

Senate Inquiry into Child Migration

Submission

Barry M Coldrey

Senate Inquiry Objective

This author hopes that the inquiry will be approached seriously and done thoroughly so that no further inquiry on this matter is required. There have been a number of inquiries and investigations, including most recently that from the British Parliament, House of Commons, Health Committee.

However, there has been no inquiry from Australia's National Parliament, so that this by the Senate should fill that gap. Many former child migrants do wish their stories to be placed in an official record, and that official recognition is part of the reconciliation process for the hurt they suffered.

However, at some stage, there had to be a conclusion and perhaps this will be the last public investigation of child migration.

Present Position on Child Migration

In the opinion of the author

- **Child migration as a policy was** - in a social climate very different from that of today - **a well-intended response to the needs of deprived children**, even if this meant making the best of a most unfortunate situation. At the time, child migration was seen to be in the best interests of the children, providing them with a fresh start and better prospects which potentially offered them greater opportunities. There are many success stories.

- The migration schemes were run by **respected national voluntary** and church organisations - Barnardo's, Fairbridge, Church of English Council for Empire Settlement - to name but three.

- **Good intentions are one thing; their execution is another.** The schemes were only as good as the people administering the schemes. There were problems. Management varied from average to rough-and-ready. Hence, for example, many years after their arrival, some former child migrants, who had lived in Australia many years and enrolled in one or other of the armed services, could find in mid-life that they were not Australian citizens.

- **The quality of life in the various Australian residential care institutions varied from satisfactory to abusive.** Physical and sexual abuse occurred. **However, each child migrant has his/her own story.** A place that proved horrific for one child was satisfactory for another. Experiences of individual children varied even in the one institution.

- With all the (legitimate) talk of abuse, we do need to be clear: much, (NOT all), of the discussion around 'abuses' is no more than talking about working class (or underclass) life at the margins of society in an earlier and poorer era with fewer social services. Child migration occurred at the base of the social heap. We are in a world of poor people. **Times change; society is more affluent; values evolve; the past is reconstructed.** However it can be true too that: 'The past is a foreign country; they did things differently there.'

- **The schemes were legal**, i.e. the schemes were sanctioned by laws passed in both the UK Parliament, and in the colonies (Dominions) and countries receiving children. There was some public debate, including discussion between the governments concerned, official reports and visits.

- **A number of voluntary and religious organisations have been assisting former child migrants for some years.** The Christian Brothers who managed four Western Australian institutions during the relevant period have made the following initiatives:

- commissioned historical research into the development of child migration schemes, residential care, and abuse allegations;
- established a Committee of expert professionals to profile the needs of former care residents;
- **concluded a \$5 million out-of-court settlement with over 200 ex-students, many of them former child migrants. Of this money, \$1.5 million was allotted to pay the legal expenses VOICES members had accumulated in pursuing their cases;**
- provided a range of services for former care residents including counselling, adult education, travel assistance and access to personal records;
- **initiated the project which produced the PHIND computerised index to the location of personal records of form child migrants who came to any Catholic institution in Australia;**
- commissioned a survey of accommodation needs among former residents of the Christian Brothers homes.

The Christian Brothers (and other bodies) may well feel that they have done, and are doing, their full share to assist former child migrants and other former residents of their child care institutions. It is the governments who have been slow to respond.

- Governments - especially Australian Governments, national and state - have done relatively little to assist former child migrants, bearing in mind the resources at the disposal of the state.

The British Government has done more, as well it might. By 1997, the British Government had provided grants totaling £146,000 to the Child Migrants Trust to assist in their record tracing, advisory and counselling service. Afterwards, further funding amounting to £45,000 has been agreed for the next two financial years 1997-98 and 1998-99. In 2000, the British Government established a Travel Fund with a £1,000,000 grant to assist former child migrants to return to the UK to visit relatives.

What further could be done to assist former child migrants ?

- an official apology for any harm caused as a result of prior governments policies might assist some as part of a reconciliation process;

- personal compensation payments for each child migrant would have to be won through the civil courts in classic negligence/ 'breach of duty of care'/'breach of fiduciary duty' cases;
- in Canada - Nova Scotia - there appear to be plans for a 'Home Children' ('child migrant') Centre funded by province and national Canadian governments; ... an idea for Australia ?
- a retirement village, Western Australia, funded by governments and agencies; with its management charter arranged to favour priority residence by former child migrants; - a variation on this theme might be a social centre/research centre/non-denominational chapel in the complex referred to above

The author - Personal Involvement in the Controversy

My involvement in the child migration controversy commenced in 1989. There is a version of my life and writing on the Australian Society of Authors, Award Scheme website: <http://www.asauthors.org/Award> (and then follow the links).

In August, (then Brother) Albert Mc Gregor wrote to me 'out of the blue' to tell me the dark underside of his experience as a child migrant (Scotland) in the Christian Brothers Castledare-Clontarf (WA) orphanages during the 1950s and, specifically, of his sexual abuse by a Brother there. Mc Gregor claimed that Brother L H Murphy had forced him when a teenager at Clontarf, around the age of 12-13, to sleep with him a number of times. Murphy would come to the boy's bed after lights out and lead the boy back to his own room and direct him into the bed.

Actually, in his first letter, Brother Mc Gregor did not name Murphy. I did some cross-checking that the Brother to whom Mc Gregor was referring was L H Murphy and Bert Mc Gregor confirmed this at a later meeting.

This commenced my involvement working on the child migration history and related matters.

My detailed statement of investigation work will have to be given in an oral submission to the Senate Inquiry, if the Committee members call for an oral presentation.

However, there are substantial references to my work during these years in two histories:

Raftery, M and O'Sullivan, E, Suffer the Little Children: The Inside Story of Ireland's Industrial Schools, New Ireland Books, Dublin, 1999, pp 262-7.

Gill, A, Orphans of the Empire: The Shocking Story of Child Migration to Australia, Millennium/Random House, 1997-8, pp 397-410.

The first of these detailed references reads as follows:

‘Much of the information on this correspondence comes from Dr Barry Coldrey, himself a Christian Brother working in Australia. He was commissioned by the congregation to write a history of its involvement in the provision of institutional care for children in Australia. In his book **The Scheme**, Coldrey says that at times savage physical abuse and fairly widespread sexual abuse occurred in these institutions.

Coldrey cites further evidence of knowledge of child sexual abuse within Christian Brothers’ institutions amongst senior members of the congregation. Statements such as ‘shameful betrayals of trust with reference to boys’, ‘terrible question of interference with boys’, ‘he must never be in contact with the young’ all reveal that clear and precise knowledge of such abuse existed.

Damning as Coldrey’s book is, more dramatic events were to follow. In the mid-1990s, it was revealed that Coldrey had in fact written a second book. When he had finished the manuscript of **The Scheme** and was waiting for the book to go through its publication stages, he wrote what became ‘Reaping the Whirlwind: A Secret Report for the Executive of the Christian Brothers - Sexual Abuse from 1930-1994’. This was a confidential report for the then Superior-General of the congregation, Colm Keating. In spite of its confidential status, ‘Reaping the Whirlwind’ found its way into the Australian legal system, and was cited as evidence in many civil cases against the Brothers and the Church. In this report, Coldrey admitted that ‘the situation in the orphanages was worse than the impression given in **The Scheme**’. He also uncovered evidence of ‘sex rings’ in two of the orphanages operated by the Brothers in Western Australia.

To give some sense of ‘Reaping the Whirlwind’, we reproduce here an account of the sexual abuse of one young boy, given by a survivor of the notorious Bindoon orphanage in Western Australia:

I settled into Boys town, Bindoon, and worked very hard under Brother Keaney but was singled out by several Brothers for special attention and often found myself in very unsavory situations where I was given jobs away from the other boys and was subjected to a Brother taking all his clothes off and all my clothes off and he (Angus) tried to penetrate me for a long time until the lunch bell rang. I was told not to say anything and it won’t happen again. The Brother would give me a job, and this other one would turn up. He told me I was doing something wrong, took my pants down and belted me with the strap and told me I would get the same till I learned to do exactly what he wanted me to do. The climax came on one day when all the boys were to go to the Bindoon Show. This Brother was going with them, so I made an excuse to stay behind, so one Brother told me to feed hay to the cattle, and clean up the dairy. I nearly died when the Brother turned up behind me with no clothes on ... he ordered me to remove my shorts ... I was scared and he grabbed me and threw me onto bales of hay and raped me. I was crying as he kept trying to push his penis into me ...

Brother Paul Keaney, mentioned in the above testimony, was born in Rossinver, Co Leitrim in 1888. He emigrated to Australia in 1912 and after working in a number of jobs, joined the Christian Brothers in 1916. He was a well-known figure in Western Australia, liking to describe himself as ‘Keaney the builder’, the orphanage he ran at Bindoon was literally built

from scratch by the children, who were mainly child migrants sent out from the UK. A significant number of these had been born to Irish mothers in Britain and placed in orphanages throughout the UK. Australian journalist, Alan Gill, in his definitive history of the child migration schemes to Australia has argued that 'Claims of physical abuse perpetrated by Keaney are so numerous that, even if only ten per cent were true, he would be quite unfit for any form of contact with children.'

Keaney is also reported to have committed acts of savage sexual abuse on several boys. One survivor describes his methods:

Keaney had a special stick which had - and I'm an ex-army man - a bullet on the end of it. Now if you know a .303 bullet, the bullet goes inside a casing like a shell, but the shell casing had got rivets on it ... and what he'd do with this stick after he'd hit you, he'd give you a quick thrust up the rectum and give it a twist and that would withdraw your lower bowel out of your rectum and that happened to me once. He must have thought he hurt me pretty badly, because he inspected me some time after that.

In the late 1960s, some years after Brother Keaney's death, the Bindoon orphanage was renamed Keaney College in honour of this Brother. His bronze statue dominates the courtyard of the building, with his hand resting on the shoulder of a small boy.

It is interesting to note that no child migration scheme every developed directly from Ireland, despite the attempts of the Christian Brothers to persuade the Irish Government to send children to their institutions in Australia. In 1938, Brother Louis Conlon, manager of the Tardun orphanage in Western Australia, wrote to the Taoiseach, Eamon de Valera, inviting the Irish Government to participate in and provide financial assistance for a child migration scheme to Australia. Conlon visited Ireland to promote his cause and received some media attention. However, on the 17 August 1938, Conlon was told by the Cabinet Secretary that the Government would not sanction such a scheme. It was thought that de Valera did not approve of such forced emigration as the solution to Ireland's problems. Irish children in industrial schools were thus spared having transportation to Australia added to their other miseries of hunger and abuse.

A House of Commons Report established to investigate the child migration schemes from Britain to Australia was published in 1998. It noted that 'the worst cases of criminal abuse in Australia appear to have occurred in institutions run by the agencies of the Catholic church, in particular the Christian Brothers and the Sisters of Mercy. The committee went on to say that:

It is hard to convey the sheer weight of the testimony we have received. It is impossible to resist the conclusion that some of what was done there was of a quite exceptional depravity, so that terms like 'sexual abuse' are too weak to convey it. For example, those of us who heard the account of a man who as a boy was a particular favourite of some Christian Brothers at Tardun who competed as to who could rape him 100 times first, his account of being in terrible pain, bleeding and bewildered, trying to beat his own eyes so they would cease to be blue as the Brothers liked his blue eyes, or being forced to masturbate animals, or being held upside down over a well and threatened in case he ever told, will never forget it.

The Christian Brothers Canadian orphanages in Newfoundland and in Ontario have also been the subject of investigations of child abuse. In attempting to explain the existence of violence and abuse in institutions managed by the Christian Brothers, Dr Barry Coldrey has written that such allegations must be placed in their historical and institutional context:

The Institute's recruitment was heavily rural in Ireland, and from the respectable working-class world-wide. Institutional youth had regularly suffered acute deprivation before their admittance, a deprivation at which the Brothers could only guess because courses in child care were very much a thing of the future - the 1960s, not the 1980s. The Brothers were normally trained as primary teachers, not as child care professionals. In institutions Brothers and boys had one another's company around the clock. The work was especially tiring and stressful; recreation away from the institution was rare; holidays few; and the boys' moods and reactions differed from those with a stable family background. Bed wetting among the younger inmates, the result of basic insecurity and poor toilet training, was a pervasive problem, and no solution appeared to offer itself except primitive aversion therapy. It was likely that stress would lead to violence.

'In more recent work, Coldrey has highlighted the very thin line that exists between physical and sexual abuse in such institutions. He says that the fact that so many children were stripped before they were beaten suggests a sexual element to the punishments inflicted on them. He points out that the beating of naked children was often a precursor to sexual abuse.

'Barry Coldrey remains a Christian Brother, living in Australia. He is an established scholar, with his doctoral thesis on 'The Influence of the Christian Brothers on militant Irish nationalism' having been published as the book *Faith and Fatherland* (Gill and Macmillan) in 1988. However, it appears that his more recent work in discovering the extent of child abuse in Australian institutions has not proved popular with the Order. According to his own web page on the internet, he says that 'My mission as an 'agent secret' for a section of the Roman Catholic church ended unromantically in February 1998 when I was handed my redundancy papers. Nor was the handshake golden.' (Raftery, M and O'Sullivan, E, *Suffer the Little Children: The Inside Story of Ireland's Industrial Schools*, New Ireland Books, Dublin, 1999)

The second account of Dr Barry Coldrey's work, that of Alan Gill - under the sub-heading 'Barry Coldrey - Inquisitor from the East' - reads as follows:

'He is softly-spoken, articulate, and one of the more colorful identities in the Catholic Church today. The Christian Brothers began by boosting him. Now they wish he would go away, which, conveniently, he has.

Brother Barry Coldrey (he prefers not to use the academic appellation) is a Melbournian who has spent much of the past six or seven years as a trouble-shooter for his own Christian Brothers Order. At least, that's how some people see it. His brief was to write a history of the Christian Brothers work for deprived children in Western Australia, with particular reference to the child migration era. There was an 'understanding' - it is not clear whether at his own or the Order's behest - that he would examine specifically the allegations of sexual abuse.

It was an uncomfortable role. There is a degree of isolationism in Western Australia which extends into the religious sphere. Some of his colleagues resented the presence of a 'wise man from the east', even from within the same Order, and looked on him as some kind of 'spy' or 'inquisitor'. Others welcomed him - perhaps on the basis of 'better the devil you know'. A third group saw him as already a member of the team, who would presumably be sympathetic, unlike a secular academic or, heaven forbid, a crusading journalist.

He struck up an early report with child migrants, including office holders of the now dormant Child Migrant's Friendship Society and its more militant successor, VOICES. For reasons which will be explained, these relations later turned sour.

Though loyal to the Order of which he was, after all, a serving member, he was in a sense a loose cannon. He had an office near that of the then Western Australian Province Leader, Brother Gerald Faulkner, which proved embarrassing when he took calls from people commonly regarded as 'the enemy'. Both the author and Bruce Blyth, director of VOICES, were at various times asked to use code names when telephoning. Blyth recalls using the name Carruthers, causing mirth when a Christian Brothers' switchboard operator rang back, asking Mrs Blyth, who has not been notified, if she could pass a message to 'Mr Carruthers'.

Near the beginning of his mandate, Coldrey encountered the rage of former child migrants who claimed that the Order had kept from them information about their families. An example was given of two brothers (Alex McDonald and Bert McGregor) in the same institution who only discovered, some 40 years later (and then no thanks to the Christian Brothers) that they were related.

He told the author: 'There is no evidence to support that supposition (of non co-operation). We took kids with just their names. Always presume muddle first, before you presume bastardry.' Interestingly, in a move which failed to gain the support of his superiors, Coldrey later floated the idea - ultimately adopted in a different fashion - of an independent fund to assist former child migrants. He suggested that (now former) Jesuit, Alex McDonald, he made chairman.

In a separate move Coldrey - again going it alone - said in a memo to the president of VOICES that he supported a change of name (of the former Bindoon orphanage) from Keaney College and the possible sale of the building in a way that would benefit former residents.

Coldrey claims the Christian Brothers and other religious bodies were 'carers' or 'middle men' in a society which did not care very much, and cannot be blamed for British and Australian Government policies in regard to child migration. To this many child migrants respond: 'It was the carers who inflicted the pain.'

Coldrey is a professional teacher and historian with some twenty published books and around the same number of refereed articles published in academic journals. He is not averse to poking gentle fun at his own (Christian Brother) inheritance. In a historical paper, 'A most unenviable reputation', he made reference to an early Christian Brothers 'Manual of School Government' which stated: 'Blows are a servile form of chastisement and degrade the soul.'

In a conversation with the author, he painted an unflattering picture of social attitudes during the 1950s, when child migration was at its peak. According to Coldrey, those admitted to the

four Western Australian institutions were regarded by society as ‘abandoned, illegitimate orphans’ - the very lowest on the social scale. The St Joseph’s Farm and Trade school, Bindoon orphanage, in particular, was perceived as ‘an end of the line joint’ to which children with the lowest intelligence or academic records were consigned.

‘Dull lads, difficult lads, hurt lads. Bindoon was the place for them. Everybody knew it. I don’t wish to hurt anyone’s feelings but it is the truth.’ He said that some of the boys sent to Bindoon had been turned out of other homes. The attitude of the Brothers was: ‘We’ll take ‘em in, anyway’.

A controversial point among child migrants has been the loose way in which children were classified as ‘orphans’ - the basic justification for their migration. According to Coldrey: ‘Through the nineteenth century and right up to this period the term ‘orphan’ was simply a catch-all for a child on the welfare, and had little to do with parents or not.

‘It could be used for a child whose parents were deceased, but was also used for an illegitimate child and for simply basically a child in care - on the welfare. The point was ‘no money’, rather than no parents. So I don’t think there was any deception.’

Coldrey subscribes to the theory that the Commonwealth Government saw English orphans kids as cannon fodder against a future ‘yellow peril’ threat, and as a useful means in preserving a white-dominated population.

He said: ‘Here’s a beautiful thought. English child migrants brought out as part of a defence build-up. It sounds silly but mass migration in the late 1940s was intended to face a renewed threat from Japan within 25 years. In a sense you could say that these kids were looked upon as building up Australia with all the other migrants.

‘Child migrants were looked at in a very attractive light because they didn’t need much after they arrived here. They didn’t need separate homes or jobs; they just needed dormitory type accommodation and a subsistence type existence. At high government level I believe there was the view that these were people who could grab a rifle against a renewed Japanese threat in the next generation.’

He adds with a chuckle: ‘Of course, the churches weren’t thinking of this, but I believe those in power did. ‘If you can’t send troops send kids.’ That sort of thing comes through in government documents.

(Actually, some churchmen did share this view, seeing child migration as a counter to a perceived Asian threat well before the Second World War. Archbishop Redmond Prendiville of Perth, welcoming Catholic child migrants arriving at Fremantle on the *Strathaird* in August 1938, stated: ‘At a time when empty cradles are contributing woefully to empty spaces it is necessary to look at external sources of supply and if we do not supply from our stock we are leaving ourselves all the more exposed to the menace of the teeming millions of our neighbouring races.’

Coldrey has an interesting theory about the tendency of boys - including (college) Old Boys - to exaggerate when remembering and describing events in their youth. He illustrates this with a story:

‘Recently a teacher at one of our Sydney colleges celebrated his Golden Jubilee of being a Christian Brother. Old Boys gave him a dinner and told all the old stories about him. Naturally they were drinking freely. Apparently, one story is that he had held a boy out of second floor classroom window to scare the daylights out of him. I think he hadn’t done his homework.

‘The atmosphere of the dinner was very convivial. The chairman got up and said: ‘Now Brother, you remember that time when you used to hold the boys out the window. Stand up all those boys who were ever held out the window.’ About forty men stood up. ‘And there you are, Brother, you held them all out of the window, scared the living daylights out of them. and now they are all here honouring you tonight.’ The old Brother said there passively; he had Parkinson’s Disease. He said softly, ‘I know who I held out the window that day and I shouldn’t have. The other 39 are telling lies.’

Coldrey’s own cautious nature has meant that in regard to his ‘investigations’ he has been protective of the Brothers’ reputations, giving them the benefit of the doubt, and sometimes rather more in regard to allegations of paedophilia. He states: ‘On one side (the child migrants) most of the players are alive and, relatively speaking, young. On the other side (the Christian Brothers) key witnesses are dead or have disappeared into the general population. So you have loud accusations on one side and old men on the other. It’s not really a fair equation.’

Partly for the above reasons he is opposed to demands for a royal commission or a judicial inquiry. ‘Really, all of the big players are gone: Brother Paul Keaney died over 40 years ago; Brother M S Quilligan, Keaney’s successor have been dead seven years. Those who survive probably wouldn’t be able to present themselves well.’

‘Of course, the people from VOICES may come back and say, ‘Well, we’ve got some of our members suffering.’ My reply to that is: ‘You’ve left your run too late.’

Coldrey warns additionally that if a judicial inquiry were held, revelations would emerge not merely of indecent acts by Brothers, but of ‘boy on boy’ sex. According to Coldrey this was widespread. ‘There was a grotty underworld in the homes and some of the lads were into unpleasant activities with each other. For example, there is a letter in the (Christian Brothers) Roman archives with a complaint, I think, that 28 lads at Bindoon were thus engaged. All this and more would certainly come out in an inquiry, anti am sure the people from VOICES wouldn’t like it.’

Statements such as this, made in public as well as in private angered many of the child migrants, who described it as a ploy to silence legitimate claims against the Christian Brothers. According to Gordon Grant, then president of VOICES: ‘The kids arrived here when they were very young. They had been brought up by nuns in England and I can assure you they were more interested in recreation than sex.’ In at least one case a Brother who complained of ‘boy on boy’ sex is now alleged to have been a paedophile.

The question is often asked: ‘Where were the school inspectors?’ Coldrey is defensive about this. ‘They were there, but if, as alleged, a child was abused sexually, how could they see, if no one told them? They would not pull a boy’s pants down to see if he had marks on his behind. Suppose they had? Imagine the allegations then. Inspectors could see how the boys

looked, reacted and so on, but they cannot read minds. Basically the inspectors endorsed the work of the homes, and they were right to do so.'

Returning to his favourite theme, Coldrey says there is 'something unsatisfactory, something not very nice about making accusations against dead men. For the most part they are charges which easily could have been aired many years ago while the individual was alive and in a position to answer them.'

Coldrey also considers it 'unfair' that the Church as an institution, and even the Order of Christian Brothers, should be blamed for the shortcomings of its members. It leads to an interesting argument about shared responsibility. According to Coldrey: 'If a Brother does something wrong, or is perceived to have done something wrong, the congregation may be embarrassed, or whatever, but the Brother as a person, or a citizen, is responsible. Likewise, if a boy believes that he was wronged, seriously and illegally, while he was at Bindoon or wherever, there are options open to him for redress and he has always had these options.'

'What I am saying is that it is the Brother who as an individual is responsible, rather than the congregation which is responsible.' On a broader level Coldrey believes the very fact that the Catholic church, in particular, is drawing flak is in some ways to its credit. 'We have some problems within the Catholic church in these areas (sexual abuse) and I acknowledge this. I think the reason why we draw so much flak is that people in the community see us as holding traditional moral attitudes much more strongly than do other bodies. Therefore, delinquencies real or imagined are thrown into more striking relief.'

The Scheme and Schemes

Brother Barry Coldrey's book, *The Scheme: The Christian Brothers and Childcare in Western Australia*, was published on 12 November 1993. In it Coldrey said he thought there were five Brothers who, during the child migration era, were multiple sexual abusers of children under their care.

He did not name the offenders, and said four of them were dead. Readers considered the figure quoted by Coldrey was surprisingly low. The Order's West Australian Superior, Brother G Faulkner, had himself given a tally of up to fifteen, when interviewed in two TV current affairs programmes.

Elsewhere Coldrey mentioned the case of six Brothers (not considered multiple offenders) who admitted sexual misconduct with a particular teenage boy. According to Coldrey: 'It appears that these men did not offend again.' Coldrey notes in his book that there was 'a general lack of understanding in those days of the lasting harm caused by sexual abuse to the young victims' and 'that is one offense was committed, similar falls were likely to occur.' He writes: 'Some sexual misconduct arises from immaturity, some from pathology, some from addictions and some from human sinfulness. Be it an illness, a compulsion or a sin, the congregation's leaders had to deal with the matter when allegations against Brothers arose.'

'In keeping with the conventional understanding of the day, child abuse was viewed primarily as corrupting children - exposing them to moral depravity. There was limited grasp of the psychological and emotional impact of child abuse. Likewise, there was little understanding of the nature of the repeat offender, or of the likelihood of offenses being repeated in other settings.'

‘While all complaints were investigated by superiors, denial by a Brother accused usually meant his word against that of a boy. This usually resulted in warnings to the Brother and no further action. ‘Occasional episodes of malicious accusations and suspicion of the reliability of orphanage boys tended to count against taking a boy’s word against that of a Brother when there was no further evidence.

‘In addition, their solutions when allegations arose, were biased towards maintenance of the institution. Until the last generation, Brothers’ executives did not have to face the complications of media intrusion or legal complications during their decision making.’

Critics were dismayed and angry. The director of VOICES, Bruce Blyth, stated: ‘The book is just a bloody cover-up, a total cover-up. He won’t produce any names. The pictures are a cover-up. Happy kids waving from a boat and a tractor. Where are the pictures of the boys on the scaffolding, or bare foot humping rocks and laying cement.?’

Inevitably, the view circulated that Coldrey had been sent to Western Australia on a damage control exercise and that the book was, as feared, ‘a whitewash’. Coldrey denied this, stated: ‘I freely acknowledge that this was a commissioned book, and as such the people who commissioned it have had a right to make suggestions and changes. But there is only one area in which I accepted directions against my wishes and that was not to use the names of certain abusers. I would have published them.’

