

HIA REF: []

NAME: [NL 190]

DATE: [23 January 2015]

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

Witness Statement ofNL 190

I, NL 190 will say as follows: -

1. I was employed by the Southern Health & Social Services Board as a trainee social worker from 1976 until 1978 when I qualified. I then worked as a social worker with a generic caseload in Portadown Social Services office from 1978 to 1982, during which time I worked with HIA 210 the applicant in this case. Subsequent posts included social work in Nottingham Community Mental Handicap Team, generic social work in Lurgan and Brownlow Social Services Offices, social work in the Fostering Team (1989 – 1995) and in the Sensory Disability team (1995 until my retirement in 2014).
2. Regarding this case, I have read the available documents (attached) relating to HIA 210 complaints about his treatment in Nazareth Lodge, and have noted that he says he told me on one occasion that SR 62 hit him with a stick. Unfortunately I have no recollection of him telling me this. That is not to say it did not happen, but that I do not remember it now.

3. I also see from [NL 191] (Senior Social Worker in [redacted]) report that in 1985 she contacted me about [HIA 210] allegation and that at that time I told her that he had never told me about being hit, and that I had not seen any signs of either [HIA 210] or his younger brother [NL 204] being punished inappropriately when I was visiting them in Nazareth Lodge. I cannot now recall that conversation with [NL 191]
4. I do remember that I visited [HIA 210] and [NL 204] at Nazareth Lodge on numerous occasions. They were already placed there when I took over the case in 1978. I was also the social worker for their older brother [NL 263] who was placed in a Family Group Home [redacted] and on a few occasions each year I brought all three boys together. They were part of a family of thirteen children, of whom eleven were in long term care, in various places, under various social workers, with the result that some of the siblings did not even know each other. It was recognised that splitting up siblings was not good practice, but the reality was that sufficient places were not available in one establishment. We did bring the younger six children together occasionally but most were not very enthusiastic about the contact, as they did not really know each other and had not remembered living in the same family.
5. I recall that [SR 62] was the person I usually liaised with when visiting at Nazareth Lodge. However, apart from her being middle-aged, I have very little recollection of what she was like.
6. My general impression is that [HIA 210] and [NL 204] were not very happy in Nazareth. I cannot recall now exactly why I thought this, but it could have been because they both wanted to be fostered by a family. I recall that they would often ask if I had found a family yet.
7. When I started working with them, [HIA 210] and [NL 204] were already being befriended by a family in [redacted] who would take them out some weekends. I think this arrangement was set up through their local parish priest, but I am not certain about that. This family used to take one or both boys out, but in the longer term they felt unable to manage more than one. I remember

completing a fostering home study with them, with the result that they were approved to foster [NL 204] Whilst this was positive for [NL 204] I felt it was very difficult for [HIA 210] who remained in Nazareth Lodge. I understand from [NL 191] report that later he did move to a foster family.

8. At that time, there was no specialist Fostering Unit in the Southern Board. If a child needed a foster family, and none was available, the social worker would place an advert in the newspaper, follow up any responses, complete a home study and obtain approval from senior staff. This was in addition to the pressures of a full caseload which included not only children in the care of the Board, but also child protection, learning disability, physical disability, mental health, older people, addiction, monitoring of childminders, etc. This made finding time to assess prospective fostercarers particularly difficult.
9. Finally, I would like to add that as [HIA 210] social worker at that time, I very much regret if I failed in any way to ensure his safety and protection.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed _____

NL 190

Dated 23 January 2015

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SOUTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES BOARD

PERSONAL SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

R. MOORE
Director of Social Services

R. D. POOLE
District Social Services Officer

CRAIGAVON & BANBRIDGE DISTRICT
THE HEALTH CENTRE
TAVANAGH AVENUE
PORTADOWN
Telephone 34400

Please reply to

17th May 1982.

