page here it is September
21 18th, I think, 1969. Just about halfway down that
22 page it says:

23 "Miss Forrest from the Department -- Ministry of
24 Home Affairs called on two occasions and expressed her
25 sympathy and concern for the Sisters and children. She

1 arranged with the Department to visit and gave
2 instructions to the Sisters and staff regarding petrol
3 bomb attacks."

4 So there was clearly unrest in 1969 in Belfast, as
5 those of us who lived through it are well aware, but
6 it's clearly been recorded in the foundation books and
7 there was concern for the Sisters and their safety from
8 the Department at that stage.

9 Then there's a visitation in 1973 at SNB-12521.
10 12521. I think it might be in the "General remarks" if
11 we can scroll down. Yes. Just the point about the
12 children:

13 "The children are lovingly cared for by the Sisters
14 and they are very happy and contented. The number of
15 children has decreased due to the fact that the welfare
16 social workers are unable to enter certain areas."

17 That was 1973. I am just going to look at
18 an incident in 1971 from the Nazareth House book, which
19 is at 10046. If we just look at the second page here,
20 it says:

21 "During the year we had a surprise visit from Her
22 Majesty's forces. It was on the night of August 1st.
23 They came as a result of a tip-off from a certain
24 newspaper that we had a room full of rifles.

25 The soldiers were very courteous and they felt the

1 message was a hoax, but they were obliged to carry out
2 their orders -- the orders given them. They carried out
3 their search without upsetting the old people. Of
4 course there were no rifles to be found. We are very
5 grateful to God that the Sisters have been preserved
6 from danger."

7 So those -- that's the kind of background of things
8 that were happening -- that was in 1971 -- and what was
9 happening outside the convent walls, as it were.

10 **A. Yes.**

11 CHAIRMAN: Just before we go on any further could I ask that
12 you go back, Ms Smith, to 12556? It's the passage you
13 were looking at where you heard that a Sister was past
14 it. I don't think we were told. Was that a visitation
15 of Nazareth House or Nazareth Lodge?

16 MS SMITH: Nazareth Lodge.

17 CHAIRMAN: Nazareth Lodge.

18 MS SMITH: Nazareth Lodge. I think it is on the preceding
19 page, Chairman.

20 CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

21 MS SMITH: If we can just scroll on up. I was wondering,
22 Sister, when we talked about this -- just if we scroll
23 up to the top of that page just to confirm. Yes. It is
24 a Report on the Visitation of Nazareth Lodge. We had
25 talked about this and wondered if that coincided with

1 SR62 being stood down from looking after children, but
2 this was clearly 1981--

3 **A. Uh-huh.**

4 Q. -- and she had been stood down in early '70s. 1974
5 I think it was.

6 Well, Sister, you will be glad to know that I am
7 coming to the end of my questions for you, but you will
8 know that the Inquiry has now heard ten weeks of
9 evidence and you have been here throughout that time.
10 You have given response statements, prepared those
11 before hearing the evidence. Those response statements
12 were prepared before you heard the evidence.

13 **A. That's right.**

14 Q. Now that you have heard the evidence and in light of
15 what you have heard I wonder whether there's anything
16 that is contained in those response statements, first of
17 all, that you might want to change or anything -- any
18 further comment that you want to make about the evidence
19 that you have heard.

20 **A. Well, it's been very harrowing, sitting up there at the
21 back, I can tell you, listening to some of this stuff,
22 and many a silent tear has been shed. I am sure it's
23 been very harrowing for the witnesses too.**

24 I certainly heard just last week from the
25 authorities that they had this light touch approach,

1 which I just can't understand, because if something is
2 wrong, it is wrong, and I think they did us a grave
3 disservice not telling the Superior or the Sister or
4 whoever it was that they found fault with, you know.

5 I'm just comparing it with my own experience, and if
6 the authorities came in and there was some non-appliance
7 in the residential or the nursing home, you would have
8 X amount of time to correct it, and the authorities
9 would be back on your tail to see if you had done that.
10 If you hadn't done it, there would be an embargo on the
11 house.

12 So I can't understand why the authorities here --
13 and I am not pointing a finger at anybody; far be it
14 from me to point the finger -- I just can't understand
15 how things were let go without correction, proper
16 correction and proper supervision by the authorities.