Actually, *The Scheme*, which carried no index, was rather like a jigsaw. By ferreting through it, including footnotes, one could make interesting discoveries, many of which were, indeed, candid. The book gives chapter and verse of the dismissal from the Order and the arrest and imprisonment of Christian Brother, Philip Carmody, in 1920. Coldrey makes much of the Order’s speedy response in this matter, from which he infers that the Order was not in the habit of hushing things up. Coldrey also notes that Carmody was the only Brother - at the time the book was written ‘ever formally charged, tried and convicted or crimes while serving in one of the congregation’s four Western Australian homes.’

The book includes the following testimony by an unidentified postwar English child migrant: ‘It was my third day in Australia ... my 13th birthday. I was in bed sick while the other boys were having boxing practice. Anyway, I was upstairs and the next thing in walked this very grotty, dirty-looking man’ with a hard bald head and he’d been working out in the fields all day, but he was wearing a Religious habit.

‘He came and sat on the bed and started talking to me and said I had beautiful skin ... and the next thing this guy has got his hands under the blankets, feeling my crotch area. Oh, I was scared. I was terrified.’

Coldrey’s research established the boy who was subjected to the abuse had made a complaint at the time. He states: ‘... Brother J J Carey, (then) a member of the Brothers’ executive in Melbourne, told me in 1989 that he was asked to investigate the matter when he was in Western Australia for a visitation.

‘Carey, as an old man in retirement, (now deceased) had read the account in *Lost Children of the Empire*, and told me that this was precisely the story he was told (by the boy, c 1954)

However, at the time he had not believed him and believed that he was being vindictive for some punishment he had received. 'Carey said to me: 'I have a feeling I made a mistake''. There are further records which show that the same Brother, 'Pop' Angus, was later reprimanded for having boys in his bedroom but 'the Brother's conduct was never investigated thoroughly'.

Coldrey goes on to say that Brother R (Angus) 'was not the only one who appears to have offended during the child migration era. The example of a Brother S is given a man who served in the institutions for a number of years. Though reported to his superiors, nothing much seems to have happened - presumably through lack of evidence. After many such allegations a senior member of the Order wrote to him in the following terms: 'A boy at Castledare has reported that you have been interfering with him. I understand you already know of the accusation. Please write to me as soon as possible by air mail, giving your reply to this very serious accusation.'

To this, Brother S replied: 'In answer to your letter referring to my behaviour towards a boy at Castledare I am pleased to say that the accusation is completely untrue ... I am deeply grateful for this opportunity to clear myself of any doubt in your eyes.' The Brother's denial was accepted. A few years later another senior member of the Order wrote in his report: 'Brother S is the uncertain member of the team ...'

The Scheme also gives various accounts of one-off sexual encounters between Christian Brothers and boys. These appear to have been treated astonishingly leniently, the punishment being a warning or transfer.

There is an interesting reference to an incident - first recorded by Lionel Welsh in *The Bindoon File* - in which a boy, Michael Searle, complained to Keaney of sexual misconduct by a staff member. (Actually Dom William OSB, one of the two Benedictine priests from New Norcia against whom accusations have been made by several Old Boys.)

According to the published account, Keaney dismissed the lad 'with extravagant language'. 'On one occasion when Mike mustered enough courage to report a particularly repulsive incident to Keaney, he was accused of lying: 'May God damn you to hellfire and may your soul rot in hell! Get out of here, you little black shit!', was the response.

The Scheme is not without home truths. Coldrey states in one passage: 'When a Brother makes an unpleasant report, the Provincial or Superior General may prefer 'to shoot the messenger', rather than investigate and follow up the report. The prestige of the Church, the congregation and its management are threatened.

Although attacked in some quarters as a 'whitewash', *The Scheme* made quite a few fascinating revelations, such as that concerning moves to remove Keaney from office - interestingly at the very height of his adulation - and the various events which followed.

The book has little in it, however, that could damage the present leadership. After reading it the book's sponsors no doubt heaved a collective sigh of relief, at least until a 1994 court hearing in Sydney (see Chapter 23), when Peter Semmler Q.C, representing numerous alleged victims, quoted extracts from *The Scheme*, in an attempt to show the Order had taken (in the 1950s) a half-hearted approach to the rectification of abuses. Mr Bernard Gross, Q.C, for the Christian Brothers, portrayed the book as somewhat less than authoritative.

A Secret Report

The arguments about the standing of *The Scheme*, paled into insignificance when Semmler revealed the existence of more modest but more dramatic literary work by Coldrey, called 'Reaping the Whirlwind: A Secret Report for the Executive of the Christian Brothers - Sexual Abuse from 1930 to 1994'. Journalists in the courtroom, including the author, were stunned to learn of its existence. Mr Gross, who had been forewarned, sought to downplay its value, describing it as 'one man's opinion', as he had done for *The Scheme*. He also objected to the word 'Secret' (which Coldrey himself had given it), arguing that 'Private' would be better.

The preface to *The Scheme* carries the statement: 'An unbiased reader would probably admit that the cause of truth has been well served by this book' Probably most readers, other than the more militant child migrants, would have agreed. But the discovery of *A Secret Report*, and the reading of extracts in court, dramatically altered the whole scene.

A Secret Report, or at least the version of it acquired by Slater and Gordon, and passed to Mr Semmler, is a part-typed, part-handwritten document of about 150 pages and it clearly in draft form. Coldrey says in the document that its purpose was to alert the General Council of the Order to 'a serious and pervasive problem of sexual abuse in the (Australian) provinces'. He also desired 'to place on record for the benefit of the executive' material which could not be put in *The Scheme*.

The fact that it is addressed to the General Council, formerly based in Ireland, and now based in Rome, in addition to the local leadership, is interesting, suggesting a desire to make sure that 'people at the top' are informed.

The author has been unable to get hold of a copy of *A Secret Report*, but has the transcripts of those parts of it read to the court in Sydney. One may presume that they are the more juicy bits. Coldrey admits in *A Secret Report* that 'the relevant section of *The Scheme*, dealing with sexual abuse in these orphanages was crafted to make the minimum admissions necessary to get out of the problem.' He goes on to say: 'The situation in the orphanages was worse than the impression given in *The Scheme*.'

Sex Rings

Probably the most shocking testimony in his report concerns evidence of 'sex rings' at Bindoon and Castledare orphanages during the child migration era, and apparently - though Coldrey is imprecise about dates - also in the years that followed.

Though regrettable, this will not be surprising to many. Statements by former child migrants refer repeatedly to the involvement of two or more Brothers in acts of sexual and physical assault. It is clear abusers were known to each other, and to some extent operated as a team.

In *The Scheme*, Coldrey refers to 'five Brothers as multiple abusers.' In a passage from *A Secret Report*, he amplifies this, stating that two of the Brothers 'probably molested some fifty boys each'. He also notes that in *The Scheme* he had avoided the mention of (a further) four Brothers'. to whom he had given the benefit of the doubt. In *A Secret Report* he adds: 'There is not much doubt, however...'

Coldrey's *A Secret Report* predated revelations in the media about a sex ring said to have operated at the Christian Brothers, St Vincent's Boys Home, South Melbourne, and a similar 'ring' at a primary school in Ballarat, whose entire male staff at one particular time are alleged to have been paedophiles.

The abused boys at St Vincent's subsequently received financial compensation, having agreed to a controversial 'no publicity' deal of a type known to lawyers as 'Settle and Suppress'. (See 'Suffer the Children - Battered Kids' in Chapter 1

There was no such arrangement to silence the scandal concerning St Alipius School, Ballarat, which led to criminal prosecutions. The ring was said to involve three Christian Brothers (including the headmaster) and a priest. One of the Brothers died in the 1970s. The two surviving Brothers were tried separately in the Victorian County Court. In July 1996, Brother Edward Dowlan, was jailed for nine years and eight months (reduced on appeal to six years and six months) for offenses committed at St Alipius and other country schools. Also in July, Brother Robert Best received a nine-month suspended sentence for offenses at St Alipius. The priest involved (Father Gerald Ridsdale) is already serving a long (18 years) prison sentence for sex offenses, including acts committed at St Alipius, and was not charged again.

A Secret Report also includes reference to a letter from Brother Louis Conlon to Dublin that Brother Keaney had been made aware of an indecency charge against a Brother who was also a heavy drinker. Conlon writes: 'I have tried hard to get this Brother transferred from Clontarf during the past six months, but have failed ... I know it is a delicate matter to deal with ... I do not wish to be critical of the Provincial, as I know only too well his many difficulties. Still, I think he should be more prompt in dealing with offenses of this kind.'

According to Coldrey there was a pattern of sexual abuse within the Christian Brothers Australian congregation from 1920, and maybe earlier. In 1935, an Australian Brother wrote to Dublin: 'If we do not take a determined stand with regard to this matter, we are bound to have numerous scandals in the near future.' His comment was to prove prophetic.

A letter to the Dublin headquarters by another senior Brother states: 'The weakness being a deplorable one and scandalous in the extreme, the every-present possibility of publicity being given to the incident gives abundant cause to the most serious concern'. Fear of disclosure was also raised by Conlon: 'As long as outsiders do not become aware of these things, we may hope for better times after the war.'

Thirteen years later, on 1 December 1948, Brother S R Young wrote from Sydney to Dublin: 'We had hoped that rehabilitation had taken place, but generally the dog returns to his vomit especially where the second vow is concerned'.

Referring to yet another clearly identified case of sexual abuse, Coldrey writes: 'The police were not called. The matter was handled within the Catholic community to avoid scandal.' His comment on all this is: 'The protection of the good name and credibility of the congregation was the outcome most sought after.'

The very existence of *A Secret Report*, and the manner in which this was revealed, is both good and bad news for Brother Barry Coldrey. On the one hand it may be argued that his integrity has been compromised, in that he wrote one version for public consumption (*The Scheme*), and another for his bosses (*A Secret Report*). Some consider this precisely the type

of concealment and cover-up which the Catholic church and its leaders are at pains to say no longer exists.

On the other hand, the very existence of the new document may be said to show a desire to reveal more - and at the same time bypass the censorship which his congregation would almost certainly have imposed had he attempted to be more frank in *The Scheme* .

There is no doubt that publicity concerning *A Secret Report* has acutely embarrassed his 'employers', who now seek to distance themselves from him, casting him as an eccentric, and playing down his role generally. There is even a fascinating and perhaps far-fetched theory that Coldrey may have leaked or engineered public knowledge of *A Secret Report* believing this to be in the general interest.

Meanwhile, Coldrey himself is (at the time of writing) out of the country, and has been since shortly after publication of *The Scheme*.

Since leaving Australia, Brother Coldrey has stayed at religious houses in various parts of Britain and overseas. He has sent notes and a postcard to the author, without an accompanying address. The impression given is of a man on the move, who likes to keep in touch, but would prefer to avoid the glare of publicity. He has been writing furiously and has produced a number of specialist working papers, some of them remarkably candid, on the treatment (and mistreatment) of children in care.

A Time-Line

This time-line is placed before the statement on my involvement in the child migration controversy to get some sense of context.

The revelations of the child migration phenomenon - as a public issue - appear to commence with the involvement of Nottingham (UK) social worker, Margaret Humphreys, in the matter.

1986 Mrs Margaret Humphreys, received her first request from a former child migrant for assistance in finding relatives and commenced her efforts to reunite former child migrants with their families. This initiative led, in time, to the formation of the Child Migrant Trust with some financial support from the Nottingham City Council, together with the British and Australian governments over time.

1987 Margaret Humphreys made research visits to Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne. In both Western Australia and the United Kingdom the child migration controversy commenced in the media which a series of major articles in **The Observer**. In Perth, Western Australia, the 'Child Migrant Friendship Society' was founded as a support group for former child migrants.

1988 Research visits to Canada and Zimbabwe by Margaret Humphreys.

1989, Philip Bean and Joy Melville published *Lost Children of the Empire* which was soon afterwards filmed and distributed as a TV documentary. The book and TV documentary publicised child migration widely and encouraged both popular and academic interest in the subject. Thousands of calls received on Help lines followed the screening of this documentary.

1990 The Child Migrant Trust received a three-year grant from the Australian Government, Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs.

1991 The Child Migrant Trust opened an office in Melbourne, Victoria and appointed a qualified and experienced social worker.

1992 The ABC/BBC produced a mini-series, *The Leaving of Liverpool* which explored the child migration phenomenon. In Perth, the VOICES organisation was established to press for compensation for former residents of Christian Brothers Boys Homes in Western Australia.

1993 (July) 'The Leaving of Liverpool' was shown in the UK by the BBC. Nottinghamshire County Council provided free telephone Help lines staffed by the CMT for two evenings. Computer monitoring revealed that over 10,000 calls were made. The Christian Brothers published nationwide a public apology in regard to physical and sexual abuses committed in their Western Australian homes and provided a counselling service and travel assistance to some former child migrants to visit the U.K.

1994 Margaret Humphreys book, *Empty Cradles*, was launched at a function at the House of Commons.

1995 In the wake of the Trust's submission, citizenship fees were waived for former child migrants, thus effectively recognising their unique position in Australian society, as well as the expertise of the Trust in verifying the bona fides of former child migrants seeking Australian citizenship. The Trust opened an office in Perth, Western Australia.

1996 The civil action sponsored by the VOICES organisation was settled out of court with \$3.5 million distributed among some 250 former students, many of whom were former child migrants. A Western Australian Parliamentary Committee investigated child migration. Over the next three years, the Christian Brothers produced a raft of measures to meet the needs of former child migrants which included: funding for a project to produce a computerised index to records of former child migrants who came to Australia under the auspices of the Catholic church; and commissioning a survey of accommodation needs among former residents of Christian Brothers homes.

1997 The United Kingdom parliament Health Committee announced a decision to hold an inquiry into the welfare of British former child migrants.

1998 The British Parliamentary Committee on Child Migration visited Australia to investigate this former aspect of British social policy. Its report, issued in August, was critical of child migration policy in general and of the treatment many former child migrants experienced in Australia, especially in certain Catholic Homes in Western Australia and Queensland, some of which were managed by the Christian Brothers; others by the Sisters of Mercy.

1998 The Western Australian House of Assembly passed a motion, 13 August, apologising to former child migrants for any abuses they suffered in the state's institutions during their childhoods.

1998 (14 December) the British Government announced its response to the committee's report and allowed £1,000,000 to assist former child migrants to visit the UK, and planned to establish a data base in London - within the Health Department - to assist former child migrants to access their relatives.

1999 The PHIND Personal History Index for former child migrants to Catholic Homes in Western Australia was launched in Perth. It is a project funded jointly by the Sisters of Mercy, the Poor Sisters of Nazareth and the Christian Brothers. Later, the PHIND index was developed to include all Catholic child migrants to Australia.

1999. The Australian Government spoke of a response to the British Government's initiative in child migration. However, the response via the Immigration Department was regularly postponed and delayed - until February 2000 when, in essence, the Australian Government allowed more funds to the Child Migrant Trust for work, but made few other concrete initiatives to assist former child migrants.

2000 (26 July) The Senate allowed a committee to explore all aspects of child migration. This initiative was led by Senator Andrew Murray (Australian Democrats, Western Australia), a former Fairbridge lad from Rhodesia. Senator Rosemary Crowley, (Labour, South Australia) is Chair of the committee.

2000 (7 September) The Senate Community Affairs References Committee refined the terms of reference for the Inquiry into Child Migration and called for submissions by 14 December 2000.

The Child Migration Controversy
A survey and analysis of the public debate over child migration and
residential care in Australia, 1987-2000.

Summary

Over the last fifteen years there has been a strident public controversy - especially in Western Australia - over the final phase of the British (and Maltese) child migration schemes to Australia after World War II. Two strands have been enmeshed: the policies themselves and the related issue of the (in)adequate care the children received in Australian residential institutions prior to their placement in employment. Allegations of widespread physical and sexual abuse have fuelled the spasms of media frenzy over child migration. Most of the criticism has been leveled at the Catholic church and some of its organisations, particularly the Christian Brothers and the Sisters of Mercy; in some ways it has been viewed as a Catholic problem, despite the fact that only around one half of the children came under Catholic auspices. This paper explores the reasons why child migration has appeared a distinctively Catholic issue and the phases of the controversy since 1987.

In the heyday of British imperialism, Father N. Waugh, Director of the Archdiocese of Westminster 'Crusade of Rescue' waxed lyrical when he thought of the child migration work of the society:¹

A double service is rendered to religion, humanity and civilisation, in carrying off the children of distress to the open lands beyond the sea, to live in the open, to work with nature, to wrestle with forest, field and stream, to forget the fetid city slums, to think and strive and pray in the open, to grow strong and self-reliant, to be the guardians of the outpost of civilisation, religion and new endeavour...every child a pioneer of the Empire

In his rich hyperbole Waugh expressed the commonplace notions surrounding contemporary child migration. He was probably unaware of the grim origins of this three hundred year old policy of dispatching unaccompanied children - abandoned, illegitimate, poverty-stricken and

¹ There is a vast array of relevant primary sources in the National Archives of Australia, Canberra and in the Public Record Office, Kew, London. One key source would be the seven substantial files: Child Migration, General Policy, Parts 1-7, 1943 - 1974, A446/182, 1960-66716-22, National Archives of Australia, Canberra. Secondary sources include: Bean, P and Melville, J. **Lost Children of the Empire**, Unwin Hyman, London, 1989; Coldrey, B.M. 'The Scheme': The Christian Brothers and Child Care in Western Australia, Argyle-Pacific, Perth, 1993; Wagner, G. **Barnardo**, Routledge, 1979; Wagner, G. **Children of the Empire**, London, 1982; Parr, J. **Labouring Children, British Immigrant Apprentices to Canada, 1869 - 1924**, Croom Helm, London, 1980; Moore, A. **Growing up with Barnardo's**, Sydney, 1980; Welsh, L.P. **Geordie, Orphan of the Empire**, P. & B Press, Perth, 1990, Welsh, L.P. **The Bindoon File**, P & B Press, Perth, 1991; Sherington, G and Jeffrey, C. **Fairbridge: Empire and Child Migration**, Woburn, London, 1998; Creelman, M. 'A surrogate parent approach to child migration: the first Kingsley Fairbridge Farm School, 1912 - 1924 in Hetherington, P. (ed) **Childhood and Society in Western Australia**, University of W.A. Press, Nedlands, 1988; Coldrey, B.M. 'Good British Stock': Child and Youth Migration to Australia, 1901-83, Research Guide N^o 11, National Archives of Australia, Canberra, 1999.

delinquent children - from the mean slums of British cities to cultivate and populate the wide-open spaces of the Empire. Moreover, Father Waugh and most other child migration enthusiasts were long deceased before the controversy erupted over the last phase of child migration - the dispatch of some 3500 children from Great Britain and Malta to Australia after World War II.

Child migration had a long and chequered history surrounded with controversy and marred by scandal. It was, actually, never a single policy pursued continuously: rather it was a complex tangle of competing private schemes, government initiatives, charismatic personalities, muddled priorities and confused agendas. It was critically affected by the economic, political and social pressures of particular times.

The first 100 children - 'vagrants' (street kids) - were shipped from the London area to Virginia in 1618, their passage arranged by the City fathers, while the last nine children were flown to Australia in 1967 under the auspices of Barnardos. The origins of child migration were linked to Britain's acquisition of an empire in North America during the early seventeenth century. In the wild, untamed, thinly-populated continent labour was at a premium and the Privy Council legalised the dispatch of 'vagrant' and 'recalcitrant' children to Virginia on 31 January 1620. Over the next two hunted years, child migration involved state action, Christian philanthropy and private enterprise. 'Kidnapping' footloose and wandering children for the Americas was a growth industry.²

Child Migration Peaks

Child migration peaked from the 1870s until the start of World War I. After the war, the 1920s emigration to Canada and Australia was small scale by comparison; and the post World War II child migration to Australia was minuscule. Some 100,000 children were emigrated to Canada before 1914; and about ten per cent of them were under Catholic auspices, reflecting the percentage of Catholics in the British population.

The large scale increase in child migration to Canada after 1870 was triggered by desperate economic conditions over the previous few years: the social havoc caused by the 1866 cholera epidemic; the bad harvest of 1867; and widespread unemployment during a cyclic downturn in the economy. It was during this grim period that Annie Macpherson, Thomas Barnardo and William Booth commenced their work among the poorest and most destitute in the east end of London. To all of these, and many other religious workers, emigration - including the emigration of abandoned children - seemed the one certain way for the desperately poor to better themselves. In the 1870s, the Catholic 'Rescue Societies' began to include child emigration among their programmes.

The Farm School Movement and Australia

By this stage, it should be clear that child migration to the Australian states - mainly Western Australia - came towards the end of a long experience with the policy elsewhere. In addition, in the early twentieth century, new migration enthusiasts involved themselves in the work, stressing that children should be trained in colonial orphanages **before** they were placed with colonial farmers. The dominating personality of this phase was Kingsley Fairbridge, who was offered land at Pinjarra, south of Perth by the Western Australian government in 1911 to pioneer his farm school initiative. After an epic struggle Fairbridge and his supporters established this venture securely and other farms schools were founded over time. It was the

publicity and mystique associated with the Fairbridge scheme that challenged Catholic leaders in Western Australia to emulate his programmes for deprived children.²

With the outbreak of World War I, migration from the British Isles was suspended, and when it recommenced in 1920, the numbers of children sent were never on the same scale. By 1920, powerful interest groups in Canada opposed the entry of unaccompanied juveniles and throughout the following decade child migration to Canada diminished. The great depression finally terminated their entry. However, as Canada barred the entry of unaccompanied juveniles, the voluntary societies focused their attention increasingly on Australia where, in the buoyant 1920s, governments favored their entry. Barnardos sent children to New South Wales in 1923 and handled 872 during the decade; Fairbridge continued its work and 918 children arrived in Western Australia during this period. There was no Catholic child migration to Australia during the 1920s.

The Last Phase of an Old Social Policy

The depression terminated almost all migration to Australia until 1937. However, the long-delayed plans to emigrate some English Catholic children to Western Australia found fruition in 1938-39 when some 114 boys pioneered the 'Tardun Scheme' on a vast property near Geraldton. In 1937, Fairbridge, Barnardos and other migration agencies recommenced their work. New farm schools were established at Molong, near Orange in New South Wales and at Glenmore, near Bacchus Marsh in Victoria.

However, with World War II, and in the wake of Japanese aggression in the Pacific, the whole migration scene changed in Australia. The government with widespread community support encouraged a new enthusiasm for a comprehensive immigration policy immediately after the ending of hostilities. Child migration was, at first, considered a major part of this new immigration policy. It was not to be. Plans for mass child migration to the country proved unrealistic; some children were brought, but the numbers were modest.

In 1947, some 300 children were brought to Catholic institutions in Western Australia. Thereafter, Fairbridge and Barnardos and many other bodies brought in some children but numbers remained small and diminishing with the years. Overall, about 3500 children came, around one-half of them for Catholic institutions. Meanwhile, in 1950, some Maltese child migrants - almost all boys - were placed in Christian Brothers orphanages in Western Australia. During the next decade some 280 boys and a small number of girls arrived under this scheme. Overall, there has been a tendency to exaggerate the numbers of child migrants who came under the various schemes.

In the 1950s, British officials came to Australia to investigate child migration: Miss H Harrison from the Scottish Home Office in 1950, John Moss from English Home Office in 1952 and a larger Home Office team in 1956. Moss tended to favour sending British children to Australia, but four years later the Fact-Finding Mission was much more sceptical of its benefits. The Mission was extremely critical of a number of Catholic (and other) institutions. Almost immediately, the British Catholic 'Rescue Societies' terminated all plans to place

² Coldrey, B M *Child Migration to Catholic Institutions in Australia: Objectives, Policies, Realities, 1926-1966*, Tamararaik, Melbourne, 1996.

their children in Australia. Other societies sent a few children each year until 1967 but essentially, child migration was over.

Times had changed; the social conditions and attitudes in the United Kingdom which had led to many children being sent abroad, were disappearing. Grinding poverty was being reduced and the social services of the new 'welfare state' were being extended. The social slur which illegitimacy had cast over mother and child was waning and at its most basic, child migration had always involved the removal of abandoned **illegitimate** children from Britain to other parts of the empire to give them a fresh start in life. Child migration was always linked with illegitimacy.³

Since the 1950s, the primary aim in child care is the welfare of the child. Hence, it will surprise some to recall that this was not the prime objective of residential child care before that time: i.e. child care was to protect respectable society **from** the depredations of the deprived child, though compassionate concern for the children was important to some. In reminding the educated reader of all this, the intention is not to excuse criminal behaviour many years ago, but to recall that the word 'abuse' has ambiguities applied over time, and what appears as 'abuse' today, may have seemed justifiable severity in an earlier time. In the popular novel, *The Go-Between*, the author mentions at the start: 'The past is a foreign country; they do things differently there!' The reflection is apt in view of the furore over child migration.

The Child Migration Controversy

The last child migrants arrived in Australia in 1967 with Barnardo's, but it was not until 1986, thirty years later, that Nottingham social worker, Margaret Humphreys, received her first request from a former child migrant for assistance in finding relatives. Humphreys had never heard of child migration until that point despite her university studies in social work. Her response to the request led in time to the formation of the Child Migrant Trust with some financial support from the Nottingham City Council, and much later from the British and Australian governments.⁴ In the following year, Humphreys interested Annabelle Ferriman of **The Observer** in a possible story on the children Britain had sent abroad after the war and both women came to Australia to meet former child migrants and search for material. In July, **The Observer** ran a major feature article on the subject which sparked widespread interest, considerable outrage and much controversy.⁵

In both Western Australia and the United Kingdom the child migration controversy commenced after **The Observer** articles. The mention of 'Western Australia' is significant; most child migrants since 1937 were sent to that state, and most former child migrants still live there. At this point it is worth stressing that there are two strands in the controversy which has continued unabated since 1987:

³ Humphreys, M 'Third Report to the Social Services Committee', 6 April 1989, Nottingham County Council, pp 7-10.