Report for Admission Panel

██████████, 18th May 1982

Re: NL 263 (16) d.o.b. 23.2.66.
Family Group Home,
██████████

Family Background

NL 263 is the 7th child in a family of 13 children, of whom eleven have been long term in care. His mother, ██████████ (nee ██████████), first became known to our department in ██████████ in 1956, when as unmarried mother she placed her twin babies for adoption. Soon after this she lived in Birmingham for a time and then married SPT 22. Their first child, SPT 22, was born in ██████████ shortly after they married. The family then moved to Mr. ██████████ parents' home in Strabane, where 3 more children were born to them - ██████████ ██████████

Mrs. ██████████, a person of very low intelligence, was not capable of providing a stable home for the children. The marital relationship was a rather stormy one, and Mr. ██████████ was prone to drink and had violent tendencies. He has spent some time in prison.

The four oldest children were received into the care of Tyrone County Welfare Committee when their parents deserted them, and the grandparents were unable to look after them. Their fifth child, ██████████, was subsequently received into care.

In 1966 Mr. and Mrs. Hegarty moved to Portadown with ██████████ and NL 263. The family situation continued to be most unstable.

7th April 1966. ██████████ (1 year) and George (6 weeks) were admitted to care for 3 weeks because of neglect, and discharged under a Supervision Order directed to the H.S.P.C.C.

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4th November 1968. Mrs. [redacted] and her 4 children [redacted] NL 263 Lilian and [redacted] were forced to leave home because of Mr. [redacted] behaviour towards his wife. She alleged that he periodically beat her and put her out. The children were placed in Nazareth House, Portadown, until their return to their parents on 24.12.68.

15th April 1969. The four children were again received into care [redacted] as their mother had left them in the care of their father. He was described as unstable, unreliable, a heavy drinker, and anxious to return to his job. The parents took them home on 10.6.69. However, two weeks later, on 22.6.69, [redacted] and the children were found on the street during the night trying to make their way to [redacted]. The children were re-admitted to Nazareth House where they remained for 3 months. During this time HIA was born (August 1969.)

5th January 1970. Mrs. [redacted] had been leaving the home frequently over the previous week, taking the children with her and exposing them to hunger and cold. On two occasions Social Worker had to obtain food for the family, owing to the parents quarrelling and failing to look after the children properly. On this occasion Mrs. [redacted] left taking only [redacted] with her. Mr. [redacted] was drinking a lot and was not fit to care for the children, so they were admitted to care on 6.1.70, NL 263 to [redacted] and [redacted], [redacted] and HIA to Nazareth House. Mrs. [redacted] turned up in Armagh 10 days later, and [redacted] was taken to [redacted].

Fit Person Orders were granted on 24th February 1970 in respect of all five children.

The next child NL 204 [redacted] b. (25.8.70.) was received into care in Strabane when he was 2 months old, and a month later transferred to Nazareth House, (P.R.O. 25.1.72) Mr. and Mrs. Hegarty moved to Liverpool, where the last two children were born.

Mrs. [redacted] has been in N.I. on a few fleeting and rather disruptive visits, in September 1976, and early 1978. In May 1980, she stayed in the Battered Wives' Hostel in Craigavon, with [redacted]. Arrangements were made for NL 263 and [redacted] to see her, but she disappeared on the day she was to meet them. At that time she told me she was separated from her husband and was living in London. She has been here on one visit since then but did not contact the children.

Personality and Behaviour

NL 263 [redacted] has been continuously in residential care since just before his 4th birthday, first in [redacted] until the age of 8 and then in the Family Group Home, [redacted].

He has had few, if any, long term close relationships, and gives the impression of being "detached". He has difficulty communicating with others, and often does not come out and say what he wants, particularly with adults. He is reasonably popular with his peers but does not seem to have any particular close friends. His classmates tend to treat him as a bit of a clown, and he often does not realise they are "taking a hand out of him". He is immature and tends to be easily led.

NL 263 [redacted] can be moody and withdrawn at times; at other times he is rather aggressive and quick-tempered, arguing that black is white to prove himself to be in the right. While he hates to be the loser in any game, he is slowly learning to cope with defeat.

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NL 263

lacks confidence in himself and needs a great deal of encouragement to face new situations. As one might expect, he is very apprehensive about the future, wondering if he will find work, where he will live, how he will cope etc, once he is no longer in care.

In February 1981 NL 263 was very ill with viral pneumonia, and after his recovery and return to school his behaviour became aggressive and disruptive for a time. It was felt that this stubborn behaviour was probably part of normal adolescent development which was complicated by lack of stability in his life so far.

