
HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE INQUIRY

being heard before:

SIR ANTHONY HART (Chairman)

MR DAVID LANE

MS GERALDINE DOHERTY

held at
Banbridge Court House
Banbridge

on Friday, 8th January 2016

commencing at 10.00 am

(Day 176)

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

1 Friday, 8th January 2016

2 (10.00 am)

3 (Proceedings delayed)

4 (10.35 am)

5 DR HILARY HARRISON (called)

6 CHAIRMAN: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. May I remind
7 everyone, please, if anyone has a mobile phone, to
8 ensure that it is either turned off or placed on
9 "Silent"/"Vibrate", and may I also remind you that no
10 photography is allowed either here in the chamber or
11 anywhere on the Inquiry premises.

12 Yes, Ms Smith?

13 Questions from COUNSEL TO THE INQUIRY

14 MS SMITH: Good morning, Chairman, Panel Members, ladies and
15 gentlemen. Our witness today is one who is no stranger
16 to the Inquiry. That is Dr Hilary Harrison. Now
17 Dr Harrison has given evidence a number of times before
18 --

19 CHAIRMAN: Yes.

20 MS SMITH: -- and therefore does not need to be sworn again.

21 Dr Harrison has also given a statement and a very
22 helpful annexe thereto at MNH296 through to 328. The
23 Inquiry has gone through the documents referred to in
24 that annexe earlier this week.

25 Now, Dr Harrison, just a number of things that we

1 were discussing and I wanted just to raise with you.

2 One of the things is what Ministry involvement there
3 was with this home prior to 1950 and the Children and
4 Young Persons Act coming into force. We know that in
5 paragraph 2 of your statement at MNH300 you refer to
6 section 25 of the 1908 Children's Act, which was the law
7 still pertaining at that time. That section empowered
8 the Ministry to cause voluntary homes to be inspected
9 and it also empowered them, with the consent of the
10 organisation running the voluntary home, to allow that
11 inspection to be carried out by an officer of the
12 organisation; so, in other words, they could
13 self-inspect really.

14 **A. Yes.**

15 Q. We were discussing that there has been no written
16 evidence that the home, first of all, was either
17 inspected by a Ministry of Home Affairs official, and
18 the Reverend Coulter, when he gave evidence to us
19 yesterday, said that he would have expected such visits
20 to be minuted. We do have the minutes for the 1940s --
21 '30s and '40s.

22 The other thing was there is nothing in the minutes
23 to suggest that there were formal inspections by anyone
24 from the Irish Church Missions on behalf of the
25 Ministry, if you like, carrying out that role as set out

1 in paragraph 25.

2 But we were looking at some other documents that
3 show that there was, in fact, contact between Ministry
4 and Manor House prior to 1950. I think if we just call
5 a few of those up, we can show that.

6 **A. Yes.**

7 Q. I think if we look at, first of all, MNH2566, now this
8 is a Ministry of Home Affairs' file that was in the
9 Public Records Office of Northern Ireland and it is a
10 closed file and it refers to Manor House Home. It is
11 TC/168.

12 Now we have looked at documents from that file, but
13 I think the important point that you want to make is
14 that the year of the first paper was 1948 in that file
15 and then the last one was 1958, when the home reopened.

16 **A. Yes, that is right.**

17 Q. So there was some contact in 1948. In fact, if we look
18 at some minutes of the Management Committee at 2481, and
19 we know from reading round the minutes at the time the
20 home was keen to provide facilities for younger children
21 than they had been able to look after and were talking
22 about opening a creche around this time.

23 We see here that Mr Bannister, who we know was the
24 solicitor of the Manor House Management Committee at the
25 time, he mentioned that he had:

1 "... written to Mr B. Maginess, who had promised to
2 further the application, but as he had now left the
3 Ministry of Commerce, his help would not be available.
4 The Reverend O'Connor agreed to see the new Minister of
5 Commerce and push the matter forward as far as
6 possible."

7 So government officials are certainly aware of the
8 existence of Manor House Home as a children's home.
9 There is contact over the issue of providing creche
10 facilities between the Management Committee and the
11 government.

12 **A. That's right.**

13 Q. If we can go then just to the next page -- sorry.

14 CHAIRMAN: Just before we leave that, the reference to
15 Mr B. Maginess is almost certainly to the subsequent
16 Minister --

17 MS SMITH: Subsequent Home Office, yes.

18 CHAIRMAN: -- who I think was already in government at that
19 time, but in a different capacity.

20 MS SMITH: That is correct. Even when he left the Ministry
21 of Home Affairs he became I think the Attorney-General.

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

23 CHAIRMAN: Yes.

24 MS SMITH: So he would have been in government for quite
25 a period of time, but at this time he had been -- he had

1 been gone from the Ministry of Commerce.

2 There is also, if you even just look up:

3 "It was agreed that the Reverend Coates should
4 communicate with the Reverend O'Connor about seeing the
5 Prime Minister."