⁴ Humphreys, M *Empty Cradles*, Corgi, Transworld, Great Britain, 1996.

⁵ Ferriman, A 'The children Britain did not want', *The Observer*, 21 July 1987, pp

- the child migration process itself; - the rightness or wrongness in sending children away from their surviving family and associations, without their informed consent, half way around the world for their education and training before placement in employment;
- the quality of care the children received in the Australian orphanages, and the evidence or otherwise of widespread physical, emotional and sexual abuse alleged to have there;

It is understandable that in popular media presentations the two strands of the controversy are blurred.

A Catholic Question

In the controversy, the Catholic Church and some of its agencies and Religious Congregations - especially the Christian Brothers, the Sisters of Mercy and the Nazareth Sisters - are featured constantly, despite the fact that only around one-half of the children arrived under Catholic auspices. Major Protestant bodies such as Fairbridge and Barnardo's, and the Salvation Army have received less criticism. We may ask: was there a distinctively 'Catholic' difficulty where child migration was concerned?

The answer must be in the affirmative; there was a distinctive Catholic problem or cluster of problems - obvious now with the advantage of hindsight - less obvious thirty to fifty years ago. The root of the Catholic residential care problem was poverty. The Catholic communities in both the UK and Australia were, in the main, communities of poor people, trying to provide educational and social services which paralleled those of the state. In this, the Catholic communities depended on the unstinting work of the men and women in the religious congregations, supported by voluntary lay assistance. Many of these people were, poorly selected, poorly trained - and sometimes temperamentally unsuited - for the roles they were asked to undertake. Since they were volunteers - for difficult work - few questions were asked.

There was a poverty in Catholic residential care greater than the difficulties experienced by the better resourced Protestant and state organisations. Thus Catholic child migrants were exceptionally deprived before they left the UK, and they faced under-resourced Catholic residential care in Australia. Small numbers of poorly prepared carers confronted large numbers of boisterous, deprived and difficult children. The staff could barely commence to meet their needs.

In addition it is now clear, that in general, the Religious Congregations tended to place their least qualified personnel on the staffs of the children's homes. Moreover, Congregation executives used the Homes - on occasion - to hide ageing, difficult, odd or mentally unstable members, at a time when the congregations could not afford specialist care for old, retired or mentally ill Brothers or sisters.⁶

In the Catholic institutions, congregate care was the norm and staff gender balance was rarely considered important. In Boys Homes, men held all, or almost all, the key roles; the reverse

⁶ Coldrey, B M 'Caring and Corruption': Church orphanages and industrial schools', *Studies* (Irish Quarterly Review), Vol. 89 No 353, Spring 2000, pp 5-18

was the case in the institutions for girls. In Fairbridge and Barnardo's care, on the other hand, the cottage system was in vogue and women attended to the younger children. This was a more satisfactory system; abuses were still possible and did sometimes occur, but the risk was much less.

In Catholic care, Religious Brothers found themselves caring for small boys, a role for which they neither training nor aptitude. The chances of physical and sexual abuse occurring were heightened. On the other hand, nuns could find themselves trying to manage teenage lads - with the rough-and-ready assistance of male farm staff - a situation which was tailor-made for trouble and, unsurprisingly, abuses occurred. Little of this seemed obvious during the child migration era; the perceptions are the results of a great deal of study and reflection from the vantage point of time.

The Controversy in Australia

The last child migrants moved into employment during the buoyant 1950s and 1960s and many years passed before dissatisfaction with the schemes was voiced publicly. Community attention in Western Australia was first drawn to child migration, and to the complaints of abusive behaviour in some of the state's residential care, in a three-page expose in **The Western Mail (Weekend)**, 15-16 August, 1967. A former child migrant, Gordon Grant (Nigel Fitzgibbon), had interested the editor, Andre Malan, in the problems child migrants were having as a result of their earlier experiences.⁷

Under emotive headings such as 'The lost children Britain sent away to Australia', 'The faceless kids of Fairbridge Farm' and 'The nightmare of Bindoon' the articles revealed an underside of Western Australian residential care which had lain dormant for thirty and more years. Some former inmates denounced child migration as such - 'robbing them of their identity'; others claimed horrific physical and sexual abuse in the institutions in which they were placed. The focus was on St. Joseph's Farm and Trade School, Bindoon; Fairbridge Farm School, Pinjarra and Nazareth House, Geraldton.

The abuse alleged ran the whole gamut - institutional procedures which stripped residents of their identity, relentlessly, hard physical labour - unsuited to the age and stage of the children in lieu of mandated schooling, and using primitive implements to boot, all in order to construct the massive, ornamental farm school buildings. There were frequent - even daily - beatings with cane or strap or indeed, any implement that came to hand. Gordon Grant reported that on one occasion his nose was broken when the principal, the soon-to-be-notorious Brother P Keaney smashed his fist into his face, and that he had been genitally fondled on occasion by two other Brothers. Boys were regularly beaten on their bare backsides.

On the other hand, there were those who had at least some fond memories of their experiences, in the main from Fairbridge, Pinjarra. While critical of child migration these men and women felt strong loyalty to their Australian home and the Fairbridge ideal

⁷ Malan, A 'The lost children Britain sent away to Australia', *The Western Mail* (Perth, Western Australia), 15-16 August 1967.

Understandably, **The Western Mail** expose sparked a spirited correspondence during the following week, with letter writers divided over the child migration experience. More allegations surfaced. One former Christian Brother, identified only as 'Michael', was reported as saying: 'it was unbelievable the things that went on at Bindoon, including sodomy.' Over the years, the controversy was to wax and wane, but the issues were defined in those pioneer newspaper articles.

Other journalists were encouraged to explore the child migration-orphanage abuse issue. Its explosive mix of 'orphans, sex, the church, stomach-turning abuses and government negligence' had the potential to excite widespread public interest. The mix regularly sent journalists into a 'feeding frenzy'. However, in the short term, after the initial articles and the reaction, little occurred. The agencies - especially the Catholic Church and the Christian Brothers - did not respond directly. One group of former residents of Catholic residential care formed the 'Child Migrant Friendship Society' (CMFS) and the Christian Brothers provided resources for its office rental and routine expenses. Already family reunion was their priority, but in public the issue disappeared for some months.

The controversy was revived a year later. On 31 August 1988, Derryn Hinch, a controversial national TV commentator and self-styled crusader, ran an eight-minute segment entitled 'Christian Brothers?' on Channel 7 show *Hinch*, which was shown in all states except Western Australia.⁸ This show sparked controversy for a while, then the issue lay dormant for a second time. In 1989, child migration impinged on the public mind more strongly with the release of Philip Bean and Joy Melville's best selling book, *Lost Children of the Empire*, which brought knowledge of the schemes to a wider, international, audience. A Domino films, TV documentary based squarely on the revelations made in the book was shown both in Australia and the UK and increased the influence generated by the book itself.

Lost Children of the Empire used the increasingly-popular 'case history' approach to highlight the maladministrative practices of the schemes and focus on allegations of physical and sexual abuse in Australian residential care. Public interest was focused on people, people suffering. Where truth is concerned, however, case histories have their limitations since there is a marked tendency to report speakers uncritically, despite possible exaggerations, of the pub-story, 'Crocodile Dundee' type. The stories presume a common situation from a limited number of particular cases. Meanwhile, the Christian Brothers were indicted throughout *Lost Children of the Empire*, film and book, in precisely the same terms as in the earlier articles. The most disturbing accounts focused increasingly on St Joseph's Farm School, Bindoon, which was rapidly acquiring notoriety as the 'Dotheboys Hall' of the child migration era. The showing of *Lost Children of the Empire* sparked widespread community debate throughout the media and particularly on 'Talk-Back' radio - especially in Western Australia, the only state where there were sufficient former child migrants to maintain more than passing outrage and spasmodic interest in the topic. The need for such groups as the Child Migrant Trust and the Child Migrant Friendship Society (CMFS) was stressed and 'Letters to

⁸ Welsh, L P *Geordie, Orphan of the Empire*, P & B Press, Perth, 1990; *The Bindoon File*, P & B Press, Perth, 1991.

the Editor' focused primarily on the issues of loss of personal identity, past abuses and the over-riding need for former child migrants to access surviving relatives.⁹

In the wake of the publicity generated by *Lost Children of the Empire*, the Child Migrant Trust received a three-year grant from the Australian Government via the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs to assist with its work which was on a much wider scale than that of the Child Migrant Friendship Society. With these funds the Trust was able to open an office in Melbourne and appoint a qualified and experienced social worker to manage its affairs in eastern Australia.

It was around this time that Australian Democrats Senator, Jean Jenkins, raised the issue in the national parliament in an attempt to gain a public enquiry into the working of the child migration schemes. Her efforts were opposed by Liberal Senator, John Panizza, who suggested that the children had been given a good chance in another country.' He dismissed the allegations of widespread abuse in Catholic orphanages on the grounds that 30-40 years had elapsed before these complaints had been raised, and the whole business was unfair to the carers - many deceased or very elderly - 'who had spent a lifetime caring for the underprivileged.'¹⁰

The response of the church and child migration agencies to the increasingly bitter debate was still muted. It will be considered in a later section. Meanwhile, the year 1990, revealed four books published each of which focused on child migration and Australian orphanage history. In Perth, Lionel Welsh released his controversial autobiography, *Geordie, Orphan of the Empire* which described the brutal regime at the St Joseph's farm school, a theme developed in his second book, *The Bindoon File*. Both books received considerable publicity in Western Australia. John Lane's autobiography, *Fairbridge Kid*, was less controversial and recounted his time at Fairbridge, Pinjarra during the inter war years. In Sydney, Alan Moore published biographical accounts of thirty child migrants who came to Australia from British orphanages under the auspices of Barnardo's.

The issue was gradually generating wider ramifications. The consistent allegations of widespread physical and sexual abuses by some staff at respected church and charitable institutions raised this hitherto dormant issue before the public and made further allegations likely from other areas of the church's ministry. A significant milestone in the development of public awareness of conditions in the **Western** Australian residential care institutions occurred in April 1991 with two broadcasts on the popular Perth talk-back radio programme, the 'Sattler File'. Harold Sattler is a Perth media identity. Public response to the first programme was so overwhelming that a second programme went to air a few weeks later on a special Good Friday arrangement.¹¹

⁹ 'Child migrants take a journey into the past', *West Australian*, 15 May 1989, and 'Gathering mourns its lost childhood', *West Australian*, 23 June 1989, gave widespread publicity to the objectives of the Child Migrant Friendship Society.

¹⁰ *West Australian*, 20 June 1989 and 17 August 1989

¹¹ Miller, J K, 'To whom do I turn ? A study in institutional child abuse', MA thesis, Murdoch University, Western Australia, 1992.

The media frenzy

‘Sex sells, and priest sex sells better.’ At one level the spasms of media concentration on the child migration issue followed from this dictum. However, there have been massive changes in the Australian social climate over recent years and it is important to understand them in explaining the drift of events. As a result of the work of feminist theorists and workers, more had become known about the patterns and incidence of violence against women and children since the 1970s than was known previously. The Catholic church, in particular, and the child migration organisations in general, did not appreciate the shift in community attitudes which had occurred in this area, and which were to shift further against abuse under the cover of respected agencies or bureaucratic indifference.

With this understanding came attempts to address the issues of violence against women and children. Parliament and the courts had been defining violence within the home as criminal behaviour, have given police added powers to move against domestic violence, and have changed rape laws to remove bias toward the rapist and against the victim.¹² In this context the claims of former residents in the Western Australian orphanages generated outrage at a time when the community was much more sensitised to issues involving domestic - and by extension - institutional violence.

Violence against women and children was newsworthy, especially if alleged to have happened in respected church institutions. The church often presents itself or appears as the moral guardian of society. Yet there can be resistance, opposition and even antagonism in some quarters to that perceived role. Stories of widespread abuse and sexual misconduct by church leaders are attractive because of their contradiction of the Christian principles which clerical rhetoric offers to the community. The church is deflated; many in society are delighted.

Abuse in North American Residential Care

The scene in Western Australia was periodically intense but isolated and parochial. However, in other parts of the English-speaking world, reports of widespread physical and sexual abuses by Canadian and American Brothers and priests were surfacing and reaching the Australian public. In 1989, the Christian Brothers Mount Cashel orphanage in St John’s, Newfoundland, was the subject of a state investigation (the Hughes Inquiry) over claims of severe physical and sexual abuse stretching back over decades. There had been a formal 1975 cover-up of explicit allegations of widespread abuse at that time. The commission proceedings were prime time cable viewing in Newfoundland and intensely reported throughout Canada. In 1990, Michael Harris, a controversial investigative journalist, published his best-selling story of the widespread abuse and scandalous cover-ups by the Catholic Church and state government of Newfoundland of the crimes committed at Mount Cashel orphanage.¹³

¹² Horsfield, P, ‘An analysis of the media debate following the ABC Compass Program ‘The Ultimate Betrayal’, Australian Journalism Review, Vol 15 No 1, January-June, 1993, p 5

¹³ Harris, M, *Unholy Orders: Tragedy at Mount Cashel*, Viking, Penguin, Ontario, 1990.

News of these events reached Australia and Michael Harris's book was reviewed in the media and available to interested parties. In Newfoundland, civil and criminal proceedings followed the Hughes Inquiry and eventually through the following decade 26 priests and Brothers were convicted of sexual offenses against underage children in the province, nine of them associated with the Mount Cashel orphanage. The Archbishop of St John's resigned. Over time, the Newfoundland provincial government arranged an out-of-court, \$C 18 million settlement with the orphanage victims, and at the present time is attempting to recoup this money from the Christian Brothers.¹⁴ All of these events were publicised in Australia as they occurred on the other side of the world.

Some of this is to anticipate. By 1990s, the public was learning that it was not only possible, but almost commonplace for Catholic priests and Religious Brothers - officially celibate - to be sexually active in practice, and for senior churchmen 'to turn a blind eye' wherever possible when revelations came to the surface. At around this time, but for a more specialist audience, U S psychiatrist, Richard Sipe, published the first of his major books, the fruits of a thirty year investigation, *Sexuality and the Search for Celibacy: A Secret World*, revealing that a large minority of American Catholic clergy were not observing celibacy with any consistency.¹⁵ It was probable that the situation was similar in corresponding countries. Meanwhile, in June 1991 in Western Australia, the Child Migrant Friendship Society was largely superseded by another 'survivors' advocacy association, called VOICES, formed in Perth as a self-help and lobby group for one-time Catholic orphanage residents, many of them former child migrants. Its leader was retired primary school principal, Bruce Blyth, and the organisation involved a range of concerned professionals working with a vigorous group of 'survivors' to lobby for a parliamentary or judicial inquiry to be held into the child migration scheme and the abuses alleged to have occurred in the state's children's homes. VOICES had around three hundred members.

VOICES produced regular newsletters, arranged a counselling service and literacy classes for victims and acted as a base from which concerted efforts could be made to keep the issue in front of the public. The tone of VOICES propaganda was aggressive and confrontational as its leaders hoped to arouse and maintain a sense of community outrage at the treatment most of its members alleged during their youth. VOICES pressed for compensation for former residents of the Christian Brothers Boys Homes in the state. In achieving its goals, VOICES was strongly assisted by the release of the ABC TV mini-series, *The Leaving of Liverpool*, in Australia, 8-9 July 1992. *The Leaving of Liverpool* was the single greatest influence in raising public awareness of the issue of the abuse and exploitation of children who had been sent to Australia under the Child Migration schemes.

There had been an extensive media preparation, and the actual release could have been an anti-climax, but the reverse was the truth. The screening was a major topic of discussion in the media and was acclaimed highly by reviewers in metropolitan newspapers around Australia. Shortly afterwards, the unedited version of *Lost Children of the Empire* was shown to a large audience and the twin issues of 'child migration' and 'orphanage abuse' were becoming well-known. The ABC Compass programme *The Ultimate Betrayal* concerned with sexual abuse by clergy was screened at this time.

¹⁴ Hughes Inquiry

¹⁵ Sipe, R, *Sexuality and the Search for Celibacy: A Secret World*, Brunner/Mazel, New York, 1990.

The Leaving of Liverpool, *The Ultimate Betrayal* and *Lost Children of the Empire* guaranteed that the issue had moved from exploitation and physical abuse to claims of deviant sexual abuse inflicted on some of the residents by Brothers, priests and respected church workers. The strong sense of shame which often silences victims of sexual abuse was being broken and more men (and women) felt able to name their childhood experiences. They were no longer isolated. Many victims were relieved that their childhood experiences were being recognised and they felt themselves vindicated. The publicity was encouraging other victims to come forward; most genuine; some bogus.

It was ironical that *The Leaving of Liverpool* which concerned **British** child migration was not shown by the BBC for a year after its release in Australia. It may not have been screened at all in the UK except for intense lobbying by the Child Migrant Trust, the Nottinghamshire County Council and some midlands Labor Members of the House of Commons. It was released by the BBC over two evenings in July 1993.

The Response of the Catholic Church

Already the Christian Brothers had apologised to former residents of their Western Australian institutions in a statement issued in the *West Australian* and *The Australian*, 6 July 1993. However, this was not sufficient on its own. In Western Australia public pressure in the media, and the lobbying of the Child Migrant Friendship Society and VOICES demanded a more tangible response. In spite of the apparent urgency a coherent, effective response took time to appear - too long for many including those sympathetic to the accused charities. Apart from classic 'denial' there was a cluster of reasons for the lack of a vigorous reaction.

In the 1970s, traditional care had been phased out and the old institutions had been closed or made available for other charitable work. There was no controversy. Hence the allegations aired in *The Observer* and the *Western Mail* came without warning and seemed extravagant and beyond belief to many who had worked in Catholic residential care. Already many named as offenders were deceased; others aged and in nursing care themselves. Silence seemed the best policy; the criticisms were discounted and largely ignored - but not entirely.

In both the mainstream media and a few Catholic newspapers, some orphanage residents presented a positive view of the Brothers work. Readers were reminded that many of the former residents had suffered extreme deprivation before they entered care or indeed - in the case of the British or Maltese child migrants - before they arrived in Australia. Moreover, some former inmates had experienced hard, unrewarding lives; and it was possible that these lifetime events had coloured their perceptions of care many years ago. Times had changed; what was normal and common in child rearing thirty to fifty years ago was called 'abuse' in a changed world. In the case of child molestation, the law had not changed in all those years, but during the child migration era, sexual abuse was presumed to be rare and not associated with respected institutions. The public was not sensitised to the issue.

All of these arguments had their grains of truth and were worth saying. However, some of the arguments **over time** were seen to be inadequate: serious physical and sexual abuse had occurred in some Catholic institutions at some times: especially in Western Australia and

Queensland.¹⁶ The attitude of the secular media was often critical and hostile; the objective of the Catholic papers was to present positive material and to seek a balance.¹⁷ However, the latter found it difficult to face the facts squarely, that when all was said, serious abuses had occurred.

In Brisbane, *The Catholic Leader* attempted to counter claims of abuse in an article 'Lost children who became Brothers' mentioning that some former child migrants had become priests or Brothers; and noted their attendance at anniversary celebrations and reunions. This suggested that many may have had a positive view of their childhoods in care.¹⁸ During the following two years, a series of articles was published in the *Leader* and *The Record*, showing the constructive work of the nuns and Brothers in the orphanages and depicting approvingly those former residents who could shrug off the downside of past experiences. *The Record*, ran a series of articles which featured former orphanage residents who had done well in life and were prepared to acknowledge that some, at least, of their success was due to the education and training they received in the institutions. These men and women were satisfied and grateful. However, none of this effort disproved the abuse allegations.¹⁹

In important ways, the year 1993 marked the watershed both for the specific controversy over child migration and the Western Australian orphanages, and on a wider scale, the Catholic church's response to the general problem of child and youth molestation by some clergy. The showing of *The Leaving of Liverpool*, *Lost Children of the Empire* and *The Ultimate Betrayal* focused the issues for the Australian public; the Christian Brothers 'Apology' marked a change from defensiveness to acceptance that physical and sexual abuse had occurred at their institutions.

The Needs of Former Child Migrants

Meanwhile the needs of former child migrants were being addressed. In 1994, Margaret Humphreys published the story of the Child Migrant Trust's work, a book called *Empty Cradles*. It received favourable reviews and widespread publicity. In response to the Trust's persistent requests, the Australian Government waived citizenship fees for former child migrants, and provided funds for an office in Perth.

However, it was the Christian Brothers and the Catholic agencies which now moved effectively to respond to their plight. The majority of Catholic child migrants had been received by the Christian Brothers and it was the Brothers who took the initiative in addressing the problems caused by the former child care policy. In brief summary these initiatives included:

¹⁶ (3) Coldrey, B.M. 'The Sexual Abuse of Children' in *Studies*, London, Vol. 58 No 3 Autumn 1996. (20) Behlmer, G.K. *Child Abuse and Moral Reform in England, 1870 - 1908*, Stanford University Press, 1982, pp 225 - 6. (19) Martin, J. E. 'Incest and Child Abuse', **Journal of Holistic Nursing**, Vol. 13 No 1, March 1995; Kahr, J. 'The Sexual Molestation of Children', **Historical Perspectives**, Vol. 19. No. 2, 1992.

¹⁷ Faulkner, G 'Old reports make nonsense of cruelty claims', *The Record*, 13 July 1989, p 3.

¹⁸ 'Lost Children who became Brothers', *The Catholic Leader*, 1 October 1989, p 9.

¹⁹ 'Thanks to Clontarf, he was able to climb the ladder of success', *The Record*, 25 July 1991, p 3. 'Skinny's fat bank balance', *The Record*, 1 August 1991, p 3.

commissioned historical research into the development of child migration schemes, residential care, and abuse allegations;

established a Committee of expert professionals to profile the needs of former care residents;

concluded a \$5 million out-of-court settlement with over 200 ex-students, many of them former child migrants. Of this money, \$1.5 million was allotted to pay the legal expenses VOICES members had accumulated in pursuing their cases;

provided a range of services for former care residents including counselling, adult education, travel assistance and access to personal records;

initiated the project which produced the PHIND computerised index to the location of personal records of former child migrants who came to any Catholic institution in Australia;

commissioned a survey of accommodation needs among former residents of the Christian Brothers homes.

Overall, these initiatives were a substantial, ongoing and expensive commitment. It stood in stark contrast to the relatively minor assistance granted to former child migrants by the various governments who had either initiated or approved the schemes, inspected the residential care institutions and had ultimate legal responsibility for the welfare of the children.

However in 1997, the House of Commons Health Committee announced an inquiry into the welfare of former British child migrants after ten years of campaigning by the Child Migrant Trust. In the following year this Parliamentary Committee visited Australia to investigate, meet interested parties and take evidence. Its report, issued in August, was critical of child migration policy in general and of the treatment many of the children experienced in Australia, especially in certain Catholic Homes in Western Australia and Queensland.

Meanwhile, the Western Australian House of Assembly passed a motion, 13 August 1998, apologising to former child migrants for any abuses they suffered in the state's institutions during their childhoods. More tangible assistance was not in evidence. On 14 December 1998, the British Government announced its response to the committee's report and allowed £1 million to assist British child migrants to visit the UK, and planned to establish a data base in London - within the Health Department -- to assist migrants to access their relatives. In view of the numbers of the children, the £1 million was a modest sum, though the data base had possibilities.

During 1999, the Australian Government spoke of a response to the British Government's initiative in child migration. However, this response via the Immigration Department was regularly postponed and delayed for over a year. When finally announced, the Australian Government made clear that, in practical terms, there was little it was prepared to do, except provide additional assistance to the Child Migrant Trust to accelerate its work on family reunion. Overall, it is the agencies who migrated the children rather than the governments

which had charge of the process which have responded to the plight of former child migrants. The governments have largely escaped their responsibilities.

Times have changed: A History Lesson

Child Migration - The 'Push' Factor

Over the years of the debate over British child migration there has often been a grim determination 'to read history backwards' - to presume that values dominant in relation to children and young people at the present time, were always in vogue.

This is not said to excuse abuses - i.e. behaviour against children which would have been considered abusive (criminal) fifty or more years ago, as it is considered now.

'The past is a foreign country' At some times, sections of the British government wanted 'unemployed, idle, disaffected, poverty-stricken, vagabond youth' out of the country. Until the gradual reorientation of British child welfare thinking and legislation during the 1940s, **'child welfare' had as its first priority, to protect respectable society from the depredations of the deprived child; 'child welfare' was not child-centred.** This came later. However, in all ages, the welfare of the children was important to some people.

In its first phase (seventeenth century), child migration was part of a haphazard criminal justice system. In its high point - after 1870 and directed to Canada - the primary motive in child emigration was philanthropic. British benevolent and religious organisations - Dr Barnardo's homes, Quarrier, the 'Crusade of Rescue' (Roman Catholic) and many others - were rescuing children from dire poverty, destitution, vagrancy, criminality or neglect and saw better opportunities for these children in the colonies of the expanding empire.

At the time, the choice appeared to be between begging, thieving, disease, prostitution and early death in the British Isles; or learning farming and domestic skills with good prospects for decent family living on the rich farmlands of Canada or Australia.