Along with Social Worker he compiled a life story book which seemed to help him sort out his confused image of his family. Since last summer his behaviour has been more settled.

Contact with family

NL 263 says he does not remember his parents at all. As far as I am aware, he has not seen them since he was 4 years old. In September 1980 he wrote to his mother in [redacted] and subsequently she telephoned him, as did his father in [redacted]. However, after a few phone calls this contact abruptly ceased, leaving NL 263 very puzzled and let-down. He had little to say to his parents when they phoned, but was proud to be able to talk about having a mother and father. Last year he was very curious to find out about his family, but this seems to have lessened a little recently, as he focusses more on his immediate future - the move to Bocombe Lodge, and obtaining employment.

The only siblings NL 263 has lived with since being in care are Patricia who was in [redacted] with him, and Delien whom he met for the first time when she stayed in the Family Group Home for a few months in 1980.

Over the years the younger six children have usually had get-togethers a few times a year. However these have been less frequent in the last few years as none of the children, with the possible exception of [redacted], seemed overly enthusiastic about the contact. With Johnny and Martin, George tends to act the big brother and seems to find them amusing and irritating.

NL 263 met [redacted] for the first time last September, and went to stay with him at Christmas. However, he returned hungry and filthy, and he later said he had been drinking beer in a pub with Hugh and his wife, and [redacted]. Hugh has not been in touch since.

NL 263 met [redacted] on one occasion when she visited [redacted] in Armagh. He has never met [redacted].

The only sibling he seems at all attached to is [redacted] who is now living in Belfast, discharged from care. Unfortunately she has rather anti-authority attitudes and does not always have a helpful influence on NL 263. At one time the houseparents expressed concern that her interest in NL 263 might not be entirely sisterly.

Interests, school, employment

NL 263 main interest is sport. He plays soccer, gaelic football and boxing, and loves swimming. He is also a keen television watcher.

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At school, NL 263 has not been a great achiever. Academically he is not very bright, he lacks concentration, and although he can read fairly well he has difficulty putting his thoughts on paper. He has sat for 4 C.S.E's. His behaviour in school has been fairly reasonable on the whole. At a recent school concert he was proud of his success in playing the part of the Incredible Hulk.

NL 263 leaves school on 28th May, to his great delight. At present he is doing 2 weeks work experience. His previous experience includes 2 weeks in the Rehabilitation Workshop last summer, 2 weeks helping in a garage in December 1981, and a part-time job for his form-master for several months, bagging cement. NL 263 tends to set his sights higher than his abilities - he talked of being a mechanic and at present is hoping to be a painter. According to teachers, he would not be capable of doing much more than fairly routine work. It takes him a comparatively long time to learn skills. The local careers officer [REDACTED] told me there are vacancies at present on two 16 week courses at the Government Training Centre - the Young Person's Engineering Course (welding, sheet metal work) and the Young Person's General Construction Operatives Course, (scaffolding, concrete, building.) Another possibility is the Community Workshop. I feel that initially George would benefit from some sheltered employment until he matures and gets used to a working life.

Needs

1. Help in becoming more independent, learning to manage money, to shop, cook wash clothes etc.
2. To gain further understanding of his background and develop a positive self-identity.
3. Support in new situations (such as employment) in order to increase his self-confidence.
4. Encouragement to go out and mix socially.
5. A well-supervised work situation.

.....
[REDACTED]
SOCIAL WORKER

SNB-6078

FAMILY (continued)

Name of Child	D.O.B.	Date R.I.C. Status	Care Authority	Present Whereabouts
NL 263	23.2.66	24.2.70 F.P.O.	Craigavon & Banbridge Social Services The Health Centre, Tavanagh Ave., Portadown. Tele. No. - Portadown 34400 Social Worker - NL 189	Family Group Home, [REDACTED]
HIA 210	25.8.69	24.2.70 F.P.O.	Do	Nazareth House Children's Home, Ravenhill Road, Belfast.
NL 204	25.8.70	25.1.72 P.R.O.	Do	Do
[REDACTED]	28.4.67	24.2.70 F.P.O.	Newry Social Services Tele. - Newry 4324 Social Worker - [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	31.7.68	24.2.70 F.P.O.	Do	Do
			[REDACTED] Social Worker	