17 Obviously from the Congregation's point of view
18 I think we have had a shake-up, and certainly while we
19 acknowledge the wrongdoing that's gone on, and hopefully
20 we are looking at it now not to paralyse us but to move
21 forward and to right any wrong that has been done, and
22 hopefully justice will be done for these people, and
23 I think we have to look at our own -- the importance of
24 good management structure within the Congregation and
25 good communication and most certainly most of all

1 transparency.

2 I think we have seen evidence of this since the --
3 well, it really started in the 2000 Chapter and then
4 certainly since Sister Mary-Anne, our Superior General,
5 has come into vogue total transparency throughout the
6 Congregation and a big advocate of transparency.
7 Although she is not here in person, she certainly has
8 been following this Inquiry at every stage. As you can
9 see, Sister Cora, the Regional Superior was not here on
10 Friday or today, because she's had commitments that she
11 couldn't get out of, otherwise she would be here. So
12 they are -- in fact, the whole Congregation is following
13 it, as you can read it on the Internet.

14 So certainly we have had a shake-up, and
15 record-keeping is a big thing we are going to look into
16 as well, because our record-keeping, as you know, leaves
17 a lot to be desired.

18 Q. Your words, Sister!

19 A. Yes. Well --

20 Q. I think the Inquiry will certainly --

21 A. -- I think the Congregation acknowledges that fact.

22 Q. Well, Sister, just one other thing. Many of the
23 complaints we know are not accepted by the Congregation
24 and we know there will be submissions about some of
25 those in due course, but while not every witness was

1 consistent, can you offer an explanation for the range
2 and number of allegation that the Inquiry has heard
3 about?

4 **A. Can I offer any ...? Well, I can't really, because what**
5 **the applicants have said is what they have said and**
6 **I can't add any further to that.**

7 **Q.** Well, finally, Sister, if there's anything that you
8 haven't said before now, this is probably your last
9 opportunity to do so on behalf of the Congregation
10 unless we have to call you back for some reason, but
11 I know you wouldn't welcome that, but if there is
12 anything else, then now is the opportunity to take it.

13 **A. I think on behalf of the Congregation -- and I know**
14 **I have said this morning already and I repeat it again**
15 **-- we do offer a sincere and profound apology to anyone**
16 **who suffered any kind of abuse in our care and that is**
17 **sincere. Not only do we offer an apology now at this**
18 **stage. I think we have to turn to these people who we**
19 **have hurt and ask -- humbly ask their forgiveness for**
20 **our trespasses, humbly ask their forgiveness for our**
21 **trespasses in the past.**

22 I would like to take this opportunity to thank
23 Judge Hart and Ms Doherty and Mr Lane for their untiring
24 quest for justice, and Christine and Joe and your team
25 for your guidance and support through the process, and

1 **also to the Inquiry -- to the security -- whatever they**
2 **are -- to the court officials for their help and support**
3 **during this time as well. So thank you very much.**

4 Q. Thank you, Sister. I have nothing further that I want
5 to ask you, but the Inquiry Panel may have some
6 questions for you.

7 Questions from THE PANEL

8 CHAIRMAN: Sister, could I ask you about a broader question
9 in relation to both of the Belfast homes that in a sense
10 perhaps carries on from the two homes we looked at last
11 year and that relates to finance and where the money
12 came from?

13 Now we appreciate, of course, that the Order had to
14 -- the Congregation had to raise its own funds. There
15 have been references today to repaying money that came
16 from Hammersmith and also to the work of the collecting
17 Sisters, who went out no doubt in all weathers all round
18 both the city and country collecting for support of the
19 homes.

20 A. **Judge, may I just say something there? You know, it**
21 **wasn't just the Sisters that went out, because I was**
22 **speaking to one of the staff the other day, and she told**
23 **me prior to going on holiday she used to go down the**
24 **Ormeau Road into the shops and clubs and pubs or**
25 **whatever and collect money for the children's holiday,**

1 and that they were most generous, and that helped to
2 provide little extras for the children when they were on
3 holiday. So I thought that was a nice story.

4 Also about every six weeks she would go down to the
5 barber on the Ormeau Road again and ask the barber to
6 come up on Sunday to cut the children's hair and he
7 would bring another friend in and would cut the
8 children's hair and again that was for nothing. It just
9 shows the generosity of the people.