'To behold young men and women crowded together in pestilential rookeries without the least provision for decency and in such conditions of abominable filth, atmospheric impurity and immoral association as to make the maintenance of virtue impossible, is almost enough to fill the bravest reformer with despair ... but to know that thousands of unfortunate boys and girls commence life thus and grow up to a degraded manhood and a dishonoured womanhood ... to know this and to witness the process being repeated from day to day - to be quite certain as what it must all grow to and yet to be quite helpless to deal thoroughly with the evil, is absolutely maddening.' (Dr Barnardo, 1870) The Custody of Children Act, 1891, limited the previously incontestable right to guardianship of negligent parents. (Parr, J, *Labouring children*, Croom Helm, London, 1980, p 68

Middle class reformers were both sympathetic to, and frightened by the young victims and their families. The authority of the state was brought to bear, to intervene in and alter the private lives of those whom they saw as dangerous to their own interests. (Swift, K J, 'An Outrage to Common Decency: Historical Perspectives in Child Neglect', in Swift, K J, and Merkel-Holquin, L A, *A History of Child Welfare*, Transaction, London, 1996, p 3)

There was a financial incentive and the charities had to be money-conscious. The charity £ was hard to come by. It cost £10 to send the child to Canada; £16 p.a. to maintain the child in UK residential care. (Hendrick, H, *Child Welfare in England 1872-1989*, Routledge, London and New York, 1994, p 80)

There was a political motive. 'The time is coming when this seething mass of human misery will shake the social fabric unless we grapple more earnestly with it than we have done' - Samuel Smith, M P (Liverpool) 'street kids' were perceived recruits for the 'dangerous classes' in the dark underworld of society which threatened the respectable Child emigration was a 'safety valve'. (Hendrick, H, *Child Welfare in England 1872-1989*, Routledge, London and New York, 1994, p 80)

There was the social imperialist view: Imperial sentiment: the children were 'bricks of empire'; 'young colonists of the future'; 'consolidate the Empire'; 'defending the imperial frontier'; 'a living link between the dominions and the mother country'. **The empire was viewed as a family; the children moved from one part of the family to the other.** Hendrick, H, *Child Welfare in England 1872-1989*, Routledge, London and New York, 1994, p 80)

'When the children's service began it was still assumed that children must be rescued from inadequate families, the slate wiped clean and the child given a fresh start. Over time, and by degrees, it was realised that the parents lived on inside the child, that his identity was bound up with his origins and hence that everything possible should be done to strengthen home ties. In the pre-1948 period, those providing public services for children it was thought that to provide food, clothing, shelter, education and moral training was sufficient. A new understanding of the emotional needs of children began to seep through during the late 1940s, with explosive consequences over the years for the child care service. (Younghusband, E. *Social Work in Britain: 1950-75, Vol 1*, George Allen & Unwin, London, 1978, p. 36)

Functions of Traditional Residential Child Care

Child migration grew from traditional religious and philanthropic residential child care. There are two useful models in explain traditional care and they assist in explaining the (sometimes) perverse gap between good intentions and unhappy outcomes.

What does the care system do ? is it, in fact, **care or control** ? The arrangements which society makes to protect children whose parents have failed them or who are unable through illness or whatever to provide adequately for them ? The care system might really act to control wayward parents and their wayward offspring to preserve social order and to protect the wider community from contamination by similar social problems.

The two models of child care:

(a) The traditional missionary/rescue model of residential child care.

Modern child care (British Isles) grew out of the Poor Law system ... the poor law was a means by which the rich and powerful of the time tried to control and regulate the 'dangerous classes' ... assistance minimal and demeaning so that people would have to be desperate to seek help. The workhouse was deemed unsuitable for children...boarding out/fostering...the intention was to rescue children from the bad influence of their unsavory parents and their wretched environment. The early child care system was to rescue children from unsavory, unsafe or unsanitary social conditions. The system exercised social control in three ways:

it sanctioned failing parents; they lost control of their children; humiliated in front of their neighbours.

it served as a warning to others

it served as a way to give the children new social and cultural values.

In a sense the children had to renounce their past, their parents and environments and (in some cases) their religion. There were strong denominational tensions in traditional child care.

Even today, let alone in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the children were under pressure to renounce their cultural values...in the children's home(s) different cultural values...middle class values. **Successful integration into the new setting may involve a subtle process of leaving behind old ways and the adoption of new standards and new behaviour.** Working class children may have to surrender the values or working class culture in order to adapt to the cultural norms of their caretakers.

(b) Traditional Medical Treatment/Sterile Protection Model

Child care was influenced by the traditional medical treatment model; look for the symptoms. They are associated with this model concepts of 'badness', 'deficit', 'an innate pathology'. The child needs to recover through a course of treatment - care - in a sterile environment - i.e. the foster care situation or the children's home well insulated from the malign influences of parents and environment. The idea is that with a course of the correct treatment, the child can be built-up to achieve a level of resistance to the pathogenic forces in his life. (Gilligan, M, p 168)

Youth Migration versus Child Migration

Juvenile/youth migration from the United Kingdom to the Dominions is not to be confused with child migration. Under child migration, children in care and still of school age were transferred, orphanage UK to orphanage Australia for education and training before being placed in employment. Child migrants were usually 8-13 years of age on arrival in Australia; some were younger.

The youth migrants arrived under different arrangements:

the juvenile/youth migrant was typically a young man, 15-19 years of age, who had left school and was making his own decision to migrate;

juvenile/youth migrants came from normal - if often poor - families.

Youth migrants were brought to Australia by the Big Brother Movement (c. 12,500 young people) and the Dreadnought Trust (c. 9,000 young men). The Young Christian Workers, Boy Scouts and YMCA also introduced small numbers of young people to Australia. There were many more youth migrants brought to Australia than child migrants.

Traditional Child Care Philosophy

Earlier social reformers took it for granted that children must be prepared to survive in a harsh world

‘Until World War II, philanthropists took for granted the existence of a criminal slum class whose members were a misery to themselves and a danger to society ... that lower class parents were irresponsible and liable to abandon their children at the slightest provocation. These abandoned children would become useless and even dangerous adults.’ (Jaggs, D and Jaggs, C, *Advancing this Good Work*, Geelong, 1988, p 19)

‘All the big children’s organisations had one characteristic in common - their desire to remove the children completely from their former surroundings, separating them from their parents and friends.’ (Redding, D, ‘The Little Slavies’, *Community Care*, UK, 4 May 1989, p 4)

The key features of a traditional orphanage included:-

a varied clientele of under-privileged youth: (real) orphans, illegitimate abandoned children, children from broken marriages, minor delinquents;

a relatively small staff, (perhaps) all unqualified for child care, in the modern sense of the term;

firm control of staff over children;

fixed routines with much ordinary work done by the children;

little individual attention to each separate child; little stress on children’s emotional development;

a ground in a Christian faith; an education generous by contemporary working class standards; and training in habits of order and hard work.

The traditional orphanage was often a rural institution. With the advantage of hindsight, it is clear that this isolation was one of the key problems of these places, i.e.

difficult to recruit and hold effective staff, who had other options;

difficult to provide staff with recreation and vacations away from the institution;

difficult for staff to maintain any regular relationships away from the institution;

the isolation encouraged the growth of attitudes and behaviour condemned by the society at large.

However, there were reasons why traditional residential care was a rural institution. The city slums from which most of the abandoned or delinquent youth came horrified middle class reformers. The country was viewed as healthy; hard physical work developed hardy bodies, hardened character, ingrained moral virtue; purified souls.

Slums personified evil: ill-health, stunted growth; alcoholism; promiscuity; venereal disease; the rural orphanage personified a cure for these problems.

Rhetoric/ Mythology over Child & Youth Migration

In the critical years, 1920s-1950s, child and youth migration gave many Australians warm, fuzzy feelings - for different reasons.

Youth migrants were viewed as the cream of Britain's young men journeying to the ends of the earth to farm the imperial frontier and assist in developing and defending the empire on which the sun rarely set; whereas, on the other hand

Child migrants were viewed as pathetic, poverty-stricken little waifs abandoned by their parents and country and given a second chance by a warm-hearted, generous Australian people who sympathised with the poor, the abandoned, the battlers.

Governments favored child and youth migration, although relatively small numbers of people were involved, because this stream gave a pleasant glow to the whole migration movement.

This may be difficult to realise at the present time.

The Numbers of Child Migrants

There has been a consistent tendency to **exaggerate** the number of youngsters who arrived in Australia as child migrants.

Many more people arrived under youth migration schemes. The confusion is redolent of journalist hyperbole and the desire of some activists to exaggerate the numbers they represent, to highlight the importance of their cause.

In counting the numbers, we need to be clear which children, which years, which countries we are counting. After World War II, some 3000-3500 youngsters came to Australia as CHILD migrants, most from the UK, but around 300 children from Malta.

The numbers involved were **minute** compared with (a) the numbers of children in care in the UK during the late 1940s-early 1950s, (say) around 125,000 in a given year; and (b) and the hundreds of thousands of people flooding into Australia during the postwar mass migration programme.

Catholic attitudes towards Child Migration

(Numbers) In the years, 1870-1914, when some 80,000 child migrants were dispatched to CANADA, the number sent under Roman Catholic auspices was some 10% of the total.

No Catholic child migrants under Catholic auspices came to Australia during the 1920s; the first Catholic child migrants - 114 boys - arrived in Western Australia in 1938-39.

Catholic agencies became increasingly interested in child migration post World War II just at the time child migration was soon to end.

About one-half (the smaller half !) of the child migrants who came to Australia after World War II came under Catholic auspices. All Maltese child migrants came under Catholic auspices.

(Attitudes) 'I saw Canon Craven ('Father Hudson Homes, Coleshill, Birmingham) today ... He said that the Catholic Council for British Overseas Settlements was anxious to increase the places to which under-privileged children could be sent from the UK at a distance. Canon Craven said that already Canada was proving too near; children sent out there saved up money for a trip home and when they reached England drifted back to their old surroundings and all the care spent on their training was thus lost.' (Wiseman, R, Dominions Office, memo, 13 February 1945, Catholic Council for British Overseas Settlement: Resumption of Child Migration to Western Australia, DO 35/1139, Public Record Office, Kew, London)

'We are not thinking of sending out children to please the Australian Government. Each case should be considered on its merits. The big appeal of emigration ... is the saving of children from undesirable parents.' (Canon George Craven, Minutes, General Meeting, Catholic Child Welfare Council, 7 November 1946. Archives, 73 St. Charles Square, London, W10 8EJ)

'It's my old trouble - a torrent of casework and an over-worked staff. We have got (I think) about forty cases of children who are absolutely deserted and who, I think, might be suitable (for emigration). Craven (Canon) to Conlon (Brother), 23 December 1946, File A, Catholic Emigration Association, Archives, 73 St Charles Square, London, W10 8EJ)

'The Catholic Child Welfare Council does not favour emigration for its own sake but does find that it is the best means in certain cases of securing the ultimate rescue of the children. If such is the case then the earlier in life the child emigrates the better Australian he will make.' (Cleary (Father) to Griffin (Bishop), 28 February 1951. 'Loose notes on child migration', 'Father Hudson's Homes', Coleshill, Birmingham)

It is my opinion that child migration - especially child migration under Catholic auspices - was intimately concerned with contemporary attitudes to illegitimacy.

Illegitimacy and Child Migration: Critical Link

Illegitimate children were long stigmatised in English society ... the consistent and ruthlessly enforced policy of the state was largely the negative policy of resisting liability for their support ... legislation concerned the illegitimate offspring of the poor ... precariousness of their lives ... invidious status accorded by English society to its bastards Civil law, (i.e. the Poor Law) was operated intentionally in such a way as not only to humiliate the mother but to stigmatise the child ... few were interested in the welfare of such children... bastards were an affront to morality and an undesirable charge on the rates such children constituted the largest single class of destitute children ... some orphanages excluded them because (it was believed) such children would inherit their parents weaknesses, and hence they would contaminate the minds and morals of the lawfully begotten. (Pinchbeck, J, and Hewett, M, *Children in English Society*, Vol. 11, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973, p 582-5)

‘Of Barnardo’s child emigrants, 30% were illegitimate. Half of the Barnardo emigrants were children of widows or widowers ... one in six had lost both parents.’ Parr, J, *Labouring Children: British Immigrant Apprentices to Canada, 1869-1924*, Croom Helm, London, 1980, p 63.

The children of widows or married women were not eligible. The Rev W Harrison, 1854, summed up the object of the Foundling Hospital: ‘ ... namely to give a woman who has fallen into sin and is desirous of escaping from its practice and degradation, an opportunity of hiding her shame, by receiving her infant and thus removing the evidence of her disgrace.’ Ramsland, J ‘Cultivating a Respectful and Modest Demeanour’: Children of the Foundling, 1800-1926, *The London Journal* , Vol 18. No 2, 1993, pp 95-113

‘Orphans’, Illegitimacy and Official Lying

It is common for former child migrants to say: ‘We were called orphans; we were told we had no parents (living); we had one or both parents still alive; we were lied to ...’

There are some misunderstandings here in the use of terms. The word ‘orphan’ in Home Office parlance and in institutional care referred to a child deserted or surrendered, a child without means of support, a child who was a charge on the state.

In a sense, one could say that an ‘orphan’ had no money, rather than no parents.

The children were commonly lied to about their parentage and this lying has a distasteful ring down the years. However, it was often meant well - in contemporary terms. The children were often illegitimate; illegitimacy cast a slur on mother and child; they were lied to with a view to protecting them from the knowledge of their unfortunate past.

This was considered the kinder thing to do; the children would make a new life for themselves; they would have a fresh start in a new world.

The following quotations illustrate the contemporary thinking:

‘Something should be done to avoid the unnecessary disclosure of illegitimacy ... in the ordinary practical occasions of life persons should not have to reveal illegitimacy in tendering evidence as to age.’ Under Secretary of State, Foreign Affairs to Under Secretary of State, Home Office, 11 August 1933

‘In 1933, 4.7% of the live births in the UK were illegitimate ... The Child Welfare Committee of the League of Nations is making a study of the various disabilities suffered by the illegitimate child.’ Under Secretary of State, Home Office to Newton, 9 January 1933. Illegitimate Children, League of Nations Child Welfare Committee, HO45/24853

In 1944, Mr W Garnett, UK High Commission, Canberra, advised the Inter-Departmental Committee on Immigration Policy as to the possibilities for future child migration.

‘A survey of children likely to be available to be sent from the UK to the Australian farm schools shows that social legislation is likely **to reduce the numbers** (comparatively with the past thirty years) of children who would be candidates for emigration. Extreme poverty and the effects of poverty will tend to decrease. However, there will still be a considerable number of children who are without family protection. These are of three main groupings:

- (a) the **illegitimate child** deserted by both parents;
- (b) the **illegitimate child** whose mother having married later is unequal to absorbing the child into her family;
- (c) the child of parents who are incapable of maintaining a steady household and therefore relinquish responsibilities.

Report Mr W Garnett, Fairbridge Farm School, 6 October 1944, p 38. Suggested visit of Mr Garnett to the Fairbridge Farm School, Pinjarra, DO35/1138, PRO, Kew, Surrey, England

Changing British attitudes towards child migration (1940s)

‘We understand that organisations for sending deprived children to the Dominions may resume their work in the near future. We have heard evidence as to the arrangements for selecting children for migration and it is clear to us that their effect is that this opportunity is given only to children of fine physique and good mental equipment. These are precisely the children for whom satisfactory openings could be found in this country and in present day conditions this particular method of providing for the deprived child is not one that we specially wish to see extended. On the other hand, a fresh start in a new country may, for children with an unfortunate background, be the foundation of a happy life, and the opportunity should therefore, in our view, remain open to suitable children who express a desire for it. We should, however, strongly deprecate their setting out in life under less thorough care and supervision than they would have at home. We recommend that it should

be a condition to the consenting of the emigration of deprived children that the arrangements made by the government of the receiving country for their welfare and after care should be comparable to those we have proposed in this report for deprived children remaining in this country. *Report of the Care of Children Committee (Curtis Committee)* Cmd. 6922 HMSO 1944, Section 501. DO35/3394 Public Record Office, Kew, Surrey.

The Legal Framework of Child Migration: UK

Child migration was legal and the governments involved know this despite occasional media reports that these or those former child migrants are seeking legal advice to tackle governments on the matter.

These are just three important Acts of Parliament which illustrate the legality of child migration:

The Empire Settlement Act, 1922

Be in enacted by the King's most Excellent Majesty

(1) It shall be lawful for the Secretary of State in association with the government of any part of his Majesty's Dominions, or with public authorities or public or private organisations either in the UK or in any part of such Dominions, to formulate and co-operate in carrying out agreed schemes for affording joint assistance to suitable persons in the UK who intended to settle in any part of HM Overseas Dominions.

(2) An agreed scheme under this Act may be either:-

(a) a development or a land settlement scheme; or

(b) a scheme for facilitating settlement in, or migration to, any part of HM Overseas Dominions by assistance with passages, initial allowances, training or otherwise.

Children Act (UK) 1948

In regard to child migration, sections 17 and 33 of the Children Act are significant:

17 This section dealt with the power of local authorities to arrange for the emigration of children in their care

33 This dealt with the power of the Secretary of State to control the emigration of children under the care of the voluntary societies.

Section 17 is as follows:

(a) A local authority may, with the consent of the Secretary of State, procure or assist in procuring the emigration of any child in their care;

(b) The Secretary of State shall not give his consent under this section unless he is satisfied that emigration would benefit the child and that suitable arrangements have been, or will be made, for the child's reception and welfare in the country to which he is going; that the parents or guardian of the child have been consulted or that it is not practicable to consult them; and that the child consents.

(It is) provided that where a child is too young to form or express a proper opinion on the matter, the Secretary of State may consent to his emigration notwithstanding that the child is unable to consent thereto; or in any case where the child is to emigrate in company with a parent, guardian or relative of his, or is to emigrate for the purpose of joining a parent, guardian, relative or friend.

(c) In the last foregoing subsection the expression 'parent or guardian' shall be construed in accordance with the provisions of section nine of this Act.

The Legal Framework: Australia

Immigration (Guardianship of Children Act, No 45 of 1946

Be it enacted by the King's Most Excellent Majesty, the Senate, and the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Australia, as follows:-

(1) This Act may be cited as the Immigration (Guardianship of Children) Act, 1946.

(3)(1) The National Security (Overseas Children) Regulations are repealed.

(2) Any person who, at the commencement of this Act, is the custodian of any child by virtue of the Regulations repealed by this section shall continue to be the custodian of that child, and the provisions of this Act shall apply as if that person that become the custodian in pursuance of this Act.

The Act presumes that there may be some of the 543 CORB children still in Australia and requiring the protection of the Guardianship Act

(5)(1) The Minister may, in relation to any matter of class of matters, or in relation to any immigrant child or class of immigrant children, by writing under his hand, delegate to any officer or authority of the Commonwealth or of any State or Territory of the Commonwealth all or any of his powers and functions under this Act (except the power of delegation) so that the delegated powers and functions may be exercised by the delegate with respect to the matters or class of matters, or the child or class of children, specified in the instrument of delegation.

(2) Where under this Act the exercise of any power or function by the Minister or the operation of any provision of this Act is dependent upon the opinion or state of mind of the Minister in relation to any matter, that power or function may be exercised by the delegate or that provision may operate (as the case may be) upon the opinion or state of mind of the delegate in relation to that matter.

(3) A delegation under this section shall be revocable at will, and no delegation shall prevent the exercise of any power or function by the Minister.

(6) The Minister shall be the guardian of the person of -

- (a) every evacuee child; and
- (b) every immigrant child who arrives in Australia after the commencement of this Act,

to the exclusion of the father and mother and every other guardian of the child, and shall have, as guardian, the same right, powers, duties, obligations and liabilities as a natural guardian of the child would have, until the child reaches the age of 21 years or leaves Australia permanently ...

(7)(1) When the Minister is satisfied that a person, representing any authority or organisation approved by the Minister, who has applied to be the custodian of any immigrant children is a suitable person to be such custodian, the Minister may place those children in the custody of that person, and that person shall thereupon become the custodian of those children.

(11) The Minister may, by order, direct that the provisions of this Act shall cease to apply to and in relation to any immigrant child, or to any class of immigrant children, specified in the order, and this Act shall thereupon cease to apply accordingly.

(12) The Governor-General may make regulations, not inconsistent with this Act.

Responsibility/Governments, Agencies

A recurrent feature of child migration schemes seems to have been lack of effective monitoring of the children's welfare by either the British Government or the Australian Government. On arrival in Australia children became the responsibility of the authorities there as 'wards of the state'. The prime responsibility for the neglect of checking procedures rests with the governments concerned, but the sending agencies might have been expected to investigate more thoroughly the conditions in which the children were living. (Schiller, D, 'The Stolen Generations and the Lost Children: a comparative analysis', p 12. Unpublished essay in the possession of its author, 'Gawsworth', RMB 250a, June Road, via Wagga Wagga NSW 2650)

Up to date, the Government has treated migrant children in the same manner as wards of the department. In care, the following number of child migrants are: Catholic institutions: 365; Fairbridge, 112 and Anglican, 48.1984. Young, A L, Director of Child Welfare Department, WA to Hon Premier and Minister for Child Welfare, WA, 9 February 1955 (Flavell, R J, 'Child Migration to Australia, Post World War II', Research paper, 1984)

'Incidentally, Mr McColl (sic.), State Child Welfare Officer, apologised before the members of the Committee and ourselves for the negligence of his Department in not having

recommended improvements before now.' The reference is St Joseph's Farm and Trade School, Bindoon, Western Australia.(DO35/6382 This is contained in a secret report of the 'Fact-Finding Mission' (1956) to the Commonwealth Relations Office and the Home Office)

Financial Support - Post WW2 Child Migrants

Since the agencies who arranged the emigration of the children and their care in Australia were VOLUNTARY, they did not expect, and did not receive full funding from governments.

They raised their finances partly the way any voluntary association raises its funds. The voluntary agencies, Homes, residential care institutions received some assistance from governments and government agencies.

The following factors need to be borne in mind:

the standard of living in an orphanage or industrial school during the child migration era was pitched at that of the contemporary working class. The author realises that speaking of the 'working class' in 2000-2001 may seem politically incorrect, but one cannot understand child migration unless we realise that it was occurring close to the base of the social heap.

it was much easier to get the general population to donate to a child care orphanage for projects such as a new dormitory block; a new hall or a new chapel, than to persuade people to give so that the children would have a higher standard of living.

that orphanage funds (whether derived from government sources, or raised by voluntary effort) had to pay for many things other than food and clothing and amenities for the children; funds had to support (a) the wages for the staff; or the wages for some staff and maintenance for Catholic religious men and women on a staff; (b) some financial payment to the organisation which supported the orphanage -Êin the case of members of Catholic Religious Congregations - for recruitment and training, for office expenses; for care of the old. sick. infirm and retired.

There is a tendency to say that is such-and-such was allowed by governments for the 'orphans' maintenance and was therefore available (only) for food, clothes and amenities for the residents.

In this clear letter, Father Cyril Stinson, Director CEMWA describes the funding available for child migrants. Stinson is writing to Father L Roberts, Director, Catholic Social Service Bueau, Adelaide, 20 July 1949.

Subsidies: To help support the children, we receive Imperial, Federal and State subsidy, and also a weekly grant of 3/- (30 cents) per child from the WA Lotteries Commission.

Imperial subsidy: This has now been raised to STG 10/- per week as from January 1st. Claims for this are submitted quarterly to Father (W) Nicol in London who deals with the Dominions Office. The claim should be set out as per specimen attached, and the Dominions Offices insisted that the first application be countersigned by some Government official as a

guarantee. We obtain the signature of the guardian. Father Nicol signed an Agreement with the Dominions Office on behalf of all migrant children so that it will apply to you as well as to ourselves. I attach a copy. According to Father Nicol there were certain verbal demands ... Imperial subsidy is payable up to the age of sixteen years. There has been no question as to whether or not it will be paid if a child leaves school and is placed in training in the institution before reaching the age of sixteen. We are still claiming it for children who have been fostered out and so far they have paid it, and it is paid over to the foster parents. The Imperial Government, or this particular branch of it, appear to be very suspicious people and the matter needs careful handling.

Federal Subsidy. This consists of Child Endowment. A claim should be lodged normally within seven days of the child being placed in the institution but in actual practice they give us a month's grace. Returns are submitted quarterly on behalf of all children in the institutions concerned.

State subsidy. The state subsidy here amounts to 8/9 per week per child payable as long as the children are in school. We submit monthly returns to the state government. To make this work easier, we have duplicated returns which are acceptable to the department.

After much fighting and representation we succeeded in persuading the State Government to undertake to pay medical, hospital, dental, optical and funeral expenses for the migrant children. They have also agreed that if any children show particular scholastic ability, they will pay the cost of their secondary education. These are important points because unless the local government help to this extent you will find the subsidy becomes hopelessly inadequate.

Equipment Allowance: I take it that you know that all these children are entitled to a £5 per head equipment allowance, payable on arrival in Australia by the Commonwealth Government. You make application to the Commonwealth Government, and in the course of very much time you eventually get it.

Outfit Allowance. For any child leaving the institution for employment or fostering, the State Immigration Department allow us £12/10/- for an outfit.

What is plain is that funding came from a variety of sources, in drips-and-drabs, and with long delays in some cases; and because of the variety of sources its is difficult to know how well off or otherwise these places were.

The sense is that it was an endless battle financially to keep the institutions functioning effectively.

Controversial Issues: Parents Consent to the Child's Migration

It is commonly claimed that child migrants were (often) sent without their parents' knowledge or consent. This is normally untrue and involves a number of misunderstandings.

