

23/5/2003

Senate Inquiry as to the treatment
Of State Wards
Canberra

Dear Secretary

I Barry Pinnell should have first written about the Child Welfare Department who, were responsible for all state wards who were taken from their parents and put into institutions run by Christian organisations. Why did they separate us from our brothers & sisters. This was a very cruel practice. I suffered this fate and it was only recently that I found out that I in fact had two brothers. Because we had no contact during our formative years normal bonding was not established. I recall as a teenager the head of the W.A. Child Welfare telling me I had no relatives.

Our guardian, The Child Welfare Department made no effort to inquire that we were being cared for according to the law. They took the word of our abusers. The worst for me and many others was the Superior of Clontarf Boys' Town a Br. Doyle nick named (KILLER) an apt name for such a cruel brutal person. He was a big fat lazy standover bugger, a coward, who spent most of his life assaulting small children. Recent revelations suggest a pervert to boot. Daily we were belted with a custom made thick strap for the slightest mistake in the classrooms and any where else in the institution run by supposed Christian brothers of the Catholic Church. We were often cold, hungry, and in the summer suffered terrible sores from sunburn. In this condition we were forced to do heavy manual work.

Br. Doyle lied to the authorities to conceal the true conditions at Clontarf and was readily believed by them as they had a cozy relationship with the Catholic Church who they believed at that time could do no wrong.

1st or short

Message I thought Peter my mate was going to be a bit late with my letter to the Senate inquiry that he Peter was typing for me from my notes that he had for 2 weeks so I sent you another letter from some notes and my very good memory 'on I thought Peter was going to be too late with my typed letter he was doing for me. He Peter is now in England for 4 weeks

PS The Photos are of the Clontarf Boys Home We Poor Boys were so unfortunate to enter as innocence children and the very Happier to Leave with Joy Peter my mate who typed the letters for me. I have the photos of the Home Clontarf Boys Home Regards Barry Pinnell

Doyle told blatant lies about my wiliness to learn at school. In a welfare file I have obtained he states that I was stubborn and had no interest in learning. He by his crude and brutal methods with the strap made it hard for us to learn geometry the subject he taught as we were in a perpetual state of fear.

Some of the other brothers took the trouble to explain more clearly to us the various subjects they wished us to learn which helped us greatly. Doyle just tried to belt school knowledge into you. He often got me up to the blackboard and ordered me to write out the answer to a geometry problem in front of the whole class.

I developed a keen memory which I used during these fearful sessions. The answers were giving in the book so I was able to write on the black board from start to finish the entire task including the answer. But! Then he would yell; "are you trying to be smart Mr Pinnell", how, did you work out the right answer? ofcourse; I was at a loss it was at this point that the yelling would start and the painful strapping, six of the best on the hands finishing off with clouts to the head from that big fat angry red faced Christian Bugger. Several times I told him I could not understand geometry he just wouldn't explain he told me to go back and learn those sums. I reckon he never knew himself if the truth be known. Often on leaving the classroom he would say to me "make sure you learn those sums Pinnell. I would whisper under my breath good riddance until next week Killer. I thanked the Lord that we only had him for a hour a week

Although we suffered Doyle for only a short period for the subject of geometry his style had such a demoralizing effect on our ability to learn. Often he would go from boy to boy belting nearly every kid in the class causing the whole room to be consumed by painful wails.

One can only feel sorry for them he taught in the junior class for a minimum of seven hours throughout the year.

One, need not be a psychologist to conclude that many vulnerable children ie child migrants aussie state wards, were severely damaged by this sadist's regime of brutality. He should never have been given jurisdiction over children. He should have been cast into jail amongst other bullies who would have giving him a bit of his own. That would be a small amount of justice for his crimes against children. He along with Br. Murphy would be prime candidates for the proverbial millstone

Tuesday was belting day at Clontarf Boy'Town

This took place every Tuesday at 11-30am to 12-30pm in the clontarf Keaney memorial hall named in honour of another sadist child abuser whom Doyle modeled himself on. Doyle would walk up the center aisle and single out various lads for punishment. These poor buggers often about a dozen would be in front of the whole assembled orphanage ridiculed, belted and ordered to miss the movies which were shown on the weekend.

