

HIA REF:

• Witness Name:

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 – 1995

WITNESS STATEMENT OF **SR 30**

1. I have been asked to comment on allegations made against me by **HIA 41** in a statement given to the Inquiry.
2. I was in fact with a group of children in Nazareth Lodge from **[REDACTED]** and also as a teacher at St Michael's Primary School. In that regard only **[REDACTED]** recollection of me is accurate. I did attend Jordonstown one evening a week **[REDACTED]** did not take over the unit until after I had left in **[REDACTED]**
3. It is possible that the description of **[REDACTED]** being put to bed in paragraph 16 on page SNB-440 is accurate. Sending children to their room or to another room to calm down would have been a common practice to try to diffuse situations and to keep order without engaging in rows with the children. This did not mean that **HIA 41** would have missed out on meals nor would he have been left there for the rest of the day or night. That would not have happened.
4. I do not accept that I slapped him from behind. I am not and would not describe myself as being a bad tempered woman nor have I ever been so described by others. **HIA 41** said in the course of conversation with me that I had hit him once, to which I replied that I had no recollection of doing so but I apologised if it had happened. He said that he was glad to hear that. His original version of the episode was that he and 3 or 4 other boys were 'messaging around' in the bathroom and while I was chastising them he burst out laughing and I slapped him across the face. He said that he was laughing at another boy and that I thought he was laughing at me. The same incident has been reported in other media with the narrative changing and taking on a more aggressive portrayal of the incident on each occasion. I have absolutely no recollection of ever having done so.
5. I note that **HIA 41** describes that on one occasion I beat him and cut his hair as a punishment. That most certainly did not happen under any circumstances whatsoever.
6. The description of the chores that **HIA 41** would have carried out is factually incorrect. The children did help out around the unit with duties such as helping with the dishes, tidying the tables, dusting, polishing and chores such as this. While janitorial duties around the outside of the house would have been carried out by adult staff, **HIA 41** did help with tasks such as answering the door/phone and handing out sandwiches through a hatch to poor people between 4.00 and 6.00pm – activities which were normal and which he appeared to enjoy.
7. The children did go out at weekends to stay with families. These were families who wanted to assist by giving children a sense of a normal life. Retrospectively we now know that some of these families mistreated the children but the vast majority were loving charitable people who genuinely desired to help children in care.

8. I accept that HIA 41 did go out with families. He told me in or about 2009 that on one occasion I asked him to go, in place of another child, to a couple who lived in [REDACTED]. I cannot recall the names of this couple. While he was getting ready for bed he said that the man came to his room and asked him to undress in front of him but he shouted at him to get out, which the man did, so nothing happened. For the avoidance of doubt HIA 41 did not inform me of this until our meeting in late 2009. Had he done so at the time it happened I would immediately have reported it to the appropriate authorities both police and social services.
9. The children would have gone to clubs and sports events after school. The fact that I would have let HIA 41 go to judo classes after school would be in keeping with the activities that the children would have attended and so I can accept that he may well have been a member of a judo club. I cannot remember the specific clubs which each child would have attended but in general children took part in swimming, dancing, music classes, scouts and other activities. They would also have gone shopping on Saturdays when they were older and would have enjoyed parties at Christmastime organised by benefactors and staff from various businesses.
10. I have not seen 'The Godfather' but being likened to such a character doesn't sound too complimentary and is personally hurtful. I loved the children for whom I cared and defended them against unjust blame or ridicule on every occasion. We had many happy times together and at night we sat around watching television or talking while I, and some of the older girls, took the smaller children on our lap. I tried to make the unit as homely as possible to the best of my ability.
11. I am disappointed that HIA 41 recalls ever having been beaten as this would not have happened. Yes children were disciplined in the home but they would not have been beaten. I note with some sadness that HIA 41 recalls that he was disciplined or punished when he was innocent of any wrongdoing. This would not have happened under my watch.
12. HIA 41 renewed contact with me in 2009. We met twice – once at Nazareth Care Village and the second time at HIA 41 home, at his request. We spoke about his life since we had last met, his [REDACTED] siblings whom he had traced and his own lovely family. Our renewed association terminated specifically at HIA 41 behest. After we had exhausted his past experiences while in care, the issue took on a new dimension in that he began to concentrate on religious issues, trying to convince me that I should become a Born Again Christian. The fact that I didn't go along with his suggestion, must have seemed like yet another rejection to HIA 41.
13. I provided a statement to the police many years ago during one of their investigations. I would be happy to supply a copy of that statement to the Inquiry but unfortunately I have not been able to procure a copy of the document despite my best efforts and I cannot recall signing the statement. I vehemently deny that I lied to the police. I would have assisted the police in any way possible by providing honest information at my disposal relating to the issues on which I was being questioned. I was unaware of the abuse committed by Brendan Smyth until many years later when it became common news around Ireland that these events had taken place.
14. I do not accept the description given by HIA 41 that he was my personal assistant. He would only have been 10 or 11 years old. I hope his memory is based on the fact that he had a good relationship with me and that he felt safe in my company thus enabling him to classify himself as a personal assistant.

Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed **SR 30**

Dated 23 January 2015

1 says:

2 "I do not accept that I slapped him from behind.
3 I am not and would not describe myself as being
4 a bad-tempered woman, nor have I been so described by
5 others. HIA41 said in the course of conversation with
6 me that I had hit him once, to which I replied that
7 I had no recollection of doing so."

8 I am just going to pause there, HIA41. You did meet
9 with this nun in later years in 2009 on two occasions.
10 Isn't that right?

11 **A. In the context of that it was dinner time on a Saturday**
12 **and the home had been renovated in our group, SR30's**
13 **group. There were a couple or three bedrooms -- three**
14 **three-bedroom rooms and some single rooms. She came up**
15 **into the group, and I don't know what the issue was, but**
16 **she sent everybody to their bed to stand beside their**
17 **bed. This was like 12.30 when we get our dinner on**
18 **a Saturday. There was three beds. Mine was the first,**
19 **DL 55 and DL20. So we were standing at the bed.**
20 **He was making faces at me and I laughed, but I didn't**
21 **know she was standing there at the door. So she just**
22 **came in behind me, which is ten times worse than getting**
23 **a punch in the face from somebody in front of you, and**
24 **she knocked me into the wardrobe. She then put me to**
25 **bed and she left me there for the day. She put the rest**

1 of the children back to the canteen and gave them their
2 dinner. That's exactly what happened.

3 Q. Well, what she says is that:

4 "HIA41 said in the course of the conversation with
5 me that I had hit him once, to which I replied that
6 I had no recollection of doing so, but I apologised if
7 it had happened. He said that he was glad to hear
8 that."

9 She goes on to say that your original version of the
10 episode --

11 A. So she is not totally denying it.

12 Q. Well, she said that you told her that she had done this
13 --

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. -- and that she apologised to your face. Is that
16 correct?

17 A. Yes. So she's not denying it.

18 Q. But she said -- what she said is:

19 "I had no recollection of doing so, but I apologised
20 if it had happened."

21 A. Yes. So it is not 100% denial.

22 Q. Well, she said -- she goes on to say:

23 "He said that he was glad to hear that. His
24 original version of the episode was that he and three or
25 four other boys were messing around in the bathroom

1 while I was chastising them. He burst out laughing and
2 I slapped him across the face. He said he was laughing
3 at another boy and that I thought he was laughing at me.
4 The same incident has been reported in other media with
5 the narrative changing and taking on a more aggressive
6 portrayal of the incident on each occasion. I have
7 absolutely no recollection of ever having done so."

8 So that's what she says about that.

9 **A. Uh-huh.**

10 **Q.** You talk about being beaten for swapping altar duty.

11 You also go on to talk about her -- having your hair --

12 "... cut my hair to humiliate me."

13 What she says about that is that that didn't happen.

14 Sisters have said there were barbers who came to the
15 home to cut hairs.

16 **A. No, never. I was walking down the back stairs to go out**
17 **to play football after school and the first floor was**
18 **the chapel floor. DL 55 and DL 31 were standing**
19 **there. DL 55 was a very intelligent fella, who**
20 **deliberately failed his 11 Plus, so he wouldn't be split**
21 **up with us. The priest was in the chapel talking to the**
22 **nuns. So I didn't know what was going on. They were**
23 **standing out at the stairs. DL 55 convinced me to get**
24 **the altar gear on and he would head on out to football.**
25 **So when I went out on to -- the priest came out to get**

1 them. The priest was obviously talking to them about
2 something, the nuns. This was about 3.30 or so in the
3 day, 3.45. When I changed into the altar clothes with
4 DL 31, went on in and done the mass, I could see from her
5 face, you know, and I knew what was coming. So that's
6 exactly what happened. She pulled me up the stairs.
7 She beat the crap out of me and she cut my hair in the
8 bathroom, and I will take a lie detector test on
9 anything that I have had to say here, you know, but she
10 wouldn't stand here and deny it in front of me.

11 Q. Well, just to be clear, the Sisters of Nazareth through
12 Sister Brenda -- the congregation that is through Sister
13 Brenda would say that they would accept SR30's account
14 of what took place.

15 A. They probably would, like, you know, because it is all
16 going to the same place in the end.

17 Q. Well, paragraph 16, back at this same lengthy paragraph,
18 you talk about working at the front door. You said:

19 "You had chores to do every morning, which
20 progressed on to me doing the front door parlour.
21 I worked full time out of school."

22 Now that is a mistake, isn't it, HIA41? You didn't
23 actually work full time.

24 A. Outside of school.

25 Q. So it wasn't full time job?

1 **A. Right.**

2 Q. -- she had charge of.

3 **A. Right.**

4 Q. She said:

5 "The children did help out around the unit with
6 duties such as helping with the dishes, tidying tables,
7 dusting, polishing and chores such as this."