'Many had parents and were sent without their parents' knowledge or consent.' (Lewis, J, 'Tormented Bindoon boys get back together at last', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 11 December 1993, p 7)

The great majority of the children sent to Australia after World War II had been surrendered to the British institutions when they were very young - commonly soon after birth. Most were illegitimate. At this early stage the father was rarely involved with the child. We are in the world of the poor, the underclass, the marginalised. The 1930s had seen desperate economic times; the early 1940s, had experienced six years of warfare.

In essence, the sending agencies made efforts - some more than others - to find the mother to give her consent. Where she could not be found, there was a LEGAL procedure for sending the children, and this could include the Principal/Director/Superintendent of the institution signing the relevant papers.

The following quotations give a flavour to these realities:

‘The London County Council will seek the consent of parents or, in the case of orphans or deserted children, the consent of the children under the hands of two Justices of the Petty Sessional Courts in accordance with the requirements of the Poor Law Act, 1930 (Education Officer, London County Council to Craven, 17 January 1939. File A, Catholic Emigration Society Archives, Archdiocese of Westminster, 73 St Charles Square, London, W10 6EJ) Armstrong, R E, (Chief Immigration Officer, Australia House) to Flint, 23 November 1955: ‘... in every case the consent of the child’s **legal guardian** must be obtained’ (to the emigration of the child) (The file is as above)

In our changed world of the last ten to fifteen years, an ageing mother meets her ex-child migrant son/daughter after thirty-forty-fifty years. It is an emotion-charged event. The mother may be embarrassed, guilty ... and so a ‘**cover story**’ is imagined: ‘I only placed you in the orphanage for a few weeks, months ... I went back to get you ... you were gone ... I tried to find you ... it was that priest, nun, church worker, Superintendent, government officer (bastard) that did this’ ... there are floods of tears (and sometimes there are TV cameras soaking in the action).

However, like many ‘cover stories’ which involve compassionate lying to assist desperate people cope with traumas of one kind or another, these stories around the theme ‘I **only** left you in the orphanage for a few months ...’ are often untrue and belie the painful reality of the times.

‘Welsh-born Gordon, in his own words, was dumped by his mother, Catherine, along with his six-year-old sister, Priscilla Joy, at Nazareth House, Cardiff in 1935. Immediately, brother and sister were separated and Gordon was despatched to the boys orphanage at Nazareth House in Swansea ... His mother had registered him in her maiden name to reduce the chances of her husband being able to trace the boy. Then she took a train to London and was never heard of again. (Reyes, C, ‘We’ll help the Lost Children’, *The Universe*, 14 May 1989, p 6

The 1956 Report of the Fact-Finding Committee (Ross Report) was discussed by the Overseas Migration Board at a meeting, 14 December 1956. Mr J Tucker, Dr Barnardo’s Homes, made the following reported comment:

The question of getting parental consent is a very difficult task. For instance, regarding the persuading of parents, if we have a mother who has deserted her child eight years ago, we have to spend sometimes months in tracing that mother to get her sanction. If there is a considerable delay we have to pay tracers, who are very expensive. (DO 35/6383)

In the case of a person committed to its care, the application in individual cases should be made to the Scottish Education Department ... The department would raise no objection to the emigration of children in the custody of the County Council if the Council were fully satisfied that the children's interests would be safeguarded adequately, and if the children and their parents - **if available** - willingly consented. (Scheme for Immigration into the Union of South Africa of children from the Allied countries in Europe, MH 55/1645)

Controversial Issues: Corporal Punishment

What is plain on this emotive issue is that in the child migration era, corporal punishment and a certain severity in raising children, in homes and at schools, was common - not universal.

Corporal punishment of children in homes and schools was legal - up to a point, but, in fact, the legal limits were ambiguous.

However, it is also clear that corporal punishment in the residential care institutions at times went beyond severity into extreme behaviour, sometimes criminal behaviour, sometimes sadism.

At this distance, it is not always possible to sift the various stories of extreme behaviour; - exaggeration occurs; (old boys) stories grow with retelling.

It is lawful for a parent or a person in the place of the parent, or for a schoolmaster or master, to use, by way of correction towards a child, pupil or apprentice under his care, such force as is reasonable under the circumstances. (Section 257 of the Criminal Code of Western Australia)

Yet there is the sense that the following account from Lionel Welsh's book captures accurately aspects of the regime at St Joseph's Farm and Trade school, Bindoon, under its controversial principal, Brother F P Keaney.

(Welsh, L.P. **Geordie - Orphan of the Empire**, P. & B. Press, Perth, 1990, p 22) Dairy - early morning - boy assistants late - Brother 'Honk' Dawe portrayed as very cruel - cold - axe handle applied to the boys buttocks. (p. 30) Boys always in fear of the strap...often six strokes on the bare backside. Brother Keaney's Sunday assemblies; first he would assemble the Brothers in his office; boys, hall, notebook. Psychological warfare; boy's name; boy stripped, bent over, beaten. Escaping/absconding: Jimmy Meham and Tom Allen; caught; Keaney in

a rage (p. 32) He flogged them over their whole bodies. Among the 100 boys ...tensions ... fights. In the hall, after church...Loser six strokes of the strap on the bare backside.(p. 44) The case of the broken slab, 'When he realised what had happened, Keaney went berserk and started lashing out with the walking stick he always carried...(p. 53) Welsh, 15 years old...stayed behind during one vacation to cook. (p. 54) Keaney and 'Pinky' Hayes from Perth ...Welsh out spotlighting breaks his leg and so does not get up for cooking duty. Keaney, meanwhile in the kitchen, is going mad because there's no breakfast and he's flogging the shit out of (John) Cassidy - a serve of the walking stick...'berserk Irishman' - 'lunatic' (p. 56) He backhanded me across the mouth. The leg broken; the doctor in Perth straightened his leg without an anesthetic.

On the other hand the following quotations are inserted to give a flavour to the reality of the times which some appear to have forgotten:

'I'd been caught stealing grapes from a vine near the teacher's quarters and was reported directly to Colonel Heath, the Director (Fairbridge, Pinjarra). As usual I had to report to him at the appointed hour to hear the dreaded order, 'Get them down lad!' ... I dropped my short pants and leaned over a chair ... half a dozen lashes later I knew all about it.' (Lane, J, *Fairbridge Kid*, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, Perth, 1990, p 196)

'Corporal punishment was dealt out to anyone who stepped out-of-line, (Barnardo's, 'Mowbray Park', Picton, NSW) but apart from that the place was all right ... I don't think caning did us any harm.' (Moore, A, *Growing up with Barnardo's*, Iremonger, Sydney, 1990, p 72)

'Modern psychology had made little impression on the average Australian parent of the postwar era. At that time, there was more discussion about the physical health of children than about their mental health. To many parents, it was clear that if children did the wrong thing, they should be punished, often physically. ... Today the cane isn't used commonly in schools. Thirty or forty years ago, it was used commonly. (Townsend, H, *Baby Boomers: Growing up in Australia in the 1940s, 50s and 60s*, Brookside, NSW, 1988, p 81) (David Kinshila) 'The incentive for us to learn our Latin verbs was 'Big Bertha' and 'Little Bertha' - two strips of rubber linoleum of different widths which he would produce from his voluminous habit, and according to the degree of misdemeanour, administer to our taut backsides.' (*St Ildephonus College, New Norcia, 1913-88*, Jubilee Magazine, Perth, 1988, p 38)

'I was a wayward, headstrong boy ... Some boys used to get into real trouble but I never did. I always knew where to draw the line, although sometimes I went a bit close to coming unstuck and many were the hidings I received from my old man. He would be waiting for me when I arrived home with a razor strap hidden behind him until I got close enough for him to grab me. Then all hell would break loose with him whacking and me yelling.' (Mark, B, *The Fall of the Dice*, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1991, p 7)

(Wilfred Wake) 'Mr Doust was a fantastic teacher, strict when needed ... better known to the students as 'Doustie', he was a strong believer in school discipline and personally administered the punishment. He used the cane for boys ... The cane was referred to as 'Percy' and spelling mistakes usually deserved a stroke of the cane for each mistake. He would then throw the pad on the floor and when the student stooped to pick it up, he would

receive a stroke on the behind.’ (Bele, L, and McCornish, A, *Picton Primary School, 1891-1991*, Perth, 1991, p 24)

Controversial Issues: Sexual Abuse of Residents

The child molestation issue is difficult to manage in limited space. Dr Barry Coldrey’s detailed study of the four Christian Brothers Western Australian orphanages attempts to grapple with the issue, among many other controversial matters. See: Coldrey, B M, *The Scheme: The Christian Brothers and Child Care in Western Australia*, Argyle-Pacific, Perth, 1993.

It is plain that sexual abuse occurred in some of the institutions and some (few) cases surfaced at the time and are available in the contemporary record. See: Appendix 3.

(Fairbridge Farm School, Molong via Orange, New South Wales, 1950s) George Wilkins has spoken of abuse by one staff member: ‘As in many closed communities with no accountability to the outside world, sexual abuse of the children was not uncommon. There was one ‘Old Fairbridgean who used to come back to work at the farm. He used to abuse any boy he could get hold of. Whatever he wanted was done. At times there were complaints; he would be sent away for a time, but he always came back,’ said George.

‘I remember him picking on one young boy to go with him to the farm. I knew what it was for, so I stepped in and sent the boy somewhere else ... (Once) he took me under one of these (raised) buildings and made me undress. I was so naive that I thought it was some sort of medical examination that I had to have.

‘Many of the girls were abused sexually. My sister had as bad a time as any. Each girls cottage had to have a boy come and chop wood and light the fires. They were sometimes responsible for the abuse; at other times it was the farm staff.’ (Ferriman, A ‘Lost Children of the Empire’, Part 1, *The Observer*, 19 July 1987, p 17)

In the controversy which erupted since 1987, most of the allegations of sexual abuse have swirled around the four Christian Brothers institutions in Western Australia, especially St Joseph’s Farm and Trade school, Bindoon.

Some former residents of the Home(s) give the impression of widespread sexual abuse; others deny its existence.

‘I myself was at Bindoon (Boys Town) for six years ... As for the sexual ennuendoes in ‘The Leaving of Liverpool’, I cannot understand as I was six years at Bindoon and not one Brother or priest ever made overtures to myself. I was with some of these men for hours of end. (Madigan, M, to the Presenter, ABC TV ‘7.30 Report’, 10 July 1992)

‘I never experienced sexual abuse (at Bindoon, 1947-52) ... want to dissociate myself from the sexual abuse allegations.’ (Welsh, L, to Province Leader, Christian Brothers, 53 Redmond Street, Manning, WA, 6952, Phone call, c. 2.45 p.m. Sunday, 19 July 1992.

(Dick Jordan) 'I never once saw any sexual abuse or rape and I never heard any stories at school (Clontarf Orphanage)' (Guild, F, 'Orphans slam cruelty claims', *Sunday Times*, Perth, Western Australia, 12 July 1992.

(Derek Lynch) 'I might say that in all the time - twelve years - that I was under their care, I did not experience any sexual abuse.' (Lynch, D, 'From orphan to magistrate - with thanks to the Brothers', *The Age*, 17 July 1992, p 12)

(Norm Yates) '... he is adamant that they were not sexually abused.' ('Our Bindoon boy sets the record straight', *Goldfields Magazine*, Kalgoorlie, Western Australia, 24 July 1992, p 3)

(Alf Wettinger) 'He (resident, five years, Bindoon) neither saw nor heard of any sexual abuse of pupils.' (Atkinson, T, 'The Lost Children', *Who Weekly*, 31 August 1992, p 24)

(Pat Monaghan) 'I find it hard to believe they sexually abused boys ... I would say that I would have got more beatings at Clontarf and Tardun than anyone else - must have been my Irish charm - but I was never abused sexually.' (Monaghan, P G, 'Beatings, starvation and lies the norm for young migrants', *Geraldton Guardian*, 14 July 1992)

(Arthur) 'He - eight years at Castledare-Clontarf - believes that claims of child abuse are exaggerated and that allegations of sexual abuse are lies. 'I don't know of any kids who were sexually abused and anything that happened in the orphanage went right around; everyone heard about it.' ('Better off than a street kid', *South Western Times*, Western Australia, 14 July 1992)

(Brian Tennant) 'He said he did not experience, see or hear of sexual abuse in the orphanages and this led him to believe that such incidents were few and far between.' (Aisbett, N, 'Too late to probe abuse: Tennant', *West Australian*, 23 July 1993, p 28)

(At 'Tuppin House', seaside holiday camp, Moore River (Western Australia) some forty old boys and their families gathered for a reunion) 'None of the men at the reunion had heard of sexual abuse while they were in the orphanages but said it was clear now that isolated incidents had occurred.' (Guild, F, 'Brothers recall the good old days', *Sunday Times*, Perth, 30 July 1993)

(Dr Tom Cullity) 'I visited Bindoon on two or three occasions between 1954 and 1956 as one of a team of doctors to see every boy. Needless to say we saw no signs of ill-treatment or under-nourishment.' (Cullity to Coldrey, 2 April 1991)

(Laurie Cain) 'There was no indication - Bindoon, five years, 1940s - of any sexual problems whatsoever - something which would be very hard to keep under cover if it did exist.' (Cain, L B, 'Bindoon revisited', *Southern Gazette*, Perth, 26 March 1991)

(Ron Shaw) 'I experienced - Castledare, Bindoon, 1947-56 - none of the brutality or sexual abuse spoken of, and I do not recall anyone being so treated while I was there.' ('Ex-Scholar defends the Brothers', *The Record*, Perth, 28 September 1989)

‘The most physically undernourished and mentally-deprived children ever seen in a ship’ The British Catholic children dispatched to Australia during the last phase of child migration, 1947-67.

Over the past fifteen years there has been a considerable amount of writing, both popular and academic, over the twin issues of unaccompanied child and youth migration from the United Kingdom to British colonies - later dominions - overseas.²⁰ All this in the context of a savage controversy which arose in the late 1980s with allegations of administrative shortcomings in post-World War II child migration policy and of widespread abuses in the institutions to which the children were sent for their education and training in Australia. This paper explores one controversial area not currently addressed in the literature: namely the condition and background of the children who were sent to the antipodes after the second world war.

Introduction

In the heyday of British imperialism, Father N. Waugh, Director of the Archdiocese of Westminster ‘Crusade of Rescue’ waxed lyrical when he thought of the child migration work of the society:²¹

A double service is rendered to religion, humanity and civilisation, in carrying off the children of distress to the open lands beyond the sea, to live in the open, to work with nature, to wrestle with forest, field and stream, to forget the fetid city slums, to think and strive and pray in the open, to grow strong and self-reliant, to be the guardians of the outpost of civilisation, religion and new endeavour...every child a pioneer of the Empire.

In his rich hyperbole Waugh expressed the commonplace notions surrounding contemporary child migration. He was probably unaware of the grim origins of this three hundred year old policy of dispatching unaccompanied children - abandoned, illegitimate, poverty-stricken and delinquent children - from the mean slums of British cities to cultivate and populate the wide-open spaces of the Empire. Moreover, Father Waugh and most other child migration enthusiasts were long deceased before the controversy erupted over the last phase of child migration - the despatch of some 3500 children from Great Britain and Malta to Australia after World War II.

Child migration had a long and chequered history surrounded with controversy and marred by scandal. It was, actually, never a single policy pursued continuously: rather it was a complex tangle of competing private schemes, government initiatives, charismatic personalities, muddled priorities and confused agendas. It was critically affected by the economic, political and social pressures of particular times.

The first 100 children - 'vagrants' - were dispatched from London to Virginia in 1618, their passage arranged by the City fathers, while the last nine children were flown to Australia in 1967 under the auspices of Barnardos. It follows that the origins of child migration were linked to Britain's acquisition of an empire in North America during the early seventeenth century. In the wild, untamed, thinly-populated continent, labour was at a premium and the Privy Council legalised the despatch of 'vagrant' and 'recalcitrant' children to Virginia on 31 January 1620. The Catholic church - a small, marginalised minority in Britain - had nothing to do with child migration at this time. Decades, even centuries passed.

Child Migration Peaks

Child migration peaked from the 1870s until the start of World War I. The 1920s emigration to Canada and Australia was small scale by comparison; and the post World War II child migration to Australia was miniscule. Some 80,000 children were emigrated to Canada before 1914; about ten per cent of them under Catholic auspices.

The large scale increase in child migration to Canada after 1870 was triggered by desperate economic conditions over the previous few years: the social havoc caused by the 1866 cholera epidemic; the bad harvest of 1867; and widespread unemployment during a cyclic downturn in the economy. It was during this period that Annie Macpherson, Thomas Barnardo and William Booth commenced their work among the poorest and most destitute in the east end of London. To all of these, and many other religious workers, emigration - including the emigration of abandoned children - seemed the one certain way for the desperately poor to better themselves. In the 1870s, the Catholic 'Rescue Societies' began to include child emigration among their programmes.

The Farm School Movement and Australia

By this stage, it should be clear that child migration to the Australian states came towards the end of a long experience with the policy elsewhere. In addition, in the early twentieth century, new migration enthusiasts involved themselves in the work, stressing that children should be trained in colonial orphanages before they were placed with colonial farmers. The

dominating personality of this phase was Kingsley Fairbridge, who was offered land at Pinjarra, south of Perth by the Western Australian government in 1911 to pioneer his farm school initiative. After an epic struggle Fairbridge and his supporters established this venture securely and other farms schools were founded over time. It was the mystique associated with Fairbridge that challenged Catholic leaders in Western Australia to emulate his programmes for deprived children.

With the outbreak of World War I, migration from the British Isles was suspended, and when it recommenced in 1920, the numbers of children sent were never on the same scale. By 1920, powerful interest groups in Canada opposed the entry of unaccompanied juveniles and throughout the following decade child migration to Canada diminished. The great depression finally terminated their entry. However, as Canada barred the entry of unaccompanied juveniles, the voluntary societies focused their attention increasingly on Australia where, in the buoyant 1920s, governments favoured their entry. Barnardos sent children to New South Wales in 1923 and handled 872 during the decade; Fairbridge continued its work and 918 children arrived in Western Australia during this period.

There was no Catholic child migration to Australia during the 1920s, though Catholic leaders in Western Australia were anxious to initiate a scheme centred on the Christian Brothers institutions in that state. However, enthusiastic planning and detailed discussions foundered on the unwillingness of the Commonwealth government to approve a subsidy and the unwillingness of the English Catholic carers to send their children to the antipodes when they had long-standing and successful arrangements over fifty years to send children to Canada.

The Last Phase of an Old Social Policy

The depression terminated almost all migration to Australia until 1937. However, the long-delayed plans to emigrate some English Catholic children to Western Australia found fruition in 1938-39 when some 114 boys pioneered the 'Tardun Scheme' on a vast property near Geraldton. In 1937, Fairbridge, Barnardos and other migration agencies recommenced their work. New farm schools were established at Molong, near Orange in New South Wales and at Glenmore, near Bacchus Marsh in Victoria.

However, with World War II, and in the wake of Japanese aggression in the Pacific, the whole migration scene changed in Australia. The government encouraged a new enthusiasm for a comprehensive immigration policy after the ending of hostilities. Child migration was, at first, considered a major part of this new immigration policy; there was talk of 50,000 child migrants over three years. It was not to be.

However, in 1947, nearly 500 child migrants were brought to Australia, most of them under Catholic auspices and most to Western Australia. Thereafter, Fairbridge and Barnardos and many other bodies brought in some children but numbers remained small and diminishing with the years. Overall, about 3500 children came, around one-half of them for Catholic institutions. Meanwhile, in 1950, some Maltese child migrants - all boys - were placed in Christian Brothers orphanages in Western Australia. During the next decade some 280 boys arrived under this scheme.

In the 1950s, British officials came to Australia to investigate child migration, John Moss in 1952 and a larger Home Office team in 1956. Moss tended to favour sending British children to Australia, but four years later the Fact-Finding Mission was much more sceptical of its benefits. The Mission was extremely critical of a number of Catholic institutions. Almost immediately, the British Catholic 'Rescue Societies' terminated all plans to place their children in Australia. Other societies sent a few children each year until 1967 but essentially, child migration was over.

Times had changed; the social conditions and attitudes in the United Kingdom which had led to many children being sent abroad, were disappearing. Grinding poverty was being reduced and the social services of the welfare state were being extended. The social slur which illegitimacy had cast over mother and child was waning. At its most basic, child migration had involved the removal of abandoned illegitimate children.

A Catholic Question

In the controversy, the Catholic Church and some of its agencies and Religious Congregations - the Christian Brothers, the Sisters of Mercy and the Nazareth Sisters - are featured constantly, despite the fact that only around one-half of the children arrived under Catholic auspices. Major Protestant bodies such as Fairbridge and Barnardo's, and the Salvation Army have received much less attention. As many as 47 Australian institutions accepted child migrants. We may ask: was there a distinctively 'Catholic' problem where child migration was concerned?

The answer must be in the affirmative; there was a distinctive Catholic difficulty - obvious now with the advantage of hindsight - less obvious thirty or fifty years ago. The Catholic communities in both the UK and Australia were, in the main, communities of poor people, trying to provide educational and social services which paralleled those of the state. In this, the Catholic communities depended on the unstinting work of the men and women in the

religious congregations, supported by voluntary lay assistance. Something had to give and many of the people poorly trained for the roles they were asked to undertake.

There was a poverty in Catholic residential care greater than the difficulties experienced by the better resourced Protestant and state organisations. Thus Catholic child migrants who were exceptionally deprived before they left the UK, faced under-resourced Catholic residential care in Australia. Small numbers of poorly prepared carers confronted large numbers of boisterous, deprived and difficult children.²²

In the Catholic institutions, congregate care was the norm and staff gender balance was not usual; in Boys Homes, men held all, or almost all the key roles; the reverse in the institutions for girls. In Fairbridge and Barnardo's care, by contrast the cottage system was in vogue and women attended to the younger children. This was a more satisfactory system; abuses were still possible and did sometimes occur, but the risk was less.

In Catholic care, Religious Brothers found themselves caring for small boys, a role for which they neither training nor aptitude. The risks of physical and sexual abuse were heightened. On the other hand, nuns could find themselves trying to look after teenage lads - with the rough-and-ready assistance of male farm staff - a situation which was tailor-made for abuse. Unsurprisingly, abuses - both physical and sexual - occurred.

Some thirty years after the last child migrants left Britain, allegations of mistreatment, abuse and deceit are being voiced on a large scale. Understandably, the main focus of attack has been the last phase of emigration, 1947 to 1967, since many of these former child migrants are still alive and many are very angry at the treatment they received.

Moreover, during the last fifteen years there has been a great deal of both popular and specialist interest in the subject, in Britain, Canada and Australia. Popular newspapers have sensationalised the issue, claiming that 'children were transported, often without parental consent, occasionally without parental knowledge.' The number of children dispatched has been wildly inflated with references to 'tens of thousands' and allusions to 'slave labour...cruel exploitation and physical and sexual abuse.'²³

By implication, all those associated with child migration are tainted - guilt by association - no matter how caring their efforts according to the lights of particular times. This article explores the Catholic problem in child migration after World War II. Its special focus is the

deprivation of Catholic child migrants before they left the British Isles on the long journey to the antipodes and provides a new shaft of light on the child migration controversy. These children presented their untrained carers in Australian institutions with exceptional problems which the latter rarely solved fully and completely. However, deprivation is the focus of this article and an example may illustrate this point.²⁴

Deprivation in British Residential Care

On 7-8 February 1906, there was the annual medical inspection - stripped inspection - of the 236 inmates of the reformatory Training Ship 'Akbar', moored in the river Mersey, one of four vessels stationed near Liverpool. The ship's dilapidated condition mirrored the pathetic state of the children. The 'Akbar' had been launched as the 'Wellesley' almost a century before and showed the scars of many campaigns and various previous roles. The boys were drawn from some of the most wretched slums in the English-speaking world. They did not impress the physician, who wrote: 'The boys are for the most part undersized in stature; many boys of fourteen and fifteen looking like lads of eleven or twelve ... Twenty-eight boys suffer from incontinence of urine at night ... there are alleged to be bad practices among the boys.' So it went on; a tale of deprivation and the results of a degree of poverty hard to contemplate today. This was the background to child emigration.²⁵

'These Sub-Standard British Children'

In the notes for a speech found among loose papers at St Joseph's Farm and Trade School, Bindoon (Western Australia) there was a line referring to the recently-arrived (1947) intake of child migrants - 'they had nothing left but their sex.' This is how the children appeared on arrival to the rough-and-ready farmers of the area and the tough belt-and-braces staff of the farm school. However, we must recall and stress that it was Australians who wanted the child migrants; it was the British care world and the Home Office officials who were increasingly reluctant to send them.²⁶

The mood in Britain was running against any policy of removing young unaccompanied children from the country. The Care of Children (Curtis Committee), 1944, was cool towards child migration, and accelerated the tendency to restrict its operation to more seriously deprived institutional children. At the level of individual residential care, there was understandable pressure on harassed administrators to send their problem children to

Australia. This occurred in many cases, not in all. The critical reality was that few children were available for immigration. Australian authorities - at all levels - were slow to come to terms with changing British care policy towards deprived children.