/MG 21.2.78

Eastern Health and Social Services Board
North and West Belfast Community
Unit of Management



Milner Street
 Belfast BT12 6FA
 Telephone 27156

CONFIDENTIAL

27 June 1985

Mother Paul
 Nazareth Lodge Children's Home
 516 Ravenhill Road
 BELFAST BT6

District Social Services Officer:
~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ *W. H. H. H.*

our ref: HC/DP *RB*

your ref: HOLD ☐ - 3 JUL 1985 ☐

COPY TO: *Mr. Ferguson SR*
Mr. Smyth SR

FOR ACTION/COMMENT INFORMATION

Dear Mother Paul

Further to our discussion on the 25.6.85. You will recall that I mentioned that both I and *NL 191* Senior Social Worker, *SR 62* office, had interviewed *HIA 210* on Friday 21.6.85. As you know, *HIA 210* was in Nazareth from approximately 1974 - 1981.

HIA 210 has made a list of complaints about the treatment he received in Nazareth and, in particular, has cited 2 individuals, *SR 62* and *NL 97*. The list of complaints that *HIA 210* has raised are as follows -

- 1 That on one occasion *SR 62* punched him in the nose, drawing blood.
- 2 On another occasion another boy in the unit at that time by the name of *NL 97* was struck by *SR 62* and, as a consequence, banged his head off a wash-hand basin causing him severe swelling to his face and 2 black eyes.
- 3 On numerous occasions he says that he was physically punished by both *SR 62* and *NL 97* the latter he recalls using a bamboo cane, and the former, a stick or mop handle.
- 4 On numerous occasions he was locked in a store cupboard under the stairs. This cupboard was normally used to store domestic equipment and he says he was made to sit in it for lengthy periods of time.
- 5 On 2 or 3 occasions he says he was made to sleep in the bathroom as a punishment over-night.
- 6 He says that on one occasion he complained to his social worker, Miss *NL 190* who was then employed by the Southern Health and Social Services Board, that she took this issue up with *SR 62* and on leaving, *SR 62* put both him and his younger brother *NL 204* into a cold bath as a punishment for having spoken to his social worker.
- 7 He says on numerous occasions he was deprived of food for periods up to one day, and
- 8 on one occasion he was served liver as his meal, disliking liver one of the other children placed this in a waste-bin. When *SR 62* came into the room she discovered the liver, took it out of the waste-bin and made him eat it.

As you will be aware we suggested to you that *HIA 210* was quite prepared to confront anyone on these allegations and was strenuous in his insistence that he was telling the truth. He quoted a number of other children who were in the unit at that time whom he alleged

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would collaborate his story. He recalled other members of staff, namely [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] whom he spoke highly of and, indeed, he recognised in himself a certain attachment to [REDACTED] SR 62 [REDACTED]. We therefore believed that whilst there is a possibility that there might be some exaggeration, nevertheless John's allegation must be taken seriously.

As you will know, [REDACTED] DL 518 [REDACTED] with whom I have consulted, has suggested that in the company of yourself I should speak to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] about their time in the unit. I have told [REDACTED] DL 518 [REDACTED] that [REDACTED] SR 62 [REDACTED] is currently in Middlesbrough and is not working with children and that the whereabouts of [REDACTED] are unknown, although we will try to ascertain this. At this stage it is not my intention to interview any of the other children cited by [REDACTED] HIA 210 [REDACTED], although I presume this remains a possibility.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]
PRINCIPAL SOCIAL WORKER

CC

[REDACTED] NL 191 [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] DL 518 [REDACTED]

21. 2. 85

NL 188

On 21. 2. 85 I interviewed HIA 210 along with his foster parent [redacted] and [redacted] S.W. regarding the recent allegations that HIA 210 has been making about the way he was treated while in Nazareth Lodge. HIA 210 has particularly bad memories of being locked in a cupboard for 4 - 5 hours a [redacted] of punishment by both a member of staff called [redacted] and SR 62. He said that he remembers that there was no light in this cupboard. He also said that he was hit with brush poles as a means of punishment. He described an incident concerning another child with whom he was with in the Unit. According to HIA 210 on one occasion [redacted] NL 97 was pushed against a sink and banged his head. He had 2 black eyes as a result of this and was not brought to hospital for treatment. He said that [redacted] NL 97 was kept off school for about 2 to 3 weeks.