6 So clearly the governing people of Northern Ireland
7 were aware of Manor House's existence and were in
8 contact with people from the Management Committee,
9 whether that were on an informal basis or on a more
10 formal --

11 **A. Yes.**

12 Q. -- role. If we just scroll down, please, to the next
13 page, it is recorded there -- oh, sorry. Just go back
14 up one, please. Yes. It is recorded in the same minute
15 book, but probably a month later, in March 1945 that:

16 "Mr Bannister reported that Dr Hays of the
17 Government Department had been most helpful re the new
18 creche and had taken MH1", who was then the matron of
19 Manor House Home, "to to see a similar
20 building. She had assisted re plans and it was
21 hoped that these would be ready shortly."

22 **A. Yes.**

23 Q. So there was certainly involvement of some shape or form
24 between Ministry officials or Government officials,
25 whether it was the Ministry of Home Affairs or not, and

1 Manor House Home.

2 **A. Yes, that's right, certainly around 1945 and possibly**
3 **dating prior to that as well, yes.**

4 Q. And maybe even afterwards?

5 **A. And afterwards, yes.**

6 Q. So it wouldn't be --

7 CHAIRMAN: At that time, because of the wartime
8 circumstances, permits for construction and building
9 and access to building materials were probably needed.

10 MS SMITH: So that may well have been --

11 CHAIRMAN: So if you wanted to do something, you would have
12 to get permission.

13 MS SMITH: So that might well have been the explanation for
14 that contact.

15 **A. Possibly, yes.**

16 Q. Certainly we were also discussing, Hilary, that the
17 Department has in the past provided the Inquiry with
18 a Home Office report, that's the UK Home Office report,
19 from 1938 --

20 **A. Yes.**

21 Q. -- about -- it is entitled "The Fifth Report of the Work
22 of the Children's Branch". It is dated January 1938.

23 Now it may well be in one of the bundles, but we just
24 don't have the Bates number to call that up, but your
25 point about that was that it sets what was happening out

1 or what the procedures were and the policies were with
2 regard to visiting and inspecting children's homes --

3 **A. Yes.**

4 Q. -- in the whole of the UK -- GB anyway -- in 1938.

5 **A. Uh-huh. Yes. Uh-huh.**

6 Q. I think you wanted to make the point that --

7 **A. Yes.**

8 Q. -- there were no formal inspections, but there were
9 visits to homes at that time.

10 **A. Yes. I think the whole period before 1950 has certainly**
11 **exercised the Department and we have tried to seek**
12 **information about what was happening there at that time,**
13 **obviously because the Inquiry is concerned with events**
14 **from 1922 onwards.**

15 So whilst not finding any documentation within our
16 own records, I did come across the report of the
17 Children's Branch Committee of the Home Office in 1938,
18 which really scopes provision for children and young
19 people throughout England. There is a section in it --
20 there are two sections in it that are relevant to the
21 Inquiry. One is the approved school section, and the
22 approved schools were roughly analogous to the
23 industrial type schools that we would have seen in --
24 around the 1930s in England, but also, more importantly,
25 the children's home section and the section which dealt

1 with institutions for poor children.

2 Now according to that report there were many
3 thousands of children in voluntary homes in England,
4 most of which had not been inspected by any form of
5 government inspectors. At the time the 1938 report was
6 produced this would have been five years after the
7 introduction of the 1933 Children Act in England, which
8 required homes to supply monitoring information to the
9 Home Office in respect of their function and numbers of
10 children, etc.

11 Now the 1938 report stated that there -- they had
12 received some 800 notifications of children's homes in
13 operation, but there were others that were not known to
14 the Ministry at that time; that in -- by 1938 300 of
15 those had been -- those homes had been visited -- now it
16 doesn't use the word "inspected" -- but that they had
17 been visited by Government -- by Ministry inspectors,
18 and it does state that, where necessary, a follow-up
19 visit was made, suggesting that there wasn't a routine
20 visiting pattern established and that it was only when
21 it was found necessary that a follow-up visit was made.

22 Now obviously that does not say anything about the
23 situation in Northern Ireland, but knowing that we -- it
24 does say something about the culture and standards of
25 the day vis-a-vis inspection of children's homes in

1 England. It suggests that perhaps there wasn't
2 a programme of inspection established, although again we
3 don't know that. We don't have evidence that it was,
4 but we don't have evidence to suggest that it wasn't.

5 Q. That it wasn't.

6 A. It is highly unlikely, given the small geographical area
7 of Northern Ireland, that we would have been in the same
8 position as England, ie that there would have been
9 children's homes that we didn't know about. There is
10 this -- the documents which we have just seen are
11 evidence that certainly Manor House was known to the
12 Ministry in and around 1945 and possibly before that.

13 It is possible, but we don't have information to --
14 we don't have the hard information to state
15 categorically, that there were visits by Ministry
16 inspectors. We know that the Ministry of Home Affairs
17 certainly did have Children's Inspectors from 1922,
18 because they were involved in inspecting industrial
19 schools, and we had very early reports, for example, of
20 visits by a Children's Inspector to Nazareth Lodge in
21 Belfast, which formerly was -- which was formerly
22 an industrial school. So we know that they existed.
23 Whether -- whether or not they did visit some of the
24 voluntary children's homes in Northern Ireland we just
25 can't say, but it is possible that they did.