In a humorous article in a Perth newspaper, a defeated Labor Party candidate and former child migrant recalled the first selection process in which he was involved: the arrangements which brought him to Australia after World War II:

I had my first taste of pre-selection in England. The news came on the radio that Australia was seeking child migrants. The Sister-in-Charge at the orphanage asked who wanted to go to Australia to put up their hands. She picked out the brightest, most intelligent and good-looking students. The rest of us got tickets for Australia.²⁷

This gentleman's tone was whimsical, but there was more than a grain of truth in the remark. In the 'Annals' at the Bindoon farm school, under the heading '1947: New Venture', the following entry appears: 'Twenty English migrant boys between the ages of ten and fifteen arrived by the 'Asturias'. The boys are mainly undersized and backward for their age.' Two months later, a confidential report to the Catholic Episcopal Migration and Welfare Association (Western Australia), noted 'the very high percentage of illegitimacy among the children' and suggested that 'on future occasions a better choice could be made among the displaced children of the British Isles.'²⁸ A mere fortnight after this report was filed, three Child Welfare Department inspectors visited Bindoon. Each filed a separate report, one of whom, Mrs. F. Stewart, noted:²⁹

I was told that most of the boys were foundlings and had all been transferred from Roman Catholic institutions in the British Isles. Their physique and mental standard seemed to be poor to fair. Six of the boys from Bristol had large bare patches on their heads as a result of ringworm ... at least two of the lads were still inflected.

By 1949, two years after the arrival of the first postwar child migrants, complaints from care staff - Catholic and Protestant - especially in Western Australia, led to a spirited correspondence between immigration authorities in Perth, Canberra and Australia House in London. Officers at Australia House were given instructions to tighten their selection procedures - but to maintain the flow of children - apparently unaware of the dilemma involved in the official order. Surveys had been done and the results showed that a substantial

minority of children were intellectually-challenged. The institution where this lack of attainment was most pronounced was St Joseph's Farm School at Bindoon. The relevant report studied 238 'school age migrant children' in Western Australian Catholic institutions' and found that six per cent were 'feeble-minded' and 23% were 'border-line mental defectives.' The report added:³⁰

These children arrived in 1947 when the immigration schemes were commencing ... Bindoon was a Home where the educational standard of the migrant children on arrival was especially low. The children were deprived and could not be expected to be on a par with Australian children.

Intense correspondence followed among the various authorities responsible for child migration. The survey results were not challenged; the discussion was along the lines that 'heads should roll' among those officers who permitted such unsuitable children to come to Australia. At the Commonwealth Immigration Department, Mr R T Metcalfe, head of the Child Migration Section wrote, 6 January 1950: 'It may be that the poor standards were confined to the children introduced in 1947.' He was defensive. In Perth, Mr H E Smith, Under Secretary at the Lands Department, commented on what he viewed as a most unsatisfactory state of affairs: 'an investigation will be necessary to find out why such a large percentage of unsuitable children was allowed to come to Australia.'³¹

In Canberra, the Secretary at the Immigration Department, T H E Heyes, was trying to placate officers and institution managers in Perth, and advise Australia House that 'children selected in future must be of normal average intelligence'. This was easily said, but tended to presume a substantial pool out of which suitable children could be selected. In fact, the available 'pool' of children was shrinking each year, and British demands for more professional care in Australian institutions were becoming more strident. Moreover, the boys and girls were deprived children; Australian expectations for the young people were unreasonably demanding. Misunderstanding were bound to occur.

The officials were grappling with the problem that deprived children from Great Britain were more deprived than were similar Australian-born children in care. The latter had not experienced the privations of a six-year World War in the same way that British children had endured. Moreover, there were still pockets of poverty in Britain that were more horrendous than anything experienced in Australia. However, by 1950, the discussion subsided temporarily, except for the acrimonious debate over alleged sub-standard British children at

St John Bosco Boys Town, Glenorchy, Tasmania. There was an imagination that things had changed for the better. At Australia House, it was confidently stated: 'In 1947, some very poor material was sent out by the Roman Catholics but since then matters have improved.'³² Father W Nicol, the London Immigration Representative of the Catholic Bishops, referred to 'some of the convents, in the past, submitting their problem children for immigration, and John Moss echoed these sentiments in his report. These were illusions.

Meanwhile, while Australian governments and charitable agencies wanted British and Maltese child migrants, they harped on the 'standards' the children should possess before being given the privilege of entering the country. British governments stressed the quality of care which the children should receive in Australian institutions. There was a dialogue of the deaf - or at least the hard-of-hearing - but most of the problems were on the Australian side and within Catholic child care. Australian policy was riddled with contradictions; Catholic care are was inadequate to deal with such deprived children adequately.

The Low Standards of Catholic Children

Meanwhile, Noel Lamidey, the Child Migration Officer at Australia House, was defensive over the strong criticisms emanating from the Immigration Department over the 'low standards' of Roman Catholic child migrants being dispatched from Britain. The matter had been outlined by the Western Australian state psychologist, and brought formally under notice by the Lands and Immigration Minister at the Conference of Commonwealth and State ministers held in Canberra, May 1949. The state psychologist had referred to 'the very poor sample of human material' arriving and added that many of the children as adults would become permanent charges on Commonwealth and state welfare services. Ministers shuddered. He wrote:³³

Those classed as 'feeble-minded' will, in general, be a charge upon the state and its institutions for life. Those classed as 'borderline defectives' will require specialised education, protection and supervision in various degrees throughout life if they are to become economically productive. Those classed as 'dull' will not benefit in even an average degree by ordinary education and are likely in the future to be a high proportion of social misfits and maladjusted persons requiring the assistance of social service agencies and other protective or supervisory organisations.

The state psychologist was perfectly well aware of the causes that made the British children appear inferior alongside comparable Australian-born youngsters. The privations and insecurity of the war years, the bombing, evacuation and interrupted schooling were all mentioned as reasons as was the change in educational methods consequent on the migration itself. He added that 'institutionalisation tended to restrict the breadth of experience and so retarded the ready development of reading and number interests.' The language is dated but the message was clear: some of the children were poorly-equipped and the specialist staff they required had not been available in Britain-at-war and was not available to any degree in contemporary Australia.

During 1951-2, the issue was muted as few children arrived in the Catholic institutions, but with Father C Stinson's mission to the United Kingdom in 1953 seeking many more children, the 'standards' debate resurfaced and there was a good deal of well-mannered tension between the various parties involved. Already, the Principal of the Murray Dwyer Home, Mayfield, NSW, had complained of the (lack of) intelligence of several children who had arrived on the 'Ormonde' in August 1952. This was the first child migrant intake to this institution.

The complaint was forwarded to Australia House and Mr N W Lamidey replied with some warmth, trying to explain the dilemmas of his position as politely as he could and trying to store³⁴ ammunition in the likely event of future criticism, by explaining selection procedures where Catholic children were involved. The children at Catholic orphanages were in the main, illegitimate - abandoned at birth or soon afterwards. They were exceptionally deprived. Catholic church people in the United Kingdom, especially Father W Nicol, were managing most of the selection process at its early stages. The Catholic institutions did put forward their most difficult problem children with a view to being rid of them.

Apart from this, many Catholic managers were uninterested in child migration - increasingly so as the years passed, Lamidey observed. Moreover, when the children preselected by the Catholic orphanages were presented to Australia House, their 'papers' were faked to present the children as 'normal'. He summarised his view in the following paragraph:³⁵

There are peculiar difficulties in selecting Catholic children which are not so evident in other child migration organisations. These consist of - in the main - a complete lack of independent school reports and, consequently, the difficulty of assessing the level of education reached ... in the majority of instances the child's education has been

(either) entirely neglected or considerably interrupted ... there is lack of information about the child's history; seemingly there are no records and no parent to explain the child's earlier circumstances.

At this point, as Australia House was advising Canberra, a further party of child migrants was being recruited for passage in the 'New Australia' due to sail from Southampton, 28 January 1953. Of 116 children presented to the selection team, only 66 would sail. Ten had been rejected: two because they were coloured, six because they were 'mentally backward' and two on medical grounds. Some were withdrawn by the relevant voluntary agencies and others were deferred for readmission at a later date on medical grounds or doubts as to their general suitability. There were no recorded problems with this party.

It was otherwise with the 'wild, undisciplined group' of Roman Catholic children on board the 'Maloja' which sailed on 10 March the same year. The Welfare Officer complained of their conduct and of one boy particularly. In Canberra, Heyes averred, - tentatively and with polished understatement - that 'Father Stinson, in his enthusiasm to keep the numbers up may attempt to relax the standards to some extent.'³⁶

There were further concerns about the British Catholic children who arrived on the 'Otranto' in June 1953. Miss M Coultas, the Welfare Officer, filed a number of complaints. The incompetence of the escorts accompanying the Catholic children was one; their poor range of unsuitable clothing was another. Heyes relayed her criticisms of the pathetic children to London:³⁷

The Catholic child migrants all showed signs of prolonged under-nourishment and malnutrition and five of the boys were crosseyed. In Miss Coultas opinion, they were the most physically under-nourished and mentally-deprived children ever seen on a ship. I appreciate that the usual precautions would have applied to the selection of these children.

Meanwhile, from another unrelated source came collaboration regarding the sparse endowment of the Catholic migrant children coming to Australia. Mr L Jackes, an Institution Office with the Western Australian Child Welfare Department filed a report on a further range of tests given by the Guidance Branch to British migrant girls at Nazareth House, Geraldton. In Jackes' view, the tests revealed 'an alarming state of affairs.' Of 25 girls who arrived during February and March 1953, only five possessed 'anything like average

intelligence.’ He added: ‘The assessments of eighteen of the girls cause one to wonder what type of selection has been employed by those choosing these children as migrants.’ The reason was, of course, that Australian authorities wanted the children and the British Catholic care organisations were not in a position to send any other.³⁸

The flow of complaints from Canberra was causing Australia House to be increasingly frank as to the realities of the selection process where potential Catholic child migrants were concerned. Mr F C Castle wrote to Canberra in September 1953 that the Catholic institutions ‘almost always’ put forward only ‘the worst children’ for emigration, and ‘as to the medical inspection’, that was ‘something you can do in Australia if you want the children.’ Castle added that ‘a normal child’ was being defined as one with no disease or gross defects and ‘about the general standard of institutional children in his area.’³⁹

Castle’s letter crossed with another from T H E Heyes which had similar complaints to others he had penned recently. Miss J McLean, Information and Welfare Officer on the ‘Maloja had reported to Canberra that ‘the RC children’ were ‘generally below average both physically and mentally. It is difficult to understand why such children were selected.’ Heyes passed on McLean’s comments to Australia House and alluded to the controversy at St John Bosco, Glenorchy, where the principal claimed that eleven of the 27 boys were sub-normal and should not have been approved. ‘We must avoid boys and girls usually classified as sub-normal,’ Heyes said. The Child Migration Office, London, was forced to pen another strong letter to his superior in Canberra trying to impress on him the real world of the selection process and the poverty of the children in the Catholic orphanages Lamidey said.⁴⁰

It may be that the system of selection for R C children in the United Kingdom is not appreciated fully in Australia ... These children attend Catholic schools and it is understood that their school records are not always objective. An interview with a child who has lived all his life in an institution is extremely artificial, if that is used as the sole measuring rod of his intelligence and general demeanour ... the children are embarrassed and shy with a stranger, often have little to say ... and it is therefore extremely difficult to say from such an interview whether the child is really backward or not.

Lamidey was trying to remain calm and polite, but also attempting to impress on the Immigration Department that its expectations were unreasonable. Both Father Nicol and

Father Stinson had obtained what children they could - 'sacrificed quality for quantity' - and the criticisms of parties on shipboard and in the Australian institutions were understandable. Australia House had sponsored a conference of representatives of the British agencies arranging the child migration in 1953 to discuss selection procedures. However, despite the fact that Australian Catholics made most criticisms of selection, no delegate of theirs appeared at the conference 'which destroyed in large measure its anticipated benefits.'

This had been the reality, the 'problem' since 1947 but it had taken six years to face the truth and express it with some precision. Meanwhile, there was one Australian orphanage where the difficulties posed by shattered expectations and differing standards of child care combined with the argument over unsuitable British children, led to a seven year saga of misunderstandings and mutual recriminations.

St John Bosco Boys Town, Glenorchy, Tasmania

The traditional, patronising, insular Australian view of the benefits available in the antipodes to British child migrants is referred to in an article in *The Western Third* in June 1949.⁴¹

It was decided by the State Government authorities and by the Brothers and Sisters that no effort was to be spared in assisting these children. Most of the children were retarded mentally and physically due to malnutrition and much broken schooling. Their physical under-development soon responded to good food and brilliant Australian sunshine.

A year before this was written, Father J Brennan, Principal at Boys Town, applied to the Tasmanian State Immigration Department for permission to take child migrants. In his application Brennan outlined the Salesian Fathers so-called 'Preventive System' of training. He stressed the constant supervision under which the boys lived. He was trying to impress; but the Home Office officials shuddered. The Salesian Fathers founder, St John Bosco, was deceased before the insights of modern psychology came into vogue, and he was concerned with virtuous living, the formation of praiseworthy habits and the elimination of sin to which he was professionally opposed. However, John Bosco's nineteenth century views - mediated through the Roman Catholic tradition - did not resonate well with British officials who did not view opposition to sin as a priority.

The Home Office viewed the 'Preventive System' as claustrophobic for the children's development; and they imposed administrative delay on the application for child migrants

from Boys Town, Glenorchy. Two years passed and the involved politics around the application need not detain the reader. By the time approval was eventually given, Father Brennan was no longer principal. His term of leadership over, he was replaced by Father J Coles. It was Coles who had to confront the first British child migrants sent to Tasmania, and he was not impressed.

Boys Town, Glenorchy was already taking local Catholic children into its primary school, and Father Coles saw this work replacing child care over the years. The child migrants, pathetically deprived, were a setback to his plans. Many were bedwetters; Coles had never seen the like. He was aghast. Father Coles wanted the youngsters repatriated to the United Kingdom; the British children were lowering the tone at the institution.

This was a simple solution to Father Coles but weighty policy issues were involved, and there was the welfare of the children. Officers from the state and Commonwealth Immigration Departments, the child welfare, the Federal Catholic Immigration Committee and the British High Commission arrived at John Bosco Boys Town, Glenorchy.

One of the first was Mr K R Crook from the British High Commission, accompanied by his wife who had experience in child care. After his inspection and discussions with Father Coles, Crook reported to the Commonwealth Relations Office, 10 June 1953, to place their minds at rest that the proposed repatriation of the unsatisfactory children would not occur. Father Crennan, Director of the Federal Catholic Immigration Committee had assured immigration authorities that there would be no sending back the children.⁴²

At Boys Town, while Crook found much to praise, he was 'somewhat ill-at-ease about the situation.' The basic problem was the director's insensitive attitude to the British boys. Coles was not a social worker - and Crook found him a man of modest ability generally; he had little experience with Australian-born boys in care; none with British, until his arrival in Tasmania. In Coles view, the problem of enuresis with a number of the boys was critical; others were aware that this was a common difficulty with institutional children. Moreover, Crook found that Father Coles was taking no urgent action to increase the female staff presence at Boys Town which would have alleviated the situation.

Meanwhile, the volume of correspondence between the parties involved escalated until a consensus emerged that the government agencies would press for a stronger female staff presence at the institution. Meanwhile to assist Father Coles, the Christian Brothers in Western Australia offered to take some of his most difficult children to their institutions.

The overall argument about the suitability of the British children sent was never solved; it simply disappeared with the cessation of the policy. After the special child migrant lift organised by Father C Stinson in 1952-3, few more child migrants were sent to Australian Catholic institutions. By 1956, Catholic child migration had terminated; no further children were despatched. Over the previous years, the acrimonious discussion over standards merely aggravated the lack of mutual understanding between the British and Australian child care communities. It probably assisted in ending child migration earlier than would have occurred otherwise.

End Notes

- 1 There is a vast array of relevant primary sources in the National Archives of Australia, Canberra and in the Public Record Office, Kew, Surrey, England. One key source would be the seven substantial files: Child Migration, General Policy, Parts 1-7, 1943 - 1974, A446/182, 1960-66716-22, National Archives of Australia, Canberra. Secondary sources include: Bean, P and Melville, J. *Lost Children of the Empire*, Unwin Hyman, London, 1989; Coldrey, B.M. 'The Scheme': *The Christian Brothers and Child Care in Western Australia, Argyle-Pacific*, Perth, 1993; Wagner, G. *Barnardo*, Routledge, 1979; Wagner, G. *Children of the Empire*, London, 1982; Parr, J. *Labouring Children, British Immigrant Apprentices to Canada, 1869 - 1924*, Croom Helm, London, 1980; Moore, A. *Growing up with Barnardo's*, Sydney, 1980; Welsh, L.P. *Geordie, Orphan of the Empire*, P. & B Press, Perth, 1990, Welsh, L.P. *The Bindoon File*, P & B Press, Perth, 1991; Sherington, G and Jeffrey, C. *Fairbridge: Empire and Child Migration*, Woburn, London, 1998; Creelman, M. 'A surrogate parent approach to child migration: the first Kingsley Fairbridge Farm School, 1912 - 1924 in Hetherington, P. (ed) *Childhood and Society in Western Australia*, University of W.A. Press, Nedlands, 1988; Coldrey, B.M. 'Good British Stock': *Child and Youth Migration to Australia, 1901-83*, Research Guide N¼ 11, National Archives of Australia, Canberra, 1999.

- 2 Bans, E and Thomas, A C, 'Catholic Child Emigration to Canada', *Crusade of Rescue*, London, 1902, p 13

- 3 Coldrey, B M, '... a place to which idle vagrants may be sent.' *The first phase of child migration during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Children and Society*, Vol 13, No 1, John Wiley, London, 1999, pp 32-47.

- 4 Flint to Secretary, Oversea Migration Board, 17 November 1954. Increased UK Government assistance to voluntary organisations concerned with child migration. DO35/6377. PRO, Kew, Surrey, England.

- 5 The Sunday Times article draws on the research and insights of a recently completed Ph.D thesis by Dr A Mc Veigh of Queen's University, Belfast.

- 6 Photos taken soon after the 1947 British child migrants arrived in Western Australia show youngsters who appear to be ten to twelve years old; many were in fact, thirteen to fifteen years of age.

- 7 Medical Inspection, Dr C J McAlister, 7-8 February 1906, 'Training ship 'Cornwall'', HO45/10413, Public Record Office, Kew, Surrey, England.

- 8 Hodge, F 'Loss doesn't dim fighting spirit', *Fremantle Gazette*, 12 May 1992, p 32.

- 9 'House Annals', St. Joseph's Farm and Trade School, Bindoon, Western Australia. These are now at the Christian Brothers Administrative Centre, 53 Redmond Street, Manning, WA 6952.

- 10 Confidential Report, Catholic Episcopal Migration and Welfare Association (CEMWA), 31 December 1947. Catholic Child Welfare, Archives, Victoria Square, Perth, Western Australia.

- 11 'St Joseph's Farm and Trade School, Bindoon, WA', Department of Immigration Files, A445, 133/2/33, National Archives of Australia, (AA), Canberra ACT.
- 12 'Catholic Episcopal Migration and Welfare Association, Perth, Child Migration': Department of Immigration, A445, 133/2/8, AA.
- 13 Lamidey to Heyes, 9 May 1950, 'Child Migration: General Policy, Part 2', A446/182, 60/6671, AA.
- 14 'Distribution of Intelligence in Migrant Children', c 16 June 1950, 'Child Migration: General Policy, Part 2, A446/182, 60/6671 AA.
- 15 Lamidey to Heyes, Immigration Department, Canberra, 20 January 1953. 'Child Migration: General Policy, Part 5' A444/182, 60/66720, AA.
- 16 Heyes to Lamidey, 24 April 1953. File as above.
- 17 Heyes to Lamidey, 25 June 1953. File as above.
- 18 Jackes to Secretary, Child Welfare Department, Perth, Western Australia, 18 August 1953, Copy in File as above.
- 19 Castles to Heyes, 14 September 1953, File as above.
- 20 Heyes to Lamidey, 18 September 1953. File as above.
- 21 Lamidey to Heyes, 3 November 1953. File as above. See also: Harrison, H C, 18 July 1950. 'Visit of Mss H Harrison to Australia; proposal to inspect living conditions of children emigrated from the United Kingdom', MH102/2055, Public Record Office, Kew, Surrey, England.
- 22 Western Third, Vol. 3 No 1, June 1949, p 1, State Government Printer, Perth.
- 23 Crook to Dixon, 10 June 1953, 'Emigration of Roman Catholic children to Boys Town, Hobart', MH102/1833, Public Record Office, Kew, Surrey, England.

This is the summary of the argument in the academic article:

‘A Strange Mixture of Caring and Corruption’: Residential care in traditional church orphanages during their last phase, the 1940s to the 1960s.

1 The revelations of the last 10-15 years of gross physical and considerable sexual abuse in many traditional church orphanages - evidence from a number of English-speaking countries - evidence from orphanages (industrial schools, ‘homes’, borstals) across the religious spectrum: Catholic, protestant, government.

However, Catholic orphanages often mentioned, e.g. Bindoon (WA), Neerkol (Qld); Artane (Dublin, Ireland), Mount Cashel, (St John’s, Newfoundland, Canada).

Was there a special ‘Catholic’ problem ? Yes, and it concerned celibacy of the core staffs, the general poverty of the Catholic community, and men sometimes trying to look after small boys.

2. Why abuse only recently recognised to have occurred ? (Was abuse recognised at the time - say 1940s and 1950s ?) Yes - but not often. Barnardo’s, Picton, NSW, Australia. 1958 - Major sex scandal: eight adults and around 24 teenagers and young men.

3 WHERE abuse only recently recognised, why ? ‘The Times’ - purpose of **the traditional orphanage**: To protect respectable society from the depredations of the deprived child. ‘The Times’: **corporal punishment common**; legal and community standard limits ambiguous as to its use; therefore bashing often unrecognised as abuse; ‘The Times’: **Sexual abuse not recognised as occurring fairly widely in society** during the years, 1940s-60s - not expected, not recognised. ‘The Times’: **General Standard of (orphanage) living: expectations low**, on a par with, or actually below, that of poor people in the general community.

4 The core problem: **the staff** - ‘The Devoted, the Dull and the Deviant’ - unfair ? yes - but with a real grain of truth. The work was hard, remuneration low; the children (could be very) difficult, the hours long, holidays few; places isolated; - hard to maintain relationships away from the job

Staff: untrained; hard to recruit; hard to keep; management little choice; unsatisfactory staff difficult to replace; Catholic orphanages: (often, not always) the least qualified which the Congregation had available; (or young, inexperienced members on the way to some other mission after a short time); Protestant and state orphanages: married women, widowed, separated, deserted, with a child(ren) to support; atmosphere of poverty; limited state support, from diverse agencies.

Since the work was hard, it was easy for staff to become self-indulgent; develop the martyr complex; ‘giving so much to the work’, therefore little indulgences, different food, children waiting on tables; ... for some, the self-indulgence could take less attractive avenues ...

5 **The second core problem**: the children, ‘omnem gatherem’: foundlings, ‘orphans’, ‘orphans of the living’; victims of divorce, desertion, one-parent families, minor delinquents - overall, in social class terms, from the lower working class. Since many children had

experienced extreme deprivation, some children presented extremely challenging behaviour. Untrained staff could hardly commence to meet their needs, and staff often reacted violently to the challenging behaviour

6 **The violence: levels of explanation:** (1) 'crowd control', 'keeping the circus on the road'; (2) Community attitudes to disciplining children; (3) Frustration - aggression,; (4) Cultural assault on working class values; children resist; staff react.

7 **Violence to sexual abuse: Nudity - supervision routines; beating naked children; punishment in inappropriate places, e.g. the showers.**

8 **Sexual abuse:** other explanations: premeditated penetration of the orphanage staffs by paedophiles; - some evidence, UK. Seeking affection from the children; drift into bad habits; children no redress at the time; would not be believed.

The full text of the article follows:

**‘A Strange Mixture of Caring and Corruption’: Residential
Care in traditional church orphanages and industrial schools
during their last phase, 1940s to 1960s.**

Physical and Sexual Abuse

The traditional orphanage was a sparse establishment; clear now, not always so obvious in the interwar period or after World War II when the standard of living for ‘ordinary’ people was lower. (1) What is plain - with the advantage of hindsight which allows 20-20 vision - is the tough regimen in these institutions, and at a certain stage the sparse atmosphere led to a specific culture of abuse. (2) On this feature of care, the testimony of many memoirs, biographies, reminiscences and academic studies are all agreed. There are numerous accounts of life in these institutions and the gist of all is the same; a few cited must suffice. (3) Michael Harris in his rivetting study of the notorious Christian Brothers Mount Cashel orphanage refers to ‘an environment that, without warning, often turned brutally violent,’ and he gives many instances. This is one: ‘Over a missing library card, Brother E. said ‘Bend over, so I bent over and he gave me a whack with his hand first and then folded the belt and started hitting me with the hook, the buckle part...the hook was digging into my bottom.’ (4)

There is no way of knowing whether such incidents were common at Mount Cashel; Harris implies that they were frequent, and others do too, one of whom is Kevin Snow. He recalled that ‘one day a Brother picked me up by the scruff of the neck and swung me around...then let me go and sent me smashing into some lockers breaking my nose.’ (5) On the other side of the world, evidence given before various committees and an increasing number of memoirs concerning the Western Australian orphanages carry a similar picture. In *When Innocence Trembles*, Ted Davies claims that he was beaten with straps and sticks, punched, kicked and verbally abused almost daily by certain staff; ‘Sometimes he was beaten until he could not walk.’ (6)

Similar claims are commonplace. In evidence tendered to the British Parliamentary Committee on Child Migration, the Executive Officer of the VOICES organisation representing former orphanage residents presented evidence of over-punishment: boys beaten with leather straps, boys assaulted with hands or fists - and on the farm - punished with any instrument which lay to hand. (7) The Committee’s report acknowledged the strength of the evidence: (8)

The weight of personal testimony, contained in the written submissions we have received and given to us orally, leaves us in no doubt that there was widespread and systematic physical and sexual abuse of the boys at Bindoon and at other Brothers establishments.