One Tuesday I would be singled out to receive Doyle's treatment which was so severe that I lost control of my bowels. I had retaliated against another boy who threw a cricket ball during a game of cricket hitting me in the head. A stick I hurled back at him badly damaged his eye. I was summoned to the junior class room which was in full session even though it was a Sunday. In front of this class Doyle grabbed me by the scruff of the neck twisting my shirt in a choking fashion causing great terror within me and lifting me clear off my feet and gave me thirty benders with all the strength he was capable of non stop on my backside with the strap. When he was finished he dropped me like a sack of potatoes. He then yelled at me to report to him the following dreaded Tuesday.

In front of the whole orphanage he again held me aloft with one hand by the collar of my shirt (I was then a very skinny kid he, being 14st and six feet tall) and proceeded to belt my backside with the strap. All present joined in counting aloud each stroke I received. The final tally being sixty the most I can recall any lad receiving at Clontarf. During all this punishment my feet did not touch the floor. After this ordeal while waiting to be dismissed I stood against the wall trying desperately to hide the fact that I had soiled my pants. Finally I sneaked to the toilet and cleaned up my messed pants.

Doyle threatened me with the police saying they were coming to question me about the damage I did to the kid's eye this threat made me even more fearful. The police never came and why would they? If they had seen the state of my backside and the pain I was in surely, they would have arrested Doyle. He was just bluffing, as he never wanted the police or the child welfare to be involved. He and the other Superiors of these institutions were a law unto themselves.

One lad was belted on the bare buttocks by Doyle with a fan belt. He absconded and on being picked up by the Welfare he showed them the black and blue state of his bottom.

They enquired of Doyle what caused such damage His reply; "the boy inflicted such on himself ". The lad in question never returned to Clontarf, however the Welfare never stepped in to protect the other kids still at risk from this sadist. His cruelty extended even to the lads who lost legs in the Clontarf bus accident of Dec 1955. Of which he was the driver.

On one occasion he was seen belting a poor soul in a wheel chair with a stick near the main building.

This lad was trying protect himself from the blows being rained down on him with his arms while pleading for mercy. He couldn't escape this vicious cowardly assault. The other poor cripples from the same bus accident sometimes incurred the same cruelty. One of the same with only one leg and on crutches was bashed by a Br. Mohen. There was no distinction when it came to wanton brutality on children at Clontarf Boys' Town In Western Australia.

THE FOOD at Clontarf was on the whole disgusting slops fit only for pigs in fact,we sometimes stole from them and if caught you got belted. There were weevils in the lumpy porridge with their beady black eyes staring back at you and rat droppings in the weeties which were swept off the factory floor. Cuts eyes well;that's what we called the mess we were forced to eat for sweets and lumps of fat floating in cold stew enough to make you sick every day. Mashed sweed,always cold was another vile mess we had to eat on pain of being belted. On one occasion some boys threw this stuff out a window onto the road way Br. Doyle (KILLER) ordered it to be scraped up and these lads had to eat every last morsel. Butter was so scarce that we would skim off the cream from the small bottles of milk giving to us by the government and shake this for hours in a small vile just to get an extra measure to add to the two slices of bread issued at the evening meal. This was on a thriving farm with many pigs fowls and cows. Yet! bacon and eggs we never saw. There were never any child weifare inspections to see these disgusting things.

The brothers ate like kings in their own private dining room. Then they had their supper in another private room late at night which during these sessions they drank wine and beer. It wasn't long before they started shouting and bickering amongst themselves using phases that were not

always Christian. The morning after we would be subject to their foul moods.

Bed-wetters were treated with pain and humiliation. I was one! There were about thirty of us, we slept on a upper long balcony over looking the boiler room. It was freezing showers for us every morning. Sometimes late at night Doyle would turn the lights on and order everyone to go to the toilet, anyone who had wet the bed was belted with the strap.

It was about this time that he used electric shock treatment on a few selected bed-wetters, they really had it rough. My bed was situated in the corner, directly above the brothers supper room, rats would run along the top of the wall above my bed. This scared me a lot but, even more frightening, was whenever one fell onto my bed. The only way I could cope was to cover myself completely with my blankets and hope and pray that I wouldn't suffocate during the night.