1 I know the point has been made that there is no
2 evidence of that in the very full minutes that Manor
3 House Committee maintained, but certainly from our
4 knowledge of how visits were carried out they often took
5 place with the officer in charge of the home and may not
6 have always been reflected, you know, in the
7 Committee -- in the Management Committee minutes or
8 the minutes of the administering authority. The place
9 where we would have found evidence of such visits would
10 have probably been in the daily log or the daily
11 diaries, which unfortunately are not available.

12 Q. Yes. They are no longer in existence. Well, certainly
13 Manor House in a formal sense came on to the Ministry
14 radar in -- when it applied to register in 1950,
15 following the passage into law of the legislation The
16 Children and Young Persons Act (Northern Ireland) 1950.

17 A document that I am going to call up from the HIA
18 bundle is a document that the Inquiry has looked at
19 before. That is the memo of Ms Forrest of 28th April
20 1953. That's at HIA1462. This was her brief summary of
21 impressions of the different voluntary homes that were
22 in existence in Northern Ireland in 1953. As I say, we
23 have looked at it before, but if we can just scroll down
24 to number 6 there, this is:

25 "Manor House children",

1 and it is:

2 "Run by a volun..."

3 Sorry.

4 "Manor House, Lisburn."

5 It is:

6 "Run by a voluntary committee."

7 It is described as:

8 "Has been poverty stricken both in money and ideas
9 for some time past. Insufficient staff of poor quality
10 in recent times. Equipment and maintenance very poor.
11 Some improvement in recent weeks, but needs ... floor
12 coverings, heating, beds, tables, chairs and play
13 equipment. Attend outside ..."

14 I think there's probably -- it should be:

15 "Children attend outside schools."

16 Then in the margin there is written:

17 "Closed temporarily. See TC/168",

18 which is that file that we were looking at the
19 cover sheet for.

20 **A. Yet.**

21 Q. "(July 1953)."

22 I think it is:

23 "Honorary treasurer's", something, "20th July '53."

24 **A. Yes.**

25 Q. I am not sure what that was actually referring to --

1 **A. I don't know. Yes.**

2 Q. -- but it might be a letter from the honorary treasurer
3 saying that it closed at that date perhaps, but, as
4 I say, it is not clear.

5 But if I can -- I mean, that was obviously in
6 contrast, for example, to the next one, which was
7 "Childhaven", just to give an example:

8 "Lively, energetic young matron is just in process
9 of introducing a homelier atmosphere to this somewhat
10 bare and spartan home. It is not helped by the other
11 three members of staff, who are little more than
12 domestics. Would need more better quality staff
13 and more equipment. Committee would be willing I think
14 if helped. Have football field, swings and large play
15 hall. Attend outside schools."

16 She is critical of even Childhaven here --

17 **A. Yes.**

18 Q. -- but then we move on down through the list and we come
19 to -- if we can scroll down, please, just --

20 "Thorndale", for example, was:

21 "Well run by adequate trained staff".

22 although it:

23 "Could do with more play equipment."

24 Then:

25 "Good Shepherd, Newry.

1 "Material conditions and equipment very good.

2 Good material conditions ..."

3 in the Sacred Heart home, which is run by the Good
4 Shepherd, and so forth until we get down to the Nazareth
5 homes there, Nazareth Lodge at number 16. We have
6 looked -- I am not going to read these again, but we
7 have looked at what she said about the Nazareth homes,
8 and if we can go on down into the next page, where she
9 says about the children in the Nazareth homes being --
10 having nothing like a normal upbringing and then:

11 "In short, I think we must press for complete
12 overhaul of the whole set-up of these homes and assist
13 them in every way possible."

14 Now that is -- what she says about Manor House is
15 not as damning as what she says about the Nazareth
16 homes.

17 **A. Yes.**

18 Q. It is clear from all that we have seen -- and you have
19 addressed this in your statement -- that the Ministry
20 officials were prepared to close Manor House down, but
21 we know that from previous evidence you have given to
22 the Inquiry there was no such suggestion in respect of
23 these voluntary homes.

24 I wondered -- and I think you may have given
25 evidence to this effect -- that one of the reasons for

1 that would have been the sheer numbers that the Sisters
2 of Nazareth were looking after. I mean, we know, for
3 example, that Termonbacca had 110 boys in just one of
4 those homes.

5 **A. Yes.**

6 Q. So I think at the time Manor House was inspected there
7 were maybe 17 children present. Much easier for the
8 Ministry to reallocate those children to the Welfare
9 Authorities, whether by fostering them out or putting
10 them into these other small children's homes that were
11 either the voluntary homes or the statutory homes that
12 were in existence at the time, rather than try to find
13 places for the children in the Sisters of Nazareth
14 homes. You would agree with that?