The descriptions of violence in the Irish Industrial Schools are similar, but suggest an even more abusive environment. Patrick Touher’s two memoirs, *Fear of the Collar* and *Free as a Bird*, are saturated with descriptions of savage beatings - even orgiastic floggings. The stories may lose nothing in the recall, but there is a sense that they are substantially true. The

following references from one of Touher's autobiographies gives the flavour of the whole. The time is the 1950s (9):

Brother stood up and suddenly clattered the boy across the face, knocking him to the ground...It was a shattering experience to get whacked on the bare bottom with a black leather strap on a cold winter's night. 'Hellfire' beat the arse off you. They would bash the bare bottom off anyone who had not got their brush and soap.

In another article, Eamonn McCann, recounts his experience of abuse at St. Joseph's Industrial School, Salthill, Co. Galway during the following decade: 'The first half of my ten-year stint was the bad half. I saw most violence in that time. Brother X was etched in my memory as the essence of violence. Some of the lads got absolutely fierce beatings but no one was ever hospitalised.' (10)

At a certain stage, the severe and persistent physical abuse led inexorably to the sexual abuse of some residents. In the United States, Alexander Starchild, whose first academic offerings were completed while he was in prison, has written of the sexual abuse of British youth in correctional institutions (11):

The whole juvenile gaol culture in England encourages sexual play as there is a strong policy of enforced nudity and corporal punishment...Caning is carried out in front of other boys - a boy is made to drop his pants and bend over. This can quickly take on sexual connotations.

The institutional world that Starchild evokes is not that of the 1980s, when he was writing, but that of some twenty or more years previously. However, there *are* valid reasons for thinking that the British practice of disciplining adolescents in care - especially older adolescents - by caning them on the bare buttocks stimulated the sexual abuse of inmates by some staff, though this was not its intention. Caning trespassed on one of the body's more private and erogenous zones where a high concentration of nerve endings led directly to sexual nerve centres. The buttocks remained a major locus of sexual signals - e.g. caressing a child's buttocks is a sexual offence; slapping an adult's buttocks in a sexual action. Hence, it can be argued that caning in the congregate care institutions encouraged sexual abusers and provided a cover for their activities. (12) Extremes of physical abuse led ultimately - and inexorably - to the sexual abuse of children. (13) The permanent atmosphere of severity had sexual overtones.

There was a thin line between extreme severity and sexual abuse in traditional care, never crossed by many of the staff, but easily crossed by some. Peter Tyrrell, a former resident of St. Joseph's, Letterfrack, Co Galway maintained that savage punishment, nudity and sodomy were linked. He wrote that 'we were sometimes stripped and beaten while naked for long periods...I was sodomised by one of the Brothers.' (14)

Touher in his memories of Artane Boys Home, is aware of the narrow boundary between beating the inmates on their naked buttocks and abusing them sexually. He recalled that few staff crossed the boundary, in his personal experience, but one did. At one point, Touher described 'normal punishment' in the following reference: 'I stared in horror as I saw a man flogging a boy across the bare buttocks with a long leather strap. I lost count of the strokes...his cries echoed off the refectory walls.' Neither Touher nor other Artane boys did

considered this sexually abusive. *That* was something else. There was a difference and he recalled how one of the staff crossed the line between harshness and sexual abuse during one beating: (15)

My arse was on fire. ‘The Sting’ was perspiring a lot now. He told me to lie across his lap and not to fall off again. He held my private parts and...suddenly I was shocked when he began to lash me all over my body with his leather real hard and between the legs with his hand.

In Newfoundland, the Earle brothers’ claims of physical and sexual abuse at the Mount Cashel orphanage were substantiated at the Hughes Royal Commission. Nine orphanage staff were subsequently convicted of sexual offences against minors; seven more are facing similar charges. The Earles testified that that they were beaten regularly on their bare buttocks for breaking minor rules: ‘If you were to be punished, you’d have your pants taken down, you’d be put across somebody’s knee and you’d be punished.’ The boys were often abused sexually in these situations. (16)

The close link between the two modes of abuse is also revealed in the account of ‘Brian’ an inmate of the Salthill, Galway Industrial School from the mid-1960s to the early 1970s. ‘Brian’ recalled that his Grade IV Primary teacher thrashed him with a strap one day in response to his dim answer to a maths question, but later took down the boy’s trousers and groped his genitals. (17)

In addition to this illegal behaviour, there were non-punitive routines which were not viewed as abusive but which tended to blur the boundaries between acceptable and inappropriate behaviour. These were the regular health and cleanliness checks to which there are many references in the memoirs and government reports, such as that from St. Augustine’s Orphanage, Geelong, Victoria during the 1950s.

At this Australian institution the boys lined up for their daily showers naked in serried files. One former resident told an Oral *History Project* researcher of the stunned look of a new superintendent when he saw the boys preparing for showers. (18) A short time later, dressing gowns were purchased for each boy. Such an intrusive attitude was not unique to one type of institution; it was common across the residential care world. Jane Rose referred to the regular inspections after daily or weekly showers at a contemporary Barnardo’s Home: ‘After showers the boys lined up naked with their hands about their heads for the inspection of the duty officer.’ (19)

In retrospect and with hindsight, some former residents have described these rituals as sexually abusive. (20) This is not the point of view in this article; rather it is argued that these routines involving nudity in the congregate care institutions blurred the boundaries between acceptable behaviour and abuse. They made abuses more likely. The boundaries became fudged; an almost careless abusiveness could result. In 1992, a former Canadian Christian Brother was convicted for the following offence: ‘Brother Recker was guilty of assault for flicking the end of a wet towel into a boy’s naked buttock...on several occasions Recker snapped his naked buttock so hard that blood was drawn.’ (21)

An atmosphere of severity and widespread physical abuse combined with a tradition of regular enforced periods of nudity all encouraged sexual abuse of inmates. The evidence for the abuse is irrefutable. Severity, violence, physical abuse, sexual abuse; these were on a continuum. The more severe the regimen the more likely the prevalence of sexual abuse. This being so, it is reasonable to explore the reasons why the institutions were such violent places. This is the focus of the following sections.

The Social Context

Abuse was not peculiar to Church-managed residential care; the Catholic Brotherhoods did not invent corporal punishment or pioneer sexual abuse of children. On the contrary, the general quality of traditional care tended to be similar - not identical - across the board. Hendrick, in his major history of child welfare in England, described residential care over the past century in these words: (22)

Inmates were abused regularly...their bodies were both casually and systematically beaten. There was little difference between reformatories and industrial schools. Both ran regimes founded on strict discipline and hard work with brutal punishments, Spartan diets and austere living conditions.

The Christian Brothers were part of this care world, but a distinctive part. Moreover, there *was* a caring side in all these homes. They provided at a basic level for the children's education and maintenance at a time when society generally did not care much what happened to at-risk young people. State resources provided for them were low and intended to provide only a modest standard of living approximate to that of the lowest levels of the working class from which most of the children came.

In this social climate, mainstream society was largely indifferent to the well-being of 'orphans' either of the living or the dead. Illegitimate, abandoned children and unruly lower class youth were treated with disdain. There was a stigma attached to being a child in care. (23) The 'orphan' was often an illegitimate child and until World War II, illegitimacy cast a slur on mother and child. The unmarried working-class mother and her offspring had a bleak and difficult time wherever they lived. (24) Such a young woman was often forced to surrender her child to an institution. The stated objective of the London Foundling Hospital gives something of the prevailing attitude: (25)

To give such a woman who has fallen into sin and is desirous of escaping from its practice and degradation, an opportunity of hiding her shame by receiving her infant and thus removing the evidence of her disgrace.

Official attitudes were punitive and patronising. Derek O'Brien, one of the former state wards who pioneered the civil action against the government and Catholic Church in Newfoundland, summed up his years in foster care: 'We didn't matter.' (26) Class was a key factor in the whole business. Another of the men prominent among the Mount Cashel survivors remembered his school days: 'We were treated a lot different from the other students.' (27)

It was against a cold, insensitive, punitive background that the philanthropic and Church-based personnel attempted to do something for the neglected, abused and delinquent children. The carers were deemed 'fit people'; their institutions 'the places of safety' to whom the children were confided. Sometimes they proved themselves to be so; in other cases not. The key factor was staffing.

Residential Care: the Staff Problem

The phenomenon of the abusive culture in residential care demands explanations. It is the intention of much of the remainder of this paper to provide them. At the simplest level, the institutions were filled with large numbers of boisterous youngsters and teenagers, all left to the care of relatively few staff, none of whom were trained professionally for child care.

The harassed staff readily resorted to corporal punishment as the only control mechanism they knew - aware that this form of discipline was legally and socially sanctioned, up to a point. However, the boundary between acceptable punishment and abuse was vague and ambiguous. The staff priority was to maintain a smooth routine. They knew that many of the children were hard to like and often difficult to manage. Many had chaotic backgrounds. There were few resources for the children's education or entertainment. As a result, the institutions tended to be stressful places; some of the children **were** disturbed.

It was not until the 1960s; earlier in some places, later in others, that the need for professional training for child care staff was recognised widely. (28) In itself, professional training would provide no guarantee that a potential carer with paedophile inclinations would not take advantage of the children in his or her care. However, staff trained to accepted standards of practice would reduce stress which often contributed to the abuse and the training process provides opportunities for identifying those unsuited temperamentally to care for children.

Many children's institutions worldwide were under the management of religious and charitable organisations such as the Christian Brothers and in these places a related problem was common: the tendency of the charities to place some of their least qualified members on the staffs of the children's homes; sometimes former orphanage residents themselves were sent to work there. This was so especially where the Religious Orders managed a range of educational activities which included prestige colleges and elite rural boarding schools. The Orders reflected society's priorities and these schools drew the best staffing which they could afford.

Understandably, a stereotype of 'THE Christian Brother' (or of the 'THE Sister of Mercy') has developed. Yet within the Religious Orders at the time under discussion, there was a difference between 'teaching Brothers' and 'lay Brothers', between 'choir sisters' and 'lay sisters' and the level of training accorded to each. Lay Brothers were intended for farm work or kitchen duties; lay sisters for domestic work. Usually the skills they possessed were acquired prior to entry or were learned on the job, while the 'choir sisters' or 'teaching Brothers' were trained for teaching or nursing according to contemporary standards. Yet it was often the lay Brothers or lay sisters who formed the majorities of the staffs of the institutions.

It was easy in a such a situation for lay Brothers or lay sisters to be treated with some disdain by the more qualified teaching staff, or to imagine that they were. The anger that this caused could be projected onto the children. In addition, many Brothers came from homes where they had experienced great physical hardship. The phenomenon was recognised during the 1930s, when St. Joseph's Boys (Industrial) School under the control of the La Salle Brothers passed through a troubled time and the concerned Home Office inspector pointed to the basic staff inadequacy: (29)

Many years ago, there is no doubt that this, like other Roman Catholic Orders, considered that a secondary staff was good enough for this school. The staff is still weak. Therefore, the school is going so badly...some definite and prompt action must be taken.

The situation was not unique to England. In his memoirs of a Brothers' reformatory in Cork, Patrick Galvin has the superintendent comment on the mental unbalance of some of his staff. (30) Galvin's account is fictionalised but when the Superior-General of the Christian Brothers wrote to his counterpart in Sydney, Australia in 1948 regarding the unsatisfactory situation at St. Joseph's Farm and Trade School, Bindoon, WA, he made a similar point: 'This place requires careful handling...the staff is very weak.' (31) Three years later, the Brother's inspector confided to his report on Bindoon: 'This has a staff of oddities and if they knew I was writing this they would not much care.' (32)

It proved a nexus hard to break; the least qualified in the Religious Orders gravitated to work in the child care institutions. In addition, before the Brotherhoods established specialist aged-care facilities for their own members, old, sick, odd and mentally unstable members were commonly 'hidden' in institution communities. Brothers or sisters who worked long years 'on the orphanage circuit' had low status within their Congregations.

In part, this staffing problem in Brothers institutions represented a specific case of a general problem in traditional child care. In 1946, the seminal report of the Curtis Committee, UK, deplored 'a widespread shortage of the right kind of staff, personally qualified and professionally trained to provide the child with a substitute for a home background.' The report found that the under-staffing and unattractiveness of residential care was due to poor salaries, poor accommodation and unsocial hours. Staff turnover was rapid, preventing children from establishing solid, permanent relationships. It was near impossible to provide satisfactory care. (33)

The recruitment problems and at times, management's desperate reliance on available help, led to a mindset which encouraged abuse and provided a cover for abusive carers. These attitudes included a quasi-martyr mood among staff who persevered, who were available - 'in the front line' - day after day. This mood said, in essence, that carers deserved every consideration and the little privileges they enjoyed - such as separate dining facilities and better food - because they were sacrificing so much for the deprived children. At one level, this was no more than harmless indulgence, but it had a negative side.

This darker side covered inappropriate behaviour by staff members which could be rationalised and excused by the fact that 'their work was no hard, their hours so long and their contribution to the cause so great' that unsatisfactory behaviour was trivial by comparison. With this martyr self-perception it was not far to more sinister attitudes of excusing destructive behaviour and illegality. In the minds of those staff members who saw

themselves as giving so much, there was a tendency to forgive their own negative conduct and that of their colleagues. (34)

Situational Factors in Violence

There are other ways of understanding the high level of violence within the fabric of day-to-day life in traditional care. This explanation concerns the situational factors - the carers own problems projected on to the residents. Often the staff were almost as deprived as the young people for whom they were caring. (35) In fact, some had been raised in institutions themselves. They had a sparse, sometimes miserable life and projected their frustrations on to the children. The circumstances which had impoverished their lives are well-known. Most carers had been born, reared and educated through one or other world war and a great depression, commonly from deprived backgrounds. In their early years they experienced tough training, some professional preparation for their work and a low standard of living. (36) Their own lives were sparse.

In the case of the Catholic Brotherhoods: while their vows first taken in late adolescence, had to be confirmed as mature adults, there were all sorts of psychological gaps in their preparation for the demands of Religious life. In a recent article in the *Irish Times* Patrick Touher commented on these issues:

Hundreds of parents, particularly in rural Ireland, promised their sons at any early age to the religious orders such as the Christian Brothers, often against their sons own wills. Many parents used the Christian Brothers to get a cheap education for their sons, pledging that they would enter the order. Many of these men who were forced into the order became frustrated. Their frustration, born of boredom and celibacy, was released in anger against the boys. To these men celibacy was like drip-feeding a caged tiger.

Touher is writing of the Irish scene as he remembers it. In Australia, one former Brother, faced with sexual abuse allegations (later conviction), made a similar link in a statement to his psychiatrist: 'Training was so restrictive that something had to give. My peers from my school days were exploding with energy, going out, socialising, going to movies and dances and having healthy outlets for their (sexual) urges. I had none of these opportunities. My outlet unfortunately became misguided.' (37)

Moreover, the young staff, coming in the main from working class backgrounds, had acquired certain attitudes towards severity in child rearing. This is the classic social psychology explanation for child abuse. The father/mother model(s) uses violence; the victim-subject leans to imitate the aggressive behaviour. The severe parenting model in the home during childhood commonly has an impact upon behaviour in adulthood.

Frustration and Aggression in Residential Care

In this further explanation for the culture of violence in traditional care, the notion of stress and the capacity of the individual to accommodate tension, are at the heart of physical abuse. In this frustration-aggression hypothesis, when a person is blocked in the pursuit of a goal,

s/he will respond aggressively, either inwardly at the source of frustration or displaced on to an innocent target. One of Juanita Miller's interviewees said of the Christian Brothers staff at St. Joseph's Farm and Trade School, Bindoon: 'They were just frustrated sexually...a miserable life themselves...they took it out on the kids.' There is some truth in this assessment. (38)

There is a variation of the frustration-aggression thesis which can also be mentioned: i.e. that caring for the young people *was* stressful and their behaviour was often frustrating. This is the era before professional training and anger-management courses. Caring for deprived, and sometimes seriously disturbed children was unusually challenging; burnout was a risk with the passing of the years.

Some staff, untrained for child care, approached their duties with idealism and dedication. This high motivation was challenged severely by numerous physical and psychological assaults made on their well-being and self-esteem by the children. Upon entering the tasks, religious men tended to perceive themselves as helpful, concerned persons whom the children and society would value. By contrast, the staff were sometimes confronted by abusive teenagers, messy and aggressive children and a community which responded only on special occasions. The nobility of caring work foundered. It proved a myth for some.

The children's chaotic behaviour was sometimes confronted in an inappropriate way - with verbal and physical abuse. Many orphanage memoirs portray vividly the stressful behaviour of some of the residents. *Suffer Little Children* is one of these. O'Brien does not shy from portraying the aggravating behaviour of the teenagers at Mount Cashel (including himself): 'The boys were cruel enough...stealing was a common activity for most of us...stealing also from one another...boy-on-boy sexual activity, some of it predatory...the furtive drinking.' (39) In view of this, some of the severe behaviour for which the Brothers institution is notorious was an inappropriate over-reaction by ill-prepared staff to the extreme and unacceptable behaviour of some of the residents. This was not the whole story; nor does it account for the sexual abuse.

Cultural Assault on Working Class

In the case of physical severity there was also another sub-cultural dimension. The mere existence of residential care showed that working class life had failed and, in addition, the care values involved a cultural assault on cherished working class mores. Some children were likely to resist the imposition of alien values accompanied by 'the disapproving glance' and the staff were likely to respond with force.

It is worth recalling and stressing that until the mid-twentieth century, child welfare was essentially *to protect society* from the depredations of idle, disaffected, unemployed, poverty-stricken children and young people; only *secondarily* was child welfare focussed on the welfare of the children, which was important to some carers. The deprived or neglected or delinquent child was viewed as a natural recruit for the 'dangerous classes' who were believed to pose a threat to the respectable.

Each industrial school, farm school, orphanage and reformatory was a 'total institution' where staff sought a complete regulation of the daily life of each inmate with the objective of remolding the personality. The institutions shared a common aim: they wished to make

respectable working class adults from rough working class youth. They wished to recast the proletarian family; to reform the improvident working class culture; and to tame the undisciplined behaviour of its young people. (40)

The focus of this paper is the last generation of traditional residential care, after the heyday of the 'child savers' but their attitudes had residual influence. No matter how sincere and altruistic, they represented a challenge to working class culture. Care staff were reforming those deemed less fortunate than themselves; inevitably they spoke with a superior air; they looked down from a privileged position. Some of their charges would internalise the new values; some would resist. Some of the violence followed from the vigorous attempt to force new values on lower class youth. (41) It was not all violence, however, and before we return to the staffing problem, another dimension of the care experience should be mentioned.

The Caring Dimension

Institution staff has been characterised - uncharitably - as 'the devoted, the dull and the deviant'. Many institution staff did care for the well-being of the children. Derek O'Brien may have been critical of the quality of life at the Mount Cashel orphanage during the 1970s: the sparse standard of living, the undercurrent of violence, the all-too-common experience of sexual abuse for some inmates. However, some of his account belies the dark side of the institution which his autobiography was intended to explore. At one point he remarked: 'As rough as orphanage life could be, in many ways it was an improvement over what I'd come from.' What O'Brien had left was a chaotic family home and abusive foster care. He explained: 'I could watch TV...play in the gym...I had an allowance...a part-time job...There was an indoor pool table...there were special treats and holidays.' (42) It is clear that Mount Cashel had a caring side; it was not a place of unremitting horror, despite its Belsenesque image. O'Brien hoped to board at the orphanage after his graduation; he was angry when the director would not allow him to remain.

Across the Atlantic, Patrick Touher has explored his industrial school experience in two books and some newspaper articles over recent years. During the 1950s, he was at Artane, managed by the Christian Brothers and he stresses the pervasive brutality. However, his expose reveals - in passing - the caring side of the hard, sparse life as well: the vast effort required to maintain up to 900 boys fed, clothed and educated against the background of the inadequate resources provided by the State in what was still an impoverished ThirdWorld country with scant social welfare provision. Touher recalled the summer holidays: (43)

Those of us who were left behind were taken to Portmarnock at the seaside twice a week for a picnic and to the circus and to Croke Park. We had long summer walks. The Brothers encouraged the boys to 'let off steam' in the countryside.

In addition, there were the regular national and religious celebrations, the visits to major sporting events, games on the school's playing fields and the weekly films in the hall. All provided some release from the drab, and sometimes violent daily round.

On the other side of the world, Australia in the 1940s and 1950s was a wealthier country than Ireland but community resources were rarely lavished on residential care for deprived children. The standard of living in the residential homes remained low and on a par with that

of the poorest from which class most of the children came. However, hard through their routines could be, children were taken on regular outings to cinemas, the zoo, the Royal Show, parades and beaches. Service clubs provided annual treats. Bands, choirs, boxing troupes, sporting teams and informal play gave some recreational activities. The reports of the State Child Welfare Department inspectors, the house annals of the orphanages and contemporary newspaper comment make this plain.

The Christian Brothers managed four orphanages in Western Australia. Over the years, and for each of the institutions, a range of inspectors penned numerous reports, some critical, many approving, a few quite enthusiastic. In terms of contemporary working class life, orphanage living was far from a grim or traumatic experience for many. In May 1947, for example, a team of Child Welfare Department inspectors visited St. Mary's Agricultural School, Tardun and were impressed with what they observed: (44)

The meals supplied to the boys leave nothing to be desired...The boys have many amenities...the talking-picture machine...a swimming pool,,,a billiard table. The boys play cricket and football in season...have four bicycles for their use. Many have made quite a hobby of keeping some of the local birds as pets.

Such references as these do not disprove that the day-to-date existence of orphanage residents could be dominated by bells, early rising, domestic chores, interrupted schooling, heavy manual work and pervasive discipline. However, the evidence cited does add a sense of balance to the sometimes common impression that residential care involved unremitting misery and primal terror. (45)

Rough-and-ready, untrained and over-worked though they often were, many orphanage staff tried to respond to the children's needs. This was the world of Christian charity and private philanthropy, not modern professionalised child care whose advent dates from the 1944 Curtis Committee report and the Children Act (1948), both of which were English initiatives. The main thrust of traditional residential care and its limitations have been well-summarised by Younghusband as follows: (46)

It was assumed that children could be rescued from inadequate families and the slate wiped clean and the child given a fresh start. Only by degrees was it realised that the parents lived on inside the child, and that his identity was bound up with his origins. In the pre-1948 period, it was thought that to provide food, clothing, shelter, education and moral and religious training was sufficient. New understanding of the emotional needs of children began to seep through in the late 1940s, with explosive consequences over the years for the child care service

Conclusion

The asylum was a nineteenth century phenomenon. Traditional care based on large barrack-style institutions, often located in pristine rural areas, was intended to provide a safe haven for abandoned, illegitimate, at-risk, lower class youth. The institution was to be a refuge from the sordid environment of the festering urban slums from which the children had been rescued. For some, refuge and a second chance were the realities; for others, the asylum from neglect, abuse and chaotic living was itself a place of terror and degradation. The latter was

the experience of W.M. at St. Augustine's orphanage, Geelong, Victoria during the 1950s: (47)

I went upstairs to tidy a Brother's room. When I got there he was in bed. He asked me to find his alarm clock but I could not find it. All I could see was his erect penis. The Brother then forced me to perform oral sex. It was just sheer rape...I became a loose sack to him.

W.M. recalled this incident as the first of many sexual assaults which lasted for more than a year. The fact that the molester was a committed Christian added to the boy's frustration and the later adult's bitterness. This was a general phenomenon noticed by Briggs and Hawkins in their recent research: 'The greatest confusion...related to the abuse by men in religious orders who subjected boys to appalling acts of violence and degradation in the name of God.' (48)

This brief article has tried to offer some explanations for the strange mixture of care, severity and abuse in some church institutions during their last phase. The topic has not been addressed seriously by historians, and the tentative insights here call for further investigation. In the Boys' Homes they controlled, the staff saw themselves as part of the solution for the boys' deprivation. Sometimes as individuals they were; sometimes they aggravated the children's problems. The institutions were sparse places. What was not realised at the time was that certain forms of physical punishment and certain orphanage routines blurred the boundaries between physical and sexual abuse, making criminal activity more likely. A culture of violence led, almost inexorably, to sexual abuse of some children by some staff. Hence that 'strange mixture of caring and corruption' that has been noticed by some commentators when the regimen of these institutions is discussed.

Endnotes

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Appendices:**Appendix 1:****Residential Child Care - Australia****Scandals during the Child Migration Era**

The reference is to scandals or public problems known at the time to the authorities.

(Barnardos, Mowbray Park, Picton, NSW, 1958)

In June 1958, *The Truth* (Sydney), Australia's contemporary tabloid newspaper specialising in sport and 'scandals' announced under a screaming headline: 'Immorality rife in big Charity' and continued:⁴³

Police have uncovered a huge perversion ring which starts in a well-known charity and has spread its filthy tentacles throughout NSW and other parts of the Commonwealth. Detectives have so far linked dozens of men and boys with the perversion ring.

They hardly dare to speculate how many others may have been led into a life of degeneracy in the same way. A senior Child Welfare Department official said yesterday that the case was the most nauseating the hardened investigators had ever uncovered.

The sex ring has been operating for many years on a highly organised basis within the framework of one of the world's best known, least suspected charities.

The charity assists underprivileged youths and has done a great deal of good, but behind the charity's cloak of respectability the perversion ring had done incalculable harm.