10 Another story she told me, one day the Superior --
11 and this was way back I suppose -- was going out on
12 a Saturday with another Sister down to buy clothes for
13 the children. She didn't have money. She didn't have
14 money to buy the children's clothes, but she went down,
15 because the children needed the clothes, and she went
16 out and ordered -- it was corduroy trousers and jackets
17 or something she bought -- and while she was out the
18 staff at the door -- the knock came to the door and the
19 staff answered it. It was a bookie from -- one of the
20 local bookies with an envelope of money. He said, "Give
21 that to Mother for the children". So when Mother came
22 back, obviously she got the money and in the money was
23 enough money to buy the clothes for the children.
24 That's Divine Providence. That's -- especially in the
25 early days that's how Sisters worked. They didn't have

1 **the money, but they trusted in Divine Providence to get**
2 **money.**

3 Q. Well, there certainly came a point at which the
4 generosity that you have described and we have heard so
5 much about both in Belfast and in Londonderry from the
6 Catholic community to support --

7 **A. Sorry. It wasn't just the Catholic community, judge.**

8 Q. Well, particularly, but I take the point you make.

9 Nevertheless there came a point at which the Order's
10 own resources from whichever source they came were not
11 adequate to meet the much more complex demands of the
12 children who were coming to you and so on.

13 We know from what you have said that as early as
14 1952 it was recognised by the Mother General that there
15 should be a move away from large dormitories to small
16 homes, something that took a long time to bring about.

17 One thing I want to ask you specifically about
18 relates to the willingness or otherwise of the Order to
19 accept money from the State, because you will no doubt
20 recall the evidence of I think it was Mr Moore, who was
21 the Children's Officer in Belfast in the late 1960s, who
22 described how he tried to persuade the then Mother
23 Superior to increase the per capita payment that the
24 Board, as it later became, would then pay for the
25 children it was already putting in, and that she was not

1 willing to do that.

2 Was there a reluctance on the part of the Order to
3 accept money from the State in whatever manifestation
4 the State appeared, whether local authority or central
5 government?

6 **A. I would say yes, because probably the Sisters thought**
7 **that they may lose their Catholicity and their running**
8 **of their own home I should imagine. That would be the**
9 **reason, rightly or wrongly, but I should imagine.**

10 Q. Yes, but there's always a difficulty for a voluntary
11 organisation, whether it's a religious body such as
12 yourselves or others, because the more dependent you
13 become on state money, then he who pays the piper starts
14 calling the tune, and that can create many dilemmas of
15 the type you have indicated and no doubt others.

16 But if we could turn to a different matter, and that
17 relates to what Ms Smith was asking you about, the
18 allegations that some Sisters resorted to excessive
19 corporal punishment of children. You have accepted that
20 some Sisters were excessive in their punishments.

21 Was there perhaps -- despite the rule of the Order
22 that children were not to be physically punished, was
23 there perhaps a turning of a blind eye to that rule,
24 because in society generally even at that time corporal
25 punishment was widespread? In other words, no matter

1 what the rule said --

2 **A. Yes.**

3 Q. -- it was happening, and was it possible that other
4 Sisters simply turned a blind eye to what their
5 colleagues were doing?

6 **A. I think it could be possible, but I also think if any
7 sister saw any child getting really beaten -- I mean,
8 not just a slap, but really beaten -- I think she would
9 have stopped it or would have done something about it.
10 I don't believe any sister would witness a severe
11 beating and not do anything about it. I can't accept
12 that.**

13 Q. Yes. The last thing I would like to ask you relates to
14 something that is always of great importance to lawyers,
15 perhaps not so much to everybody else, but it does seem
16 to be the position -- and the Sisters were by no means
17 unique in this -- that the structures of the
18 Congregation were quite different to those which the
19 regulations required, such as an administering authority
20 and monthly visitors. There appears to have been a lack
21 of understanding until well into the '80s on the part of
22 the Order that what they were doing didn't mesh well
23 with what the regulations required. Now I know it might
24 be said that the inspectors didn't pick it up either,
25 but as far as the Congregation is concerned, it does

1 appear to have been the position that just nobody
2 realised what they were meant to be doing in that
3 respect until 1984.

4 **A. I can only speak from my experience and certainly the UK**
5 **seemed to be miles ahead of the Northern Ireland houses**
6 **for whatever reason, and why that was I really couldn't**
7 **tell. Was it -- I don't know. I can't make any excuse**
8 **for them, because I don't know.**

9 Q. Thank you very much, Sister.

10 MS DOHERTY: Thanks, Sister. Following up from that, would
11 you say that the reason -- the fact that the Northern
12 Ireland houses were so far behind the rest of the UK
13 would suggest some kind of failure in governance and
14 communication, that, you know, the Northern Ireland
15 houses weren't getting the benefit of the experience of
16 the UK houses?