My humiliation ordered by Killer Doyle was to wash every morning the sheets of the other wet the beds in freezing water in the foot troughs in the shower room. After I had wrung them by hand I had to carry them down to the clothes lines behind the kitchen. If I was late for breakfast I got the strap in fact one got the strap for being late for anything, no excuses were accepted.

On another occasion I was humiliated by Br. Killer Doyle when he ordered me to his room late at night, where he accused me of fiddling (boy on boy sex) with other boys. I told him I didn't even know what it meant. During this interrogation my pajamas fell down around my ankles when I reached down to pull them up he told me to leave them down while he stared at me.

Incidentally in regards to my bed wetting this started when I was in Casledare Boys Home which was only a few miles away from Clontarf. There was this tall mean Bugger a Br. Murphy who had a nasty habit of lifting your arm up and giving you a swift punch to the kidneys I am sure this is what started me to wet my bed.

I remember my first orphanage was St Joseph's Foundling home in Wembley W.A. where I was put as a baby. I stayed here until I turned six. This was run by Nuns whom I recall were very kind. My only complaint is

when we were put on the bus to be taken to Castledare I was not allowed to take my little teddy who I always took to bed with me for comfort.

Castledare an orphanage for junior boys, on the whole; wasn't too bad. We had lots of fun in the river on which it was situated. It was in a rural setting There were a few cruel Christian Brothers but Br. Murphy was the worst in more ways than one. On the first day of my arriving he ordered us to line up. You will always call me Sir! He said. At this request a kid down the line laughed out loud. Murphy lifted up this kid's arm and punched him in the kidney then repeated the same to the other kidney causing the kid to double over in great pain. This was a great shock to me on my first day at Castledare. It was common knowledge that he was doing sexual things to some of the little boys. Some of these boys became his willing; what we referred to as (PETS) they, to gain favor with Murphy would report to him any thing wrong we did or any complaint of his behavior towards us. Squealers we called them!. Most of the Brothers had a number of the same.

I missed a lot of schooling on account of the many bad boils I had on the back of my neck. I was put in the kitchen to improve my diet. The Cook Rosie would scare me by saying that in America they cut off little boys heads who had boils. One day I saw two policemen take away the priest. For what reason I don't know. They should have taken Br. Murphy and some of the other brothers for sure.

I hold our guardian the State Child Welfare responsible for the abuses I suffered while in those institutions. I was denied a decent education and throughout my childhood I along with many others treated like a criminal. Not once was I interviewed personally by a welfare officer to inquire as to how I was been treated. Because I was a state ward I was denied all my basic human rights that other normal children are entitled to.

This extended to my teenage years. When I was out of work I was locked up by the Welfare. I was put into Tudor Lodge where we were forced to take communal showers while a middle aged matron looked on. In another grotty boarding house our clothes were taken away from us on weekends leaving us only with underpants. We were used as house boys. Our wages were taken off us. We were compelled to work at low paying dirty and dangerous jobs. It was made plain to us in the institutions and in so called

after care that we were second class citizens in our country of birth
"Australia".

I trust the present day government departments charged with the security
and happiness of innocent children will heed the terrible past history of
child care practices in Australia, thus ensuring that in the future no child
will ever suffer as we did. I don't want these people making excuses and
defending the gross negligence of their predecessors.

I wish to thank the Senate committee members who take the time to read
these my childhood memories and expressed feelings.

PS: Because I was denied a normal education by a supposed teaching
Order "The Christian Brothers" a friend has kindly typed this document
from my draft notes, a sample of which I include.

Yours Sincerely

Barry G Pinnell

PS Peter does forget or did not ^{mention or} see that I had
written note from the Child Welfare department
about my inquiring of whether I had any Brothers
or sisters and where was my mother and father
which the reply sent back to me was
that my mother had not been to see them in
years and they did not now where she was
about my father they said nothing I was later to
learn that was how poor boys were called
orphan when now poor boys were called
orphan anyway they also said in the letter
that I had no Brothers or Sisters signed by
the head man of the Child Welfare Department
a Mr J. McCall if I recall

the letter in question in total disbelief and a raging
infer on Barry's reading what was in the letter that I had
to them on Sisters and not knowing my mother or father then
shreds in disarray
B. G. Pinnell