Detectives have uncovered a sickening trail of corruption. Youths placed in the charity's care in Sydney have for many years been incited to lead lives of perversion by men whose duty it was to after their moral and physical welfare.

In the light of this account, two things need to be made clear to an audience at the turn of the millennium:

- Gay sex between consenting adults was illegal, and while rarely prosecuted, tended to force consenting homosexual adults into secret arrangements best described as a sexual underworld;
- *The Truth* report shows that at the time - forty to fifty years ago - it was impossible to discuss such matters in public with any degree of precision or frankness.

In spite of its opaque sensationalism and generalised hyperbole, *The Truth* was substantially accurate on this occasion. It was the Superintendent at Picton who discovered 'the fairly widespread scale of irregularities' in May (1958) and alerted NSW Child Welfare and the Barnardo's authorities in Sydney. The police were called. Arrests followed.

⁴³ The Truth (Sydney), 8 June 1958, p 3

On 30 May, five weeks before Barnardo's London headquarters and the Commonwealth Relations Office were advised, Mr T Price, the Director at 'Mowbray Park' prepared a report for the Director of Child Welfare in Sydney.⁴⁴

The centre of the sexual underworld at Picton was Walter Etheridge, the Sports Master, 1952-55, who maintained a close association with many of his past students after they left the institution. 'There is no doubt', Price said, 'that during his period at the Farm School and since, up to the present time, Etheridge has been guilty of serious sex offences against a number of boys. These offences include sexual interference, mutual masturbation and sodomy.' Fifteen boys (teenagers) are listed associated with Etheridge.

Mr N Judson was a poultry farmer in the vicinity of 'Mowbray Park' and had employed Barnardo's boys, for many years. Price added:

The information which has come to me implicates Judson in various sex offences from interference to sodomy. It seems fairly certain that he has practised these habits since the war but I have not seen older lads to verify whether it extended to the pre-war period. Three older boys have worked for him recently.

Twelve teenagers were associated with Judson, many of the same lads who were linked to Etheridge. David Newell, a young man around twenty years of age, was closely associated with Etheridge 'in all his malpractices' and acted as procurer, introducing younger boys to the circle. Price mentioned that David's younger brother, Allan - 'a boy of the highest moral fibre - had resisted attempts to involve him in the underworld and its orgies; and had implicated Mr D Tebbuts, another local poultry farmer, in molesting many boys. Price added:

Etheridge and Judson formed a close liaison and were both present when a number of the offences took place. Drinking parties have been held on Judson's properties when a number of our lads were present and these were normally followed by sexual misbehaviour

Apart from the activities centred around Etheridge, Tebbuts and Judson, another case of molestation came to light. Douglas Mitchell reported that he had been sodomised by the 'Herd Testing Office', Mr W L while he was working at the dairy farm of Mr D S Smith of Williamstown, NSW. More recently, David Newell and Etheridge had tried to interest some of the young Barnardo's boys at Normanhurst in their activities.

Almost a month later, the Minister for Immigration, A R Downer, banned the arrival of further parties of Barnardo's boys into Australia until the whole affair had been resolved. Downer wrote to Price on 24 June: 'The pity of it is that the discovery was not made earlier before the moral fibre of so many of the boys was affected ... these influences are disastrous for their characters.'⁴⁵

It was not until 3 July, that Barnardo's advised the Commonwealth Relations Office of these events. 'The Council of Dr Barnardo's Homes has been distressed to discover that there has

⁴⁴ Price to Hicks, 30 May 1958, Child Migration: Dr Barnardo's Children's Homes, NSW, 1951-1961, A445/1, 1956/67312, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

⁴⁵ Downer to Price, 24 June 1958, 'Child Migration: Dr Barnardo's Children's Homes, NSW, 1951-1961, A445/1, 1956/67312, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

been serious sexual perversion and malpractice occurring between staff and boys, chiefly at our Picton Farm School in NSW but also between some employers when the boys were placed with them.' The London civil servants were not amused at the delay.⁴⁶ Lucette tried to place their minds at rest: 'The facts have been reported to the police who are making the fullest investigation and have launched prosecutions following these investigations.'

The Superintendent at Barnardo's London office advised the Commonwealth Relations Office that he and his deputy would be going to Sydney immediately to take matters in hand. Commonwealth Relations telegraphed its High Commission in Canberra to complain of being kept in the dark and requested more details of the problems at 'Mowbray Park' and other Barnardo's homes. It was at this point that the Australian Immigration Department banned entry for further parties of Barnardo's boys.

Lucette and Charles arrived in Australia on 11 July and accompanied by their Sydney solicitor, commenced a wide-ranging series of visits, investigations and meetings with all relevant authorities. Within a few days of their arrival, one of the eight adults implicated in the systematic abuse, the ringleader, Etheridge, was tried and convicted. The *Sydney Morning Herald* reported:⁴⁷

A man was sentenced to five years gaol by Judge Holt in Quarter Sessions yesterday for sex offences against former pupils of Dr Barnardo's Farm School at Picton. He is Walter Francis Etheridge, 40, of Alexander Street, Crows Nest, a former drill instructor at the school. Etheridge pleaded guilty to all charges

The High Commission reported to London on 15 July that all was in hand: 'The police were called and some individuals are under arrest. It is clear that the Australian authorities and Barnardo's took action swiftly. The Minister for Immigration (in concert with Barnardo's) personally ordered cessation of entry of migrant boys into the Homes affected.'

Etheridge appears to have been the ringleader but over the next three months, six other adults were tried and convicted of similar crimes. A further individual escaped prosecution by disappearing into the population. It seems that a paedophile ring had targetted Barnardo's by placing certain of its members - especially the physical education instructor, Walter Etheridge - on the farm school staff. He and his assistant 'drill instructor' then placed selected teenagers with employer members of the circle when the young men were sent for work experience.

Much later in the year, the New South Wales Vice Squad prepared a summary of the prosecutions and convictions. David Newell was given a good behaviour bond in view of his age. The other were:⁴⁸

Mr D K Tebbutt, 41 years old, residing at the time with his wife and two children at 'Yaralla' ... a poultry farmer, employing ex-inmates of the Home;

⁴⁶ Lucette, E H, (General Secretary, Barnardo's to McConnell, (Commonwealth Relations Office), 'Complaints concerning Dr Barnardo's Homes in Australia, DO35/10260, Public Record Office, Kew Surrey, England.

⁴⁷ *Sydney Morning Herald*, 19 July 1958, p 17

⁴⁸ Vice Squad Summary, 23 December 1958. Child Migration: Dr Barnardo's Children's Home, NSW, 1951-61, A445/1, 1956/67312, National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

Mr W F Etheridge, 40 years old, residing at the time at 102 Alexander Street, Crows Nest and his wife and one son;

Mr K C Henry, 27 years old, Chief Crew Messman aboard the RMV 'Oronsay' ... returned to England and his employment terminated with the Orient Line

Mr John Davin, 38 years old, a steward on the RMV 'Orion' ... returned to England and his employment with the Orient Line terminated.

Mr W L, the Herd Testing Officer - case dismissed

Mr J F Adams, 45 years old, a married man residing with his wife at a former housemaster at the Picton school, 1956-57 ... assaults on inmates while he was there.

Mr N F Judson, 58 years old, a married man residing with his wife and two daughters at ... via Picton, a poultry farmer.

Meanwhile, in London, officials at the Commonwealth Relations Office mused about the possibility of similar problems at other farm schools in Australia.⁴⁹

If there is publicity about Barnardo's, it may lead to enquiries whether we are satisfied that similar practices do not occur in boys' institutions of other societies. Please suggest to the Immigration Department that they should consider checking the positions in other institutions for boys.

In fact, there was very little publicity as the High Commission was able to advise London on 8 August, and a week later, the Immigration Department lifted the ban on the entry of further child migrants to Barnardo's facilities in Australia. It was a further two months before Lucette returned to London - his return delayed when the pressure of events led to a mild heart attack. On 23 October, he and Kirkpatrick reported thoroughly on his trip in an interview at the Commonwealth Relations Office. At this important meeting, Mr P J Woodfield represented the Home Office, which had been cool to child migration since the war.

Lucette was able to say that 'the infection no longer existed' at 'Mowbray Park' or any other Barnardo's home in Australia. The most searching enquiries had been conducted by the NSW Police Force, by the Child Welfare Department and by the charity's own senior staff. However, Barnardo's had decided to close down the farm school at Picton. It was isolated, even from the town of Picton and this created difficulties with proper staffing. In addition 'the committee responsible for the Picton home was dissolved. There had been 'a variation of opinion on policy matters' Lucette reported euphemistically.

The local committee had been humiliated by the widespread sexual abuse at their home and resented the arrival of Barnardo's executives from London. Their emotions were complicated by the reality that the offenders were mainly well-known local identities.

⁴⁹ Heyes to Coe, Official Secretary, UK High Commission, 14 August 1958, DO35/10260, Problems at Barnardo's Homes in Australia, Public Record Office, Kew, Surrey, England

At the meeting of 23 October, both Commonwealth Relations and Home Office accepted that Barnardo's had taken decisive and effective action to place its house in order. Woodfield made it clear that the Home Office would not raise any objection to the continuation of emigration to Barnardo's institutions in Australia. This was the view that the Commonwealth Relations Office took in its report to the Minister, Lord Home. Lucette's report on the events, dated 28 October, was written after his meeting with government officers.⁵⁰

He stressed that Barnardo's had seriously considered ending its child migration programme to Australia, but was dissuaded by the general goodwill displayed by all sections of the NSW public with whom they came in contact when they visited to investigate. He added:

The sex offences against our boys have been disturbingly many. Four members of staff were involved and two employers with whom we had placed lads. Twenty-six boys were involved though the discovered offences were almost entirely among boys who had left Picton for employment.. This fact is strongly associated with the conduct of Mr Etheridge, at one time a housemaster at Picton. In addition to his perverted character, the other factors which permitted this evil to run were the weakness of character of the then Superintendent at Picton and the bad judgement of the then Manager.

Lucette added that the police had been helpful at every stage of proceedings: especially in the speedy investigation and arrest of suspects. In the aftermath, all Barnardo's staff in the state were screened and 'we are able to say that we are satisfied with the character and conduct of all the staff who are in our employment.' Lucette outlined the punishing round of inspections and conferences he, his assistant and their Australian solicitor had maintained while in New South Wales. Lucette concluded:

Our own investigations conducted through all our Homes and by meeting a large number of the old boys and old girls confirmed us in the view that migration should be resumed with something of an emphasis on the later school age and it would rather need strong arguments to explain throwing away the material advantages and assets which we have in our grip than to explain our deciding to renew the flow of children to Australia.

The most serious molestation scandal of the child migration era was resolved and scarcely surfaced during the controversy of the last ten-fifteen years.

⁵⁰ There are, interestingly, some variations between Lucette's statement and that of the NSW police, Vice Squad, under the 23 December date. The discrepancies are not relevant to the purpose of the discussion at this stage.

Memorandum submitted by Mr Dallas Patterson, relating to personal experience as Principal of Fairbridge Farm School, Pinjarra, Western Australia - delivered, 7 January 1949, MH102/2251

Exploitation of Fairbridge youth during the 1930s at Pinjarra

Young, crude, small populations in vast territories cannot afford or hope to train social services such as are emerging in old, closely packed lands. (p 2) At Pinjarra, the State school staff of nine under their own Head Teacher were unqualified by training, temperament or willingness to fit into the idea of a farm school experiment.

Fairbridge children up to my time as Principal, were sent at fourteen years of age, almost illiterate, quite untrained and to any job or place to please the employer ... it was almost impossible to train the so-called 'Trainees' with the never-ending demand for their labour.

The Head Cottage Mother and Matron was displaced by my wife and me because of her utter lack of sympathy towards the girls. Her harshness was mid-Victorian in its zeal.

The Perth Committee were openly opposed to every effort to raise the status of the children above that of potential cheap labour.

It is interesting that Patterson speaks well of Tardun (p 3) and the Christian Brothers attempting to give secondary education to the children there.

Aftercare cannot undo the harm of bad selection, non-education and lack of training.

Case A: '... free from the slur and drag of the Fairbridge name'

Case C 'A Devon boy with the sea in his blood was refused permission to enter the R.A.N. The Perth Committee quoted the usual rigmarole about 'all boys for the land and all girls for domestic service.' It required the generous intervention of Lord Gowrie, the Governor-General, to enable this natural sailor to enter the life he longer for.

Large scale 'Tarduns' for boys would be far too expensive, but Brother Conlon merits the widest recognition.

Case 1. 'Cooking in a lean-to shed in hot weather, slaving for women too ignorant to know how to treat employees, ill-paid work in lonely surroundings.

Case 2. 'A member of the Perth Committee was notorious for his philandering conduct towards the girls in his wife's employ. Cottage mothers disliked their girls being sent to his station. After Care disapproved of the reports given by the girls of his conduct, but girls continued to be sent. Institution children are fair game.

Case 3. 'A Western Australian Minister for ..., telephoned to order me to give his son a boy at the lowest wage for that son's farm. The farm was on our Black List.

Case 4. The wife of the Chairman of the Perth Committee arrived unheralded one day at the Farm School and ordered my predecessor to move a young Fairbridge girl ... from her son-in-law's house. Her son-in-law was a man with no conscience and had behaved in a most seriously immoral way, repeatedly and over a long period whenever his wife left the farm to go to the nearest Township. The relatives of many members of the Perth Committee were 'cynical scoundrels'.

Fairbridge Farm Schools in Australia - suggested visit of Mr Garnett to the school at Pinjarra. DO35/1138 PRO, Kew, Surrey, England.

Edith Thompson, Chairman, Executive Committee, Society for the Oversea Settlement of British Women to Wiseman, R (Dominions Office), 9 April 1945.

'Miss Small, the Headmistress of St Hilda's school, Perth, assures me that Miss Woods is a reliable person and that her statements are accurate.

Woods, T C, to Thompson, 5 April 1945

Much of my report is now out-of-date. I was dismissed, 4 October 1943 ...

Woods to Joyner, Fairbridge Farm School, Pinjarra, 31 March 1943

'I was two years at Fairbridge and was fairly and considerately treated ... (1943) It was the middle of the war years. At one point this year, there were ten boys in Reformatory Homes, mostly at (Salvation Army) Gosnells ... Three others have just left Gosnells for work. There was one incident where a lad stole a rifle and a group of Fairbridge teenagers ran away and lived in the hills ... returned at night to raid neighbouring farms ... discontent ... older boys not sent out to work.

'Girls have not been paid on attaining the age of sixteen years although their services have been retained ... (p 138) Children are never allowed to continue at the State school after they are 14 years old. God parents in England are often willing to help children but sufficient care is not taken at the Farm school to see that the children write regularly ... A large amount of the training on the farm amounts to free labour for the convenience of personnel. It is my opinion that the children are made to fit the work rather than the work remodelled to suit the best interests of the children.

'There is noticeable secrecy in sending the children out to work. They do not know where they are going until they are handed an envelope in the office at the moment they are due to leave. Children are given practically no instruction (p 142) in the social problems which they meet when they go out to work. A lady doctor informed me that our girls with whom she had contact were painfully ignorant on straight-forward scientific facts.

'Many cottage mothers unsatisfactory. They have spoken very roughly to the children and have hit them. Girls in their teens have been beaten.

Dr Barnardo's Children's Homes, NSW, Part 3, 1949-1951. A445/1, 133/2/4. National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

‘Unsavory episode at Mowbray Park’

Metcalfe, R U, Immigration Department to Ladd, (Barnardo’s), 2 March 1951

“ ... my attention has been drawn to the recent unsavory episode at Mowbray Park resulting in court proceedings which, fortunately for all concerned, were eventually withdrawn.

‘I have had a hurried glance through the letter which Mr Hicks wrote to your Chairman on 13 February ... I cannot help feeling that your Manager at Mowbray Park was a contributing factor towards this disturbance. It is obvious he lost control of himself for otherwise he would not have attempted to strike or manhandle these big boys who naturally resented such treatment.

‘In view of the latest development whereby it is alleged certain of these boys will not be permitted to return to Mowbray Park, I cannot help feeling that Barnardo’s has lost some of its standing and this would be a great pity ...

‘If it were known publicly that Barnardo’s had practically banished certain of its boys because the farm manager did not like them, I believe your organisation would lose much of its prestige ...

Green, R A (Barnardo’s) to Wheeler, R H, Immigration Department, 8 March 1951.

I was surprised to hear from you on the subject of the recent trouble at Mowbray Park...

NCH lads, recent arrivals ... Barnardo’s were not responsible for their selection, nor had they been under Barnardo’s control before ... Before the arrival of this party, my Chairman and Committee were rather nervous on account of the ages of the lads which were, in the main, 15 and 16 years.

The lads did not settle in well and indeed some of them gave trouble from the very start ... petty thieving ... we got busy putting some lads out to employment ... several complaints ...in November (last) there was an upset at the Picton Central School as a result of which six boys absconded but were picked up and returned to the Farm School by the end of their first day’s wanderings.

On 15 January, there was further unpleasantness when a number of boys attacked another old resident lad telling the Superintendent that they were going to bash this boy for bullying one of the gang ...

The behaviour on this week’s holiday was not good. It was spent at our Branch at Burwood where several locks were broken ... On the return of the party to the Farm school, Mr Paxton commenced investigations. It was at this juncture that the attack occurred on the Superintendent who telephoned me at my home to give me the news of it ... the nine boys concerned had run away and he was afraid that they might return during the night and commit some violence or folly ... police called.

Mr Paxton called an hour or so later and advised me that the nine boys had returned ... four returned to the cottages ... five aggressive ... police called ... charges laid ... the five lads were taken into Picton, and on the following day transferred to the Child Welfare shelter at Ashfield, and the following day were to appear in the Children's Court.. The Court Officer advised that a charge of assault should be entered against X and all charged with being uncontrollable.

Our chief concern was the safety and welfare of the community at Mowbray Park and this would have been seriously jeopardised by the return of the four lads in their state of mind ... general idea was to place them in employment a.s.a.p.

We had to attend Court for six days ... charges withdrawn ... one lad returned to Picton; four others to 'Roylestone' whence they have been placed in employment. They were all of the age for employment.

Northcote Training Farm, Glenmore, Vic. A445, 133/2/24 continued on 133/2/74.
National Archives of Australia, Canberra.

John Curtin: 'The policy of child migration to Australia has the warm support of the government and we are extremely anxious to give effect to it at the earliest opportunity.' John Curtin, House of Representatives, 10 March 1944, in a letter of J A Carrodus to Sir H Luxton, Chairman of the Northcote Fund.

A Nutt, Chief Migration Officer to Secretary, Immigration Department, Memo, 20 November 1945. Mr R H Wheeler visited the school in May 1944 ... Prior to Wheeler's visit there had been troubles of a sexual character with four of the girls, the State School teacher and some of the old boys who had left the school and returned for short periods implicated. Following upon this, the State school teacher was transferred elsewhere, the Principal of the Farm School, Colonel Heath, resigned and the Trustees appointed a new Principal, Mr H Brown, who had previously been a House Master at Wesley College, Melbourne.

Wheeler, R H, Chief Migration Officer, 12 May 1944. Confidential report, Northcote Homes. 'On the way to the school I learnt for the first time from Mr Garnett of the UK High Commissioner's Office, that there had been trouble with the bigger girls, the State School teacher and some of the old boys who had left the school and returned for short periods being implicated. Four girls appeared to be involved. The school master was charged before the courts of having carnal knowledge but was acquitted. He was immediately afterwards moved to another school ... Col Heath resigned. The new principal, Mr H Brown, had been a Housemaster at Wesley.

The principal said that the old boys who had returned to the school between jobs or for a short holiday had been found in bed with some of the girls in the latter's quarters (notwithstanding the girls were in the care of a cottage mother who also slept under the same roof). These were the same girls who were involved in the Court proceedings. One of the girls had also been found in bed with an old boy in the latter's quarters.

In my opinion such examples indicate clearly:

- (a) lack of proper supervision; and
- (b) the unwisdom of allowing old boys to come back to the school unless they can be segregated properly.

One of the girls who had excellent reports for about four years is reported to have told the other girls that before leaving England a man living next door had had intercourse with her. This child on arrival in Australia was eight years old.

Appendix 2: Publishing Programme:

1979 Australian Federal Politics for the Senior Student, Hargreen/Edward Arnold, Fourth Edition, 1985.

1981 Legal Studies for the Higher School Certificate Student, Privately printed, (Out-of-print).

1982 Australian Federal Politics and Foreign Policy, Hargreen, Edward Arnold/ Hodder & Stoughton.

1985 Australian Foreign Policy for the Senior Student, Collins Dove, Melbourne. 1985 Bruce Dawe's Poetry (Coles Notes). T.C.Loethian, Publishers, Port Melbourne.

1987 Critical Issues in Peace Studies. Edward Arnold/Hodder & Stoughton (Australia)

1988 Faith and Fatherland: the Contribution of the Christian Brothers to the Development of Irish Nationalism, 1838-1921. (Gill and Macmillan), London and New York.

1989 Essential English Summary, Privately printed, Melbourne. (In 1992, this text was published by Hawker Brownlow Education, Cheltenham, Victoria)

1990 Issues in Australian Politics: Elections. Hawker Brownlow Education, Cheltenham, Victoria.

1990 Issues in Australian Politics: Pressure Groups. Hawker Brownlow Education, Cheltenham, Victoria.

1990 'The Social Classes attending the Christian Brothers school in the nineteenth century', British Journal of Education Studies, Vol. XXIX, N^o 1. February 1991.

1990 'Education for Revolution: the Christian Brothers and Radical Irish Nationalism, 1838-1921', Proceedings of the Third Irish-Australian Historical Conference, ANU Canberra, 1990.

1991 Effective Legal Studies (Notes Summary). Hawker Brownlow Education, Cheltenham, Victoria.

1991 The Western Australian Boys Homes and the Child Migration Scheme, Tamanaraik, Melbourne.

1992 St. Joseph's Farm and Trade School, Bindoon: History Sources, Tamanaraik Press, Melbourne.

1992 Francis Paul Keaney and Child Care in Western Australia, 1918-1954. Tamanaraik Press, Melbourne. 1992 Maltese Child Migration to Australia, 1938-1966, Tamanaraik Press, Melbourne.

1992 Child Migration, the Australian Government and the Catholic Church, 1926-1966, Tamanaraik Press, Melbourne.

1992 'A most unenviable reputation: the Christian Brothers and school discipline over two centuries', *History of Education*, (UK) Vol. 21, N^o 3. 1992 - also published in *Oideas*, Eurack, N^o 38, 1992, Government Publications Office, Dublin, Eire.

1993 *Lord Somers Camp and Power House: the early years, 1929-1939*. Tamanaraik Press, Melbourne.

1993 *Essential Legal Studies for the Senior Student*, Hawker Brownlow Education, Cheltenham, Victoria.

1993 'Child Migration and the Catholic Church: a Historical Perspective', *The Australasian Catholic Record*, Vol. LXX. N^o 1 January 1993.

1993 *The Scheme: the Christian Brothers and Child Care in Western Australia*, Argyle-Pacific, Perth, Western Australia.

1995 *Child Migration to Catholic Institutions in Australia: Objectives, Policies, Realities: 1926-1966*, Tamanaraik Press, Melbourne.

1995 *Child Migration: Consent of British Parents and Guardians to the Children's Emigration: The Legal Dimension*, Tamanaraik Press, Melbourne.

1996 'A most unenviable reputation': the Christian Brothers and school discipline over two centuries' in O'Sullivan, P. (ed.) *The Irish World Wide: Vol.3 Religion and Identity*, Leicester University Press, 1996.

1996 'A thriving and ugly trade': The first phase of child migration: 1617 -1757', in *History of Education Society Bulletin*. N^o 58, Autumn 1996.

1996 'A Charity which has outlived its usefulness': the last phase of Catholic child migration, 1947-1956', *History of Education*, Vol. 25. No 4. December 1996.

1996 'The sexual abuse of children - as a public issue', *Studies (Dublin)*, Vol. 58. N^o 3 Autumn 1996.

1997 'Child Migrants from Postwar Britain', *History (Royal Australian Historical Society)*. N^o 53. September 1997.

1999 '...a place to which idle vagrants maybe sent.' The first phase of child migration to the Americas, 1618-1778', *Child and Society, Oxford University Journals*, Vol. 13. N^o 1, February 1999.

1999 'Good British Stock': *Child and Youth Migration to Australia, 1901-1983*. Guide N^o 11, National Archives of Australia

2000 'Caring and Corruption': *Church Orphanages and Industrial Schools*, *Studies (Irish Quarterly Review)*, Vol 89 No 353, Spring, 2000, pp. 5-18.

2000 'A strange mixture of caring and corruption': residential care in Christian Brothers orphanages and industrial schools during their last phase, 1940s to 1960s', *History of Education*, Vol 29 No 4, Spring 2000, pp 343-355.

2000 'A Strange Mixture of Caring and Corruption': Residential Care in Tradition Church orphanages during their last phase, 1940s to 1960s, in 'A Passion for Scholarship'. 1999 ISAA Annual Conference Proceedings, Independent Scholars Association of Australia, Canberra, 2000.

2001 'The Queensland Inquiry into Institutional Abuse - a Good Model for Ireland', *Studies: an Irish Quarterly Review*, Winter 2000.

2001 'British Child Migration': an Introduction', *Family Tree Magazine* (England), January 2001.

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There are some essays on the author's website:

http://www.geocities.com/brett_usher/index.html

The new search engines: www.google.com and www.northernlight.com are excellent for searching these topics. In my case, type in Barry Coldrey and most of my writings will become available.