17 **A. Yes, it could be, and also Northern Ireland was quite**
18 **unique because of The Troubles and lots of other things,**
19 **and maybe the Sisters were just too cushy in their**
20 **little domain that they just didn't want to move. It**
21 **could be a possibility.**

22 Q. Thank you. Can I just ask -- I hear what you are saying
23 is your belief is if a Sister saw a child being badly
24 beaten, they would have intervened. Would you accept
25 that on occasion some Sisters severely beat children?

1 **A. Unfortunately yes, some Sisters, Geraldine, yes.**

2 Q. Can I just ask the response statements, how they were
3 drafted, because obviously, Sister, you are here having
4 to represent something that you weren't a part of,
5 although you are part of the wider Congregation, but how
6 the response statements that you had to sign your name
7 to were drafted?

8 **A. Well, I had to do a lot of phoning around and speak to**
9 **Sisters that were obviously relevant to each statement**
10 **and gather information before I answered a statement.**

11 Q. Because sometimes, Sister, to be honest, there is
12 statements made in the response statements which are
13 very kind of, you know, "This didn't happen or we don't
14 accept this happened", and in your oral evidence there
15 is a very balanced view about to the best of your
16 ability and what you know and "we can't be sure".

17 **A. But don't forget I have been sitting here listening to**
18 **all the evidence. The statements I have written were**
19 **written before I heard some evidence.**

20 Q. Okay, and that's what I really want to hear. I think
21 that's important for witnesses to hear as well --

22 **A. Yes.**

23 Q. -- because clearly some of them were upset about what
24 was in the response statements --

25 **A. Yes.**

1 Q. -- and I think it's important for them to hear that from
2 you listening to what you say that has changed your
3 position.

4 **A. Yes.**

5 Q. And the last --

6 **A. Sorry, Geraldine. Not just my position, but the**
7 **Congregation's position. I am speaking on behalf of the**
8 **Congregation.**

9 Q. Thank you. That's really helpful.

10 The last thing you will be glad to hear from me is
11 -- it's just a matter of clarification. It was when you
12 were talking about the difference between personal vows
13 and professional obedience -- I know I am coming back to
14 this -- because in a way for me it is hard to
15 differentiate those. If there's a set of rules in my --
16 I suppose my view would be that as a nun you obey them
17 in a kind of ...

18 **A. Well, nuns are only human beings, you know. We are not**
19 **plaster saints or anything like that. We have plenty of**
20 **faults and failings, plenty, and so I would accept**
21 **Christine's argument that, yes, if you want to stretch**
22 **it that far, if Sisters hit children when they knew**
23 **there was a policy that they shouldn't have hit the**
24 **children, that's for their conscience.**

25 Q. I suppose that's for me it is not that there was

1 professional rules set down saying, "If you are
2 a carer/you are a teacher, this is the way you have to
3 behave" and they broke those rules. They broke their
4 absolute vows as -- do you know in relation to being
5 a nun and what was expected of them as a nun as opposed
6 to a social worker or a care worker.

7 **A. Yes, I agree.**

8 Q. Okay. Thanks very much, Sister.

9 MR LANE: You mentioned that there was an approach where you
10 were trying to avoid lasting attachments. This is going
11 back some way obviously. What was the thinking behind
12 that?

13 **A. Well, do you know, David, even -- it sounds a bit**
14 **crazy -- even within the convent now we weren't even**
15 **allowed to go in -- at one point -- this is going way**
16 **back -- we weren't even allowed to go into another**
17 **Sister's department in case what they called**
18 **a particular friendship grew, you know. That would be**
19 **against your vow of chastity. That was the thinking in**
20 **those early days, and so I would imagine that the same**
21 **would be true of keeping a Sister in one unit with the**
22 **children in case there was that attachment. That would**
23 **have interfered with her vow of chastity.**

24 Q. But we have heard that friendship generally was seen as
25 a virtuous thing.

1 **A. Yes, I know, but not a particular one, not -- I mean,**
2 our love is for all, not just for one person. Maybe
3 I am wrong in saying all that, but that certainly was at
4 one point the thinking.

