



REPORT BY SIR GEORGE TERRY, CBE QPM

CONCLUSIONS

It is of particular significance to state under this heading that the Director of Public Prosecutions having received and given what I can only describe as very careful consideration of all of the reports which concluded the enquiries by your R.U.C. team, the contents of which we were aware, has decided that no further action should be taken against any persons for criminal offences.

My conclusions after the fullest possible investigation are:-

- (a) There is absolutely no evidence that residents of any children's home were involved in anything remotely resembling homosexual "rings" as asserted by the media or the latter's contentions that this so-called ring involved Police Officers, civil servants, military personnel, Justices of the Peace or legal people.
- (b) There was no cover up or concealment of evidence or disciplinary breaches by the R.U.C. personnel. There was some degree of lack of awareness over information/intelligence but this was at a time of intense terrorist activity which placed an excessive strain on Police resources and undoubtedly dictated priorities. There was, therefore, at this time an understandable inability to recognise that extremely vague information which arose in 1974, if probed thoroughly, may well have revealed that which was finally discovered in your 1980 investigations. In 1976 there was some



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other information which was not thoroughly recognised as relating to that which came to hand in 1974. In no way, however, by any stretch of imagination was this a question of a cover up, only, I repeat, a lack of awareness, of interpretation and recognition. Any later critics had the benefit of what never exists at the time, namely, hindsight. In fact, it was D/Superintendent CASKEY's excellent work which ultimately focussed attention upon this!

- (c) No complaint was ever received by the Police from any victim at Kincora or other boys' homes of homosexual abuse by the staff until your 1980 enquiry team was launched. In the absence of such complaints there are constraints and limits to the action which can be taken by the Police on the basis of unsubstantiated rumour or allegations even where they emanate from well-motivated and genuine people. That being said there were several occasions when, through inadequacy or inefficiency, insufficient cognizance was taken by supervisory officers of the implications of information, which unsupported and lacking credibility from its original source, should nevertheless have attracted greater interest and a more positive response. I do not consider, however, despite those lapses of professionalism, that an earlier investigation would reasonably have been prompted on the basis of the information available to those officers.



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- (d) Your team's investigation in 1980 and indeed their continuing activities endeavoured but could not establish the existence of any para-military organisation connected with the homosexual misconduct in any boys' home or of any attempts to recruit persons to a para-military organisation through residents in a boys' hostel. My team's enquiries also covered this ground fully and we can confirm the conclusions of your team that no such viable para-military organisation in fact exists beyond an ideological concept of a few ineffectual individuals with hopes and aspirations which never materialised or reached the stage of criminal activity. However, we traced evidence that a member of the Eastern Health & Social Services Board in Belfast was put off from exercising properly his supervisory role because it was believed that one of the Kincora Hostel staff, namely, McGRATH had strong para-military links. This resulted out of personal fear in a failure to investigate matters with homosexual connotations or pass to the Police information.
- (e) Because of the articles in the media I went to great lengths to afford the maximum facility to the various reporters for them to produce evidence to support their stories and assertions. Each was particularly asked to provide to me evidence or the identity of witnesses who could substantiate their allegations of a "homosexual ring" etc. or to inform me of anything which they considered the R.U.C.'s team had not discovered. No fresh or real



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evidence whatsoever was provided to me from any of the reporters despite my emphasis that it was important for them to give it. Equally they could not or would not give to me the names of any credible witnesses, victims or suspects who might fall into this category.

When considering this against the general tenor of the press articles which convey a sense of righteous indignation on their part that nothing was done despite the evidence they claim was available, I am bound to conclude that they had no such evidence.

In consequence I am satisfied that no further evidence in fact exists and the stories that were produced for public consumption for whatever reason fall under that well known guise of investigative journalism!

Having said that, however, there can be no doubt that the item by the Chief News Reporter of the Irish Independent Newspaper published on 24th January 1980, although containing some erroneous detail, was substantially correct. It was in fact this which led to your team under D/Superintendent CASKEY being formed and uncovering the whole sordid affair.



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In that connection I refer earlier to our having traced the media's sources of information; the basis of this newspaper article clearly emanated from Social Workers whose integrity and dedication compelled them to do something that might ensure the matter was ventilated.

- (f) My terms of reference did not require me, as I have mentioned in the early part of this report, to investigate as such the shortcomings of the Social Services Departments. Nonetheless it is evident that there was a high degree of naivety, incompetence and in some instances an avoidance of responsibility by members of that very vital Service. My assumption is that those matters will be looked at internally and remedied.
- (g) Following that point I am sure and I firmly conclude that the marked ineffectiveness of those required to staff childrens homes was occasioned by those so appointed being of very low calibre in regard to suitability and experience for the work they really were required to undertake. Indeed the system of elected representatives performing a regular overlooking and supervisory function appears to be nothing more than a "rubber stamping exercise".



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- (h) If a better system of formalised liaison, as between what was the Children's Department and now the Social Services and the Police, had then existed, the Police would have been enabled to know quite early of matters in the Childrens' homes and preventive action and criminal proceedings taken; indeed the need for some prosecutions would then never have arisen.
- (i) In spite of the extensive enquiries carried out by the R.U.C. team in 1980 and subsequently, and all of the work undertaken by my team in re-interviewing, no further complaints of homosexual activity from any Kincora inmates were received. I, therefore, conclude that so far as is humanly possible all complaints have been registered, investigated and proceeded with according to the evidence, and there certainly is nothing which could be justifiably interpreted by the media as amounting to anything remotely resembling a homosexual prostitution ring.
- (j) In (a) above I deal with what I can only describe as the fictional allegations about a homosexual prostitution ring. However, in view of the comments regularly featured in the media, I think I should add further emphasis to the fact that with my team I have particularly looked to see if any evidence at all can be found to indicate an involvement in any homosexual practices by British Officials in the



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Northern Ireland Office or any action by them to suppress Police enquiries in this connection. I conclude without hesitation that there is no justification in this allegation and that no evidence exists.

- (k) The media have also given a degree of prominence to the fact that some Military circles were aware of homosexual mis-practice in the Kincora Boys' Hostel. The Military sources have been very frank with me and perfectly open during the ongoing enquiry by your own team under D/Superintendent CASKEY. Let me say quite clearly that once more I sought evidence from all sources including the media with negative result.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

Arising from the whole my recommendations are few but very firmly based as follows:-

- (a) An enquiry within the Social Services elements in the Province appears highly desirable to prevent shortcomings which have been clearly revealed, and in my view this can only be effectively accomplished by practical contact during the enquiry with members of my team. This should encompass more careful consideration as to the recruitment and screening of persons suitable for employment in residential homes; their qualifications which may well be reflected by the remuneration they receive are vital. In fact there is clearly a desperate need within this selection process to eliminate from any appointments persons with a propensity towards misbehaviour with young persons under their care.



- (b) As a consequence of the last recommendation it follows that the best possible training should be afforded to all Social Workers. This particularly relates to basic practicalities leading towards the elimination of naivety and lack of worldliness by those who have to deal with the complexity of the well-being of young persons. Therefore, the whole history of the Kincora Hostel saga should form the basis of hard bitter experience which should