15 **A. Yes, I would, because in 1953, of course, the statutory**
16 **homes were just getting up and running. There were few**
17 **statutory homes being built. They certainly couldn't**
18 **have coped with the numbers of children coming from**
19 **those four Catholic institutions. There wouldn't have**
20 **been the facilities to maintain those children in care.**

21 Q. And the other issue that -- by even calling them
22 Catholic homes, we know that it was a major political
23 factor.

24 **A. Absolutely.**

25 Q. The Northern Ireland state had been in existence for not

1 quite thirty years -- well, 1953, just thirty years.

2 **A. Yes.**

3 Q. The effect -- the political effect of closing down four
4 homes and putting these Catholic children into State-run
5 homes or facilities would have been quite an undertaking
6 by the government of the day.

7 **A. Yes. Possibly it could have had quite a destabilising**
8 **effect, given the troubled history of the Northern**
9 **Ireland state coming into being.**

10 Q. So for those reasons the approach taken by the Ministry
11 to those four Nazareth homes was completely at odds with
12 the approach they were taking to Manor House.

13 **A. Yes. I think perhaps also another point to be made is**
14 **that Manor House were clearly poverty stricken. They**
15 **had a dearth of money. Now I know that that -- those**
16 **words are used certainly at least of one of the Catholic**
17 **homes, but it appeared to be, generally speaking, the**
18 **Catholic homes did have access to more finances and the**
19 **main problems there were around untrained, unqualified**
20 **staff, whereas with Manor House there was a real serious**
21 **shortage of funding, which the Ministry would not have**
22 **been in a position to assist, because it was revenue**
23 **funding that they were short of, and I know that the**
24 **Panel has heard the history -- the problems of the**
25 **person who brought in some financing having been taken**

1 ill and finances dropping, and so there was I think
2 a unique financial issue there that maybe was not just
3 so characteristic of the four Catholic homes.

4 Q. So that would have been an additional factor --

5 A. It would, yes.

6 Q. -- in the thought processes.

7 A. I think Ms Forrest was saying at one stage that
8 an injection of cash by the Ministry could not help the
9 situation, because, of course, the Ministry was
10 restricted in its capital grants for improvement and it
11 could not supply revenue funding or trained staff. It
12 could -- it could certainly support staff costs to
13 become trained, but it wasn't in a position to supply
14 the kind of financing that the home would have needed.

15 Q. Well, it would appear that -- and I know you objected to
16 me using the word "intervened" -- but it would certainly
17 appear, if the Minister hadn't intervened, that Manor
18 House may well have been deregistered. I mean, we know
19 it closed its doors, but to actually have ceased to be
20 in existence in any form as a children's home.

21 I just wanted to -- you have talked about the memo
22 that's at MNH2843. This to me, and I think, having
23 looked at it again, you would agree, this is probably
24 from the then Minister, Brian Maginess. That's MNH2843,
25 please. It is addressed to Mr O'Neill:

1 "Have suggested a more lengthy and sympathetic
2 letter which I would like to discuss with you."

3 That's dated 6th May 1953. We know this is the
4 letter that is being sent to the Management Committee at
5 Manor House essentially about deregistering.

6 **A. Yes.**

7 Q. The papers suggest that the Minister was not opposed to
8 the closing down of Manor House.

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

10 Q. He simply wanted this "well-intentioned but inept", as
11 they have been described, Management Committee let down
12 gently.

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

14 Q. Then we see the Ministry officials engage with the new
15 Management Committee. They engage with the architect,
16 for example. They meet with the Manor House Committee.
17 They give advice about staffing ratios and so on. The
18 memo for that -- I mentioned it yesterday and
19 I mentioned it as maybe coming from 1956, but I just
20 want to correct that. It was actually January 1954.
21 That's -- we don't need to call it up, but it is at 3347
22 to 3348.

23 Now is it fair to assume -- given what we have seen
24 of the contact from the Management Committee with
25 Mr Maginess and writing to him and so forth, is it fair

1 to assume that there might have been some other,
2 further, perhaps informal, approach from the Management
3 Committee to Mr Maginess, for example, which is not
4 recorded on the papers, but which might have stopped
5 officials from following through and insisting on the
6 return of the certificate and deregistering the home?

7 **A. Yes. I think that that is entirely possible, because**
8 **certainly the scenario does change very quickly in the**
9 **documentation that we have seen in that Minister is**
10 **saying, "Well, I agree in principle that the home**
11 **should -- should be closed, but let's let them down**
12 **gently". Let them resign more or less rather than be**
13 **sacked, if you take an analogous employment situation,**
14 **but -- and you have an official then writing shortly**
15 **after that suggesting that they may offer to tender the**
16 **certificate rather than the Ministry request it back,**
17 **but then -- then we have the situation where Ministry**
18 **architects are commenting on plans submitted by the**
19 **home's architect. So something definitely changed to**
20 **alter the course of events, albeit the children**
21 **eventually were removed --**

22 **Q. Yes.**

23 **A. -- but -- but there seemed to have been some kind of**
24 **change of climate.**

25 **Q. Then we see that there's a minute, for example, of the**

1 Manor House Committee where the Minister went -- where
2 they went directly, I should say, to speak to the
3 Minister after they were getting mixed signals from
4 officials in the Department and that's at 3358.
5 I wondered, as I said, if they might have gone to Brian
6 Maginess. They actually talk about going. I was
7 referring to this here. 3353. I beg your pardon. Just
8 at the bottom of the page 323 there, you will see:

9 "Arising out of the minutes the Secretary reported
10 conversations with a Mr Jackson and with a Mr Duff, both
11 of the Ministry of Home Affairs, and a third with
12 Mr G.B. Hanna, QC, the Minister ..."