5 Q. So too --

6 **A. Obviously it changed over time.**

7 Q. Too strong a link between a Sister and a particular
8 child?

9 **A. Yes, yes.**

10 Q. So where did the pets and favourites fit into that?

11 **A. Well, there shouldn't have been. It is only natural**
12 that you have a pet or a favourite, but as long as you
13 don't show it to others, you know, to the other
14 children. I mean, I think human nature is that you do
15 like one child better than another. That's natural, but
16 as long as it's not seen by the other children and as
17 long as you don't show favouritism to one particular
18 child.

19 Q. Thank you. Just to clarify on the line accountability,
20 the chart which we saw showed the Mother Regional off to
21 one side rather than in direct line accountability. Was
22 that just a misdrawn chart really?

23 **A. Yes, just a misdrawn chart.**

24 Q. In terms of retreats, we have heard mention of the
25 children having retreats and really seemingly having to

1 sit around in silence for a day or two. You mentioned
2 also retreats for the Sisters. What were the purpose of
3 these two sorts of retreats and what actually happened?

4 **A. Well, I don't know. I have never been on a children's**
5 **retreat. So I can only tell you what I have heard from**
6 **other Sisters. I don't think they were meant to hit in**
7 **silence. I think just the priest would have given them**
8 **an extra talk or something, you know, an extra little**
9 **lecture or something like that.**

10 The Sisters' retreat is -- we have a six-day retreat
11 once a year, usually mid-year, and then at the end of
12 the year we have a three-day retreat just to get us in
13 tune with ourselves and our relationship with God and
14 where we are in our journey of life, yes.

15 Q. And that's where you would have a visiting priest or
16 somebody taking the retreat?

17 **A. Well, in those days, yes, it was a visiting retreat**
18 **priest, but nowadays many, many Sisters go to retreat**
19 **centres and go out of Nazareth House away to different**
20 **centres.**

21 Q. One of the concerns in setting up these homes at all was
22 the question of Catholic children having care within the
23 faith. What was -- was there any concern about the loss
24 of Catholicity with the closure of the homes? I mean,
25 the children presumably have gone to other sorts of

1 establishments when they have needed residential care.

2 **A. Well, I suppose when you were in our care, it was our**
3 **responsibility to make sure that if they were Catholics,**
4 **they were brought up in the Catholic faith. Once they**
5 **left, well, I mean, we have parish sisters and things**
6 **like that, people that go around the parishes.**

7 **Q. So where would the children go now? Into the State**
8 **homes?**

9 **A. I presume so, yes.**

10 **Q. But there isn't a widespread concern about that now that**
11 **there would have been in earlier years?**

12 **A. No, because I think if there was a Catholic child in**
13 **a non-Catholic home, then it's the responsibility of the**
14 **home owner to make sure that that child is taken to**
15 **church, or else there might be somebody from the parish**
16 **that would come in and befriend the child and take the**
17 **child to the sacraments.**

18 **Q. Okay. Thank you very much.**

19 **A. Thank you very much.**

20 **CHAIRMAN: Well, Sister, thank you for coming to speak to us**
21 **again today and, of course, we have all of your**
22 **statements, which we have looked at. We are very**
23 **grateful to you for coming. I am sorry again we weren't**
24 **able to take your evidence on Friday. I am sure you**
25 **would have preferred that rather --**

1 **A. Yes.**

2 Q. -- than waiting over the weekend, but you can see why
3 that wasn't possible, but thank you for coming to speak
4 to us again today.

5 **A. Thank you very much.**

6 Q. I hope that will be the last occasion we need to hear
7 from you, but we can't give any absolute guarantees yet,
8 but thank you very much.

9 **A. Thank you very much. Thank you, judge.**

10 **(Witness withdrew)**

11 MS SMITH: Chairman, that concludes today's evidence.

12 CHAIRMAN: Very well. We will resume tomorrow.

13 (12.40 pm)

14 (Hearing adjourned until 10 o'clock tomorrow morning)

15 --ooOoo--

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I N D E X

1	
2	
3	Speech re Timetable from CHAIRMAN3
4	SISTER BRENDA (called)5
5	Questions from COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY6
6	Questions from THE PANEL76
7	
8	
9	
10	
11	
12	
13	
14	
15	
16	
17	
18	
19	
20	
21	
22	
23	
24	
25	