HIA 210 said that he had told his Social Worker [redacted] NL 190 about being hit on one occasion by [redacted] SR 62 with a stick but the Social Worker he said believed [redacted] SR 62. I contacted HIA 210 previous social worker [redacted] NL 190 [redacted] about this allegation. She said that [redacted] never told her about being hit and she never saw any signs of either [redacted] HIA 210 or Martin being punished inappropriately while she was visiting them in Nazareth Lodge. On another occasion [redacted] HIA 210 remembers being hit and having a very sore arm and shoulder. HIA 210 claims that [redacted] SR 62 would have used 'anything she could get her hands on' to hit the children with. On [redacted] HIA 210 occasion he said that [redacted] NL 263 got hit with a hosepipe of a vacuum cleaner. HIA 210 also said that he remembers being punched on the nose because he didn't want to go to his Irish Dancing classes. Another form of punishment which HIA 210 described to me vividly was being locked in a bathroom all night long. He also remembers being put into cold baths.

HIA 210 said that he remembers when he was about 6 or 7 years old going out to a family [redacted] with whom he was to be fostered. [redacted] had bought him a bike for Christmas and when he brought it back to Nazareth Lodge it was taken off him and he never saw it again. HIA 210 also said that the children in the Unit were threatened that if they misbehaved that the man who had abducted and murdered a young boy from the [redacted] would get them also.

On 3. 4. 85 I interviewed HIA 210 brother [redacted] NL 263 with regard to the allegations which HIA 210 had made. [redacted] NL 263 had difficulty remembering who was in the Unit with him [redacted] and along with his brother the other children he remembers were [redacted] HIA 210 [redacted] NL 263. He has no memories of being moved to Nazareth Lodge. He remembered [redacted] who he described as 'O.K.' He then said that she was 'good and kind' to him. I asked him if he had ever remembered being hit by either [redacted] or [redacted] SR 62. He said that sometimes he would have got smacked around the head although this was never hard. [redacted] SR 62 he said would have hit the children with a wooden spoon or slipper. He denies ever having seen John being hit. When asked if he ever remembered seeing [redacted] NL 97 with black eyes he said he did - but this occurred when his brother and [redacted] NL 97 were playing 'hide and seek' and bumped into each other. When asked about the cupboard which HIA 210 describes being locked into [redacted] NL 263 said he remembers being told to go and stand in it. He also said that he found HIA 210 in this cupboard on one occasion. This cupboard he said could be opened from both the inside and outside and was not locked when he found HIA 210 in it. He does remember on one occasion being told to eat soap along with other children. However just as he was about to eat the soap it was taken off him. [redacted] NL 263 also remembers [redacted] HIA 210 having a bike and there were bikes available for the children to play on.

NL 191

Senior Social Worker

GA:mc
11. 4. 85

-2-

4th November 1968. Mrs. [redacted] and her 4 children [redacted] NL 263 [redacted] and [redacted] were forced to leave home because of Mr. [redacted] behaviour towards his wife. She alleged that he periodically beat her and put her out. The children were placed in Nazareth House, Portadown, until their return to their parents on 24.12.68.

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210

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Personality and Behaviour

NL 263 [redacted] has been continuously in residential care since just before his 4th birthday, first in [redacted] until the age of 8 and then in the Family Group Home, Armagh.

He has had few, if any, long term close relationships, and gives the impression of being "detached". He has difficulty communicating with others, and often does not come out and say what he wants, particularly with adults. He is reasonably popular with his peers but does not seem to have any particular close friends. His classmates tend to treat him as a bit of a clown, and he often does not realise they are "taking a hand out of him". He is immature and tends to be easily led.

NL 263 [redacted] can be moody and withdrawn at times; at other times he is rather aggressive and quick-tempered, arguing that black is white to prove himself to be in the right. While he hates to be the loser in any game, he is slowly learning to cope with defeat.

HIA REF: []

NAME [NL 190]

DATE [29 JANUARY 2015]

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

Witness Statement of NL 190

I, NL 190 will say as follows:

- 1 Further to the Panel's request for any additional general information about Nazareth Lodge, I have nothing further to add.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed

NL 190

Dated

29.01.2015