13 **A. Yes.**

14 Q. "... regarding the question of whether it was likely
15 that Manor House would receive a government grant."

16 So it is clear that, you know, whenever Mr Jackson
17 and Mr Duff, who didn't seem to be in agreement as to
18 Mr Duff clearly wanted this home shut down, end of,
19 whereas Mr Jackson was slightly more disposed to saying,
20 "Yes, well, you could get grants and so forth", they
21 then go to speak to Mr Hanna directly.

22 Then we see at 2771 the memo which says:

23 "On the Minister's instructions we did not cancel
24 the registration of the home."

25 **A. Yes.**

1 Q. Now paragraph 2 of your statement at 2.12 you thought
2 that that referred to the intervention by Mr Maginess --

3 **A. Uh-huh.**

4 Q. -- but if the memo dates to 1954, might it have been on
5 the instruction -- that meeting with the Management
6 Committee and Mr Hanna was 19... -- September '54. We
7 know that George Hanna took over as Minister of Home
8 Affairs in October '53. So might it appear that it was
9 on the instruction of Mr Hanna that they did not
10 deregister this home?

11 I say that because if we look at 2728 to 2729, this
12 appears to be Mr Hanna's note, saying:

13 "I am not happy about this matter. Following
14 reports warranting the closing of the home ('warranting'
15 is perhaps too mild) an arrangement was made of a
16 face-saving nature under which arrangement the
17 registration was to be surrendered. This promise was
18 not kept. The Ministry did not act. Instead of
19 Ministry upon -- instead of insisting upon the bargain
20 being kept the Ministry seems to have condoned the whole
21 business, because an architect entered into
22 consultations with the Committee's architect regarding
23 remodelling. In my view the consultations commit us to
24 the course of reestablishing this home unless we can
25 find some change of circumstances or other reason for

1 saying 'no'."

2 Then he goes on to talk a little bit more. So I am
3 wondering if it is these instructions. "What is the
4 point? There is no point in deregistering this home.
5 You have been acting as though it was still a children's
6 home by engaging with them. You didn't insist on them
7 surrendering the certificate. My hands are tied." So
8 it is maybe his instructions rather than Mr Maginess'.

9 **A. It could be, but I think my rationale for thinking it**
10 **was Mr Maginess was the fact that they did then continue**
11 **to engage -- they did engage with the architects, etc.**
12 **So there must have been some decision at that stage that**
13 **the -- you know, even before Mr Hanna came on the scene**
14 **that the certificate wasn't to be handed in.**

15 Q. And that's why I wondered maybe was it, you know, some
16 sort of informal engagement --

17 **A. Yes.**

18 Q. -- or informal discussion between the Minister and
19 officials.

20 **A. Yes.**

21 Q. "Just let's see how they get on with the new Management
22 Committee", something like that?

23 **A. Possibly, yes.**

24 Q. You made the point to me, Hilary, that it is not unusual
25 for Ministers even today to take decisions that are

1 contrary to the advice that they are given by their
2 official and that this course by Mr Maginess, if it was
3 him, or indeed Mr Hanna --

4 **A. Yes.**

5 Q. -- you know, was to -- was not something that they --
6 was unusual.

7 **A. No. It wasn't unreasonable. As I was saying earlier,**
8 **policy advisers give advice to Ministers and Ministers**
9 **are obliged to take account of that advice, but at the**
10 **end of the day it is the Minister's decision as to what**
11 **happens in any particular situation. I understand the**
12 **use of the term "intervention", because, in fact, that**
13 **is actually used in one of the minutes by a civil**
14 **servant at the time, but I would see it more as his --**
15 **as him exercising his prerogative as Minister to**
16 **determine what should happen in any given circumstance.**

17 Now I am not saying that it is -- it is not
18 an everyday occurrence when Ministers don't take the
19 advice of policy advisers by any means, but it is
20 certainly not unusual for a Minister to determine that
21 they will take in full the recommendations of their
22 advisers or in part their recommendations or indeed to
23 adopt a different course of action altogether. That's
24 not an unusual feature at all of the relationship
25 between Ministers and the Civil Service.

1 Q. Well, just moving on to another point, at paragraph 2.6
2 of your statement you say -- you talked about whenever
3 the home applied to be registered, there was an initial
4 inspection by Ms Forrest and then it was not inspected
5 until 1953, and you talk about that in paragraph 4.2.
6 I can assure you, Hilary, as I am sure you well know,
7 that the Panel have read your entire statement. I am
8 not going to sort of read out from it.

9 **A. Sure.**

10 Q. I was wondering if it was possible that if the home had
11 been inspected in the interim years between 1950 and
12 1953, that the Ministry might have been able to avert
13 any of the deterioration that clearly happened in those
14 -- that intervening period, whether by way of grant for
15 staff training or equipment or simply by giving advice.
16 Do you think that if they had been around in those three
17 years that anything -- it might have made any
18 difference?

19 **A. I think if there had been a visit in those intervening**
20 **years, I have no doubt that the Ministry would have**
21 **picked up earlier that the home was in difficulties.**
22 **The Ministry could not have provided the kind of**
23 **finances, though, that the home needed to keep going at**
24 **an acceptable standard. Looking at the pressures on the**
25 **Ministry officials at the time, Ms Forrest and her**

1 colleagues in particular, they were faced in 1950 having
2 to register at least 22 voluntary children's homes.
3 They were new to post. They had -- they were
4 responsible for carrying out annual inspections or
5 inspections of training schools as well. They were
6 responsible for a range of other duties. So it was
7 probably not unreasonable that they didn't visit during
8 that three-year period, and my view is, looking at the
9 circumstances that they found, whilst they may have been
10 able to give professional advice, they certainly
11 wouldn't have been able to provide the kind of financing
12 necessary to keep the home going at an acceptable
13 standard.

14 Q. Thank you. Still with your statement, at paragraph 4.3
15 you talk about inspections between 1958 and 1957 (sic)
16 and saying that there is no material from that period of
17 time, and you talk about The Hughes Inquiry not having
18 any material, but, as we know, Hughes was only
19 interested in events in Manor House in around 1982. So
20 they had management books from 19... -- Management
21 Committee minute books from 1977, but given the events
22 which led to the closure in 1953 and thereafter when it
23 reopened in 1958, it would have been most surprising if
24 the Ministry had not kept Manor House under supervision,
25 as it were --

1 **A. Yes.**

2 Q. -- and taken an interest in what was happening there.

3 We know from evidence to Hughes that it is
4 clear that Ms Forrest visited and was not slow to
5 express criticism where she found something wanting --

6 **A. Yes.**

7 Q. -- which would be entirely in keeping with what we have
8 learnt about the lady. So I think that, although we
9 don't have those records, we do have some entries in
10 the minute books where it records Ms Forrest or Ms Hill
11 attending --

12 **A. Yes.**

13 Q. -- to visit the home. So I think --

14 **A. Yes.**

15 Q. -- it would be a safe assumption to make that the home
16 was inspected during that period of time.

17 **A. I would think so. I would think that there would have**
18 **been a very watchful eye on events in the home, and**
19 **given the fact that Ms Forrest prior to the dispersal of**
20 **the children was actually instructed to visit weekly and**
21 **continued those visits when the children weren't there,**
22 **if she was involved in site visits with architect and so**
23 **on, I would imagine that that -- there was a high level**
24 **of contact when the home opened just to ensure that**
25 **things were continuing to go according to plan.**

1 Q. One other thing that I wondered, just the experience of
2 Manor House in Ministry terms of, you know, "This was
3 somewhere we wanted to close down. We weren't able to
4 close it down" for the reasons that we have already
5 explored, and I just wondered might that have led to
6 a change in attitude, "Well, you know, obviously we
7 weren't able to -- this was probably the worst example
8 that we came across of a small home where we could not
9 close it down" -- might that led to a change in
10 attitude, "Well, there is not much point in trying to
11 close these homes down. Let us just see if we can keep
12 them operational and help them keep running"? Do you
13 think that was a feature at all?

14 A. Well, I don't think so, because again, as I was saying
15 earlier, the -- certainly some of the things written by
16 the civil servants in those days were not quite as
17 diplomatic as we would expect civil servants today to --
18 in ways that we would expect them to act, and there was
19 no sense in which those civil servants were in any way
20 intimidated by Ministers. It is quite obvious that
21 there appeared to be engagement almost of equals. So
22 I would very much doubt that they would have altered
23 their views or changed their opinions.

24 We have to remember that the civil servants
25 themselves, the policy advisers themselves were divided

1 as to what should happen to the home and Ms Forrest
2 appeared to have remained neutral throughout in that she
3 was there to give advice and so on. So it -- I would
4 doubt that there was any kind of effect -- adverse
5 effect on the ability of policy advisers to give their
6 views.

7 Q. Well, we know from Mr Buchanan's evidence to Hughes in
8 1984 that, in fact, no home was ever taken off the
9 register in Northern Ireland.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. He made the point that in GB the Department was looking
12 at setting up regular reviews, and obviously post
13 Kincora that happened, and the whole landscape, as we
14 have heard in the course of this Inquiry, changed with
15 regard to inspections of children's homes. It never did
16 force a home to close. Isn't that right? This is the
17 closest it came?

18 A. To my knowledge that -- that's right, yes.

19 Q. Thank you very much, Dr Harrison. I have nothing
20 further that I want to ask you, but the Panel Members
21 may have some questions for you.

22 A. Thank you.

23 **Questions from THE PANEL**

24 CHAIRMAN: If we just look at this whole episode in a broad
25 way, Dr Harrison, the reality is that, although the home

1 was clearly very unsatisfactory in material terms,
2 strangely enough the children seem to have been quite
3 well looked after.

4 **A. Yes. I think Ms Forrest commented on that on a number**
5 **of occasions, that they -- whilst they were -- I think**
6 **she used the word they weren't ill mannered. They just**
7 **didn't know how to behave in front of strangers.**

8 Q. Yes.

9 **A. It wasn't -- and certainly when she looked at them while**
10 **she was concerned about them being confined to desks in**
11 **what should have been I think leisure time, they all**
12 **seemed to be engaging quite happily with staff in**
13 **whatever activity was -- was going on at the time, and**
14 **also I think although she commented on the rooms being**
15 **cold, the children were actually in a warm place. The**
16 **room that they were in was -- I think so, or perhaps did**
17 **she say that they didn't seem to feel the cold? I think**
18 **that's -- I think the staff were in the warm place.**

19 **Isn't that right?**

20 Q. Yes. There were certainly very unsatisfactory aspects.

21 **A. Yes, yes.**

22 Q. One child in a very cold room, for example, that wasn't
23 well.

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

25 Q. But the records appear to show that once the Ministry

1 became aware of the situation, they effectively forced
2 it to close.

3 **A. Yes.**

4 Q. That's the reality of the situation.

5 **A. Yes, they did, yes.**

6 Q. Because irrespective of what would happen in the
7 long-term, in the immediate term --

8 **A. Yes.**

9 Q. -- they were all of the view that the existing
10 Committee were simply incapable of bringing about any
11 material improvement in the financial position and
12 therefore --

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

14 Q. -- the home had to close.

15 **A. That's right.**

16 Q. It was only when it appears that a completely new
17 Committee was created and a much more dynamic Committee
18 --

19 **A. Yes.**

20 Q. -- that it appeared, against everyone's expectation it
21 seems, to have succeeded in raising a substantial
22 capital amount --

23 **A. That's right.**

24 Q. -- which then allowed the Maconachie Committee to say,
25 "Well, we can't create a new home, but we can grant aid

1 improvements to a home that has been brought into
2 existence again". That appears to be what happened.

3 **A. Exactly, yes.**

4 Q. Thereafter the home appears to have functioned quite
5 adequately --

6 **A. Yes, indeed.**

7 Q. -- up until it, like many others, closed, because it
8 simply could not continue with falling numbers, and that
9 made it financially impossible to continue.

10 **A. Yes, that's right. The Committee -- the then Committee,**
11 **when the crisis was in place, they were also clearly**
12 **divided about whether the home should close.**

13 Q. Yes.

14 **A. I noted that at one stage I think three members, who**
15 **were in favour of the home closing, had a private**
16 **meeting with the Ministry, and as a consequence of that**
17 **meeting then the final decision to close the home and**
18 **make arrangements for the children was taken. So, yes,**
19 **that's quite right. There certainly was no doubt**
20 **pressure placed on them.**

21 Q. And another factor, of course, was that the civil
22 servants noted that there did not appear to be as many
23 Protestant voluntary homes as there were Catholic
24 voluntary homes.

25 **A. Yes.**

1 Q. We know from the figures that we have seen elsewhere in
2 the Inquiry that at that time the Sisters of Nazareth
3 homes contained in numerical terms --

4 **A. Yes.**

5 Q. -- a very much larger number of children than these
6 voluntary Protestant homes.

7 **A. That's right, and there were also eleven of them --**

8 Q. Yes.

9 **A. -- as opposed to something like I think it was seven**
10 **Protestant homes, which, had Manor House closed**
11 **indefinitely, would have reduced the number to six.**

12 Q. Yes, because as well as the Sisters of Nazareth homes
13 there were the other Catholic homes --

14 **A. Yes.**

15 Q. -- which Ms Forrest deals with in that memorandum.

16 **A. Yes, that's true.**

17 Q. But the great bulk of the children were in the four
18 Sisters of Nazareth homes. Isn't that right?

19 **A. Absolutely.**

20 Q. And there were hundreds of them.

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

22 Q. So if they were to close, there was a major
23 accommodation problem, irrespective of any significant
24 political consideration.

25 **A. Yes.**

1 Q. When we come to the 1960s, there do appear to be quite
2 a number of references to staff at least being
3 considered to go on courses to improve their
4 professional -- or improve their qualifications, and it
5 was the position, was it not, that where a voluntary
6 home was prepared to agree to someone going on a course,
7 let's say, to the Rupert Stanley, the Ministry would
8 provide the funding for a replacement member of staff?

9 **A. My understanding is that that was the situation.**

10 Q. Yes.

11 **A. It certainly was most definitely the situation later on,**
12 **when it came to the implementation of Hughes, but my**
13 **understanding is that there were -- there were finances**
14 **available for replacement costs for staff undertaking**
15 **full-time residential care training.**

16 Q. Yes. I think there is a reference I saw earlier today.
17 If we look, for example, at MNH206, there's a letter
18 from the Ministry of Home Affairs dated 15th March 1966
19 suggesting that:

20 "In view of the urgent need for more trained staff
21 in children's homes voluntary bodies should consider the
22 secondment on full pay" --

23 **A. Yes.**

24 Q. -- "of any suitable members of staff to the courses of
25 training provided by the Belfast Education Committee at

1 The Rupert Stanley College. This would enable employers
2 to obtain from their staff undertakings" --

3 **A. Yes.**

4 Q. -- "to remain",

5 and then the next paragraph states:

6 "The letter further stated that where a voluntary
7 home seconds a member of staff for training on full
8 salary, the Ministry will be prepared to reimburse the
9 reasonable salary of the substitute who would be
10 required."

11 So that is March 1966.

12 **A. Yes. That's very helpful. Thank you.**

13 Q. Yes. Thank you.

14 MS DOHERTY: I don't have any other questions.

15 MR LANE: You mentioned that the Ministry couldn't help with
16 the revenue support.

17 **A. Yes.**

18 Q. But presumably under the 1950 Act the Welfare
19 Authorities could have done.

20 **A. Well, yes, they -- Welfare Authorities, had the home
21 been accommodating Welfare Authority children, they
22 certainly could -- there wasn't a per capita arrangement
23 at that stage --**

24 Q. Yes.

25 **A. -- but individual fees would have been payable for each**

1 child accommodated on behalf of a Welfare Authority, but
2 it is interesting -- I notice that when it came to the
3 finding of alternative placements for the children, all
4 of them, with the exception of one, who -- one child who
5 happened to be I think from Fermanagh --

6 Q. Yes.

7 A. -- is that right -- they all had to be found places in
8 Dublin --

9 Q. Uh-huh.

10 A. -- which suggests to me that the vast majority of the
11 children taken by this home at this stage were voluntary
12 admissions, and therefore those children wouldn't have
13 attracted any Welfare Authority fees, apart from the one
14 who was --

15 Q. Yes.

16 A. -- the Fermanagh placement, and he went back to
17 Fermanagh, I think was found a foster home.

18 Now it is interesting that when
19 turns the home around, one of the declarations that they
20 make to the Ministry is that they will encourage a much
21 broader kind of spectrum of children to be admitted, and
22 I think, if I am correct, he does say that they will
23 begin to take children on behalf of Welfare Authorities
24 as well, and -- but they certainly -- at that stage they
25 didn't -- they weren't receiving any kind of significant

1 **funding from Welfare Authorities.**

2 Q. At the later stage it appears that that put them on
3 a sounder financial footing, but presumably at this
4 stage an approach could have been made to Welfare
5 Authorities to ask them to take responsibility for the
6 financing.

7 A. **Yes, yes.**

8 Q. That happened in some of the Catholic homes later on.

9 A. **Yes. It did later on. Whether the Welfare Authorities**
10 **would have been prepared to take on children whom they**
11 **hadn't admitted and -- I seem to remember in earlier**
12 **modules, for example, when we were considering the**
13 **children's homes in Derry, that there had been this**
14 **debate about the fact that many of the children**
15 **accommodated in voluntary homes, had those homes not**
16 **been there, the Welfare Authorities would have had to**
17 **have --**

18 Q. Yes.

19 A. **-- received those children into care themselves, but, in**
20 **fact, no -- no real agreement about the financing of**
21 **children came into place until '6... -- 1966 and --**
22 **around about the 1960s, where Welfare Authorities agreed**
23 **to use the voluntary homes --**

24 Q. Uh-huh.

25 A. **-- as a -- as a definite resource, and then it wasn't**

1 until 1973 that the per capita arrangements came into
2 place.

3 Now in 1973 there were -- there was a cohort of
4 children who had been from the old style voluntary
5 admissions procedures and there was children who had
6 been voluntarily admitted. In '73 the Eastern Board was
7 the first to say, "Well, we will pay for those children
8 and we accept" -- for example, Manor House was in the
9 Eastern Board's area. If they were -- if they were
10 supplying -- if they were providing places for 18
11 children, then regardless of where those 17 or 18
12 children came from -- I think the home opened with
13 a capacity of 20 -- but regardless of whether they were
14 voluntary admissions or not, the Board paid a per capita
15 allowance for each child for each place, but that really
16 didn't come into place until much later.

17 Q. Do you think consideration could have been given to
18 contacting the ICM's headquarters, because there is
19 a comment -- I am not quite sure of the date of it --
20 about the headquarters only having provided I think it's
21 the miserable sum of £52 per annum towards one member of
22 staff.

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. So could more pressure have been put on there, do you
25 think?

1 intend to commence our next module in relation to
2 Millisle Borstal. Thank you.

3 (11.25 am)

4 (Inquiry adjourned until 10.00 am
5 on Monday, 18th January 2016)

6 --ooOoo--

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25