8 Can you say are those the kind of things that you
9 did do as well?

10 **A. Yes. Emptied the bins, cleaned the budgie cages, done
11 things like that. Quite happy with that, you know.**

12 Q. She said:

13 "Janitorial duties around the outside of the house
14 would have been carried out by adult staff. HIA41 did
15 help with tasks such as answering the door, phone and
16 handing out sandwiches through a hatch to poor people
17 between 4.00 and 6.00 pm, activities which were normal
18 and which he appeared to enjoy."

19 So she is saying you did these things, but only
20 between 4 and 6 o'clock. You say it was longer than
21 that.

22 **A. No. Well, you see, the nuns would have been away having
23 their meetings and prayers. They all left the groups,
24 say, from around 4 o'clock to 7 o'clock. So if anyone
25 in this room came to Nazareth Lodge, you spoke to me**

1 first. I designated you to a room and then went and got
2 the person you came to see. So they then had their
3 dinner and whatever up in that quarters. There was
4 a black phone which had a buzzer on it, which would have
5 buzzed the quarters. If I didn't get an answer, I would
6 have run up the stairs and rang the bell and waited till
7 one of them came out. So it was that and at 10 o'clock
8 I put a chain and a lock around the gates and left the
9 key in a right-hand side small drawer where the entry
10 books of children going in and out of Nazareth Lodge was
11 also kept.

12 Q. Well, Sister Brenda in her statement would say in
13 paragraph 10:

14 "The Sisters do not accept that HIA41 was required
15 to carry out all of the duties he describes or that he
16 acted in some way as a personal secretary to SR30 or, in
17 fact, any other Sister. He would have been very young
18 at the time ..."

19 A. Just SR30.

20 Q. They say you would have been very young at the time.
21 That wouldn't have been appropriate.

22 I know you talk in paragraph 22 to 25 -- maybe we
23 should just go to that at this stage, please.

24 Paragraph 22 is on --

25 CHAIRMAN: 444.

1 "I saw it and all the boys in the bedroom."

2 You say it was witnessed by NL54.

3 Now just coming back to her statement, I just want
4 to be clear. This is the nun who, despite what you say
5 about her in this, HIA41, you have a lot of time for
6 this woman.

7 A. Yes. I mean, this was the first sort of mother that
8 I had and I had a very close relationship. There was no
9 part of her day that I wasn't involved in, and anything
10 that needed done, I done it. I took DL 31 from
11 primary school during the day and walked him to the
12 clinic at the bottom, way down past Paisley's church.
13 So I was given the responsibility to go to his class in
14 primary school, because I could be trusted to do that,
15 and take him to the clinic appointment and bring him
16 back home. So you can check that out. Was there a DL 31
17 DL 31 went to an ear clinic away down the bottom? So
18 that was the way it was. There was no need -- there was
19 no violence in the home amongst the boys. There was no
20 sexual talk. There was no -- there was no such a thing
21 as bullying. They were all family, brothers and sisters
22 that lived in the group, and all of that was great, was
23 pleasant, and it was renovated to hotel standard.

24 Now I think she said somewhere that I got a single
25 room, but I was in two three-bedroom rooms first, which

1 is where NL7, I would have dressed him and put his
2 on. Then I was in another room with DL20 and
3 DL 55 , which -- I have a photograph here of us
4 in the bedroom, which she gave me in 2009. Then I got
5 a single room.

6 So, no, I suppose I can only look at it that it was
7 just too good to be true. There was that schizophrenic
8 side to her and there was no let-up or no mercy when she
9 decided to punish. She flew into rages like
10 schizophrenic. She didn't go about beating the kids or
11 doing anything like that. She was quite -- as I say,
12 she was a Julie Andrews character. She would have had
13 -- done wee plays in the sitting room with us. She
14 would have played football with us.

15 Then one time I remember we were at the beach and we
16 didn't want to play football with the girls. So she got
17 out a big bag of Easter eggs and she said, "Well ..."
18 She got me and DL 55 to pick teams of girls and
19 boys. So she was very, very clever, and the winner got
20 the bag of Easter eggs, but we didn't know that there
21 was Easter eggs for everybody, you know. So there was
22 that side to her. I would say 80% of her was fantastic,
23 but I am not going to sit here and tell lies, because
24 most of my abuse led to the deception that -- that she
25 played a major role in in just dumping the children and

Name: SR 30
Date: 26th January 2015

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

Witness Statement of SR 30

I, SR 30 will say as follows: -

1. I went to Nazareth Lodge on 27th August 1974 and left for Nazareth House on 10th August 1980.
2. In respect of the witness statement provided by HIA 397 formerly HIA 397 at no time did I have any responsibility for nor physical contact with this person.
3. With reference to paragraph 17 this did not happen.

Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed SR 30

Dated 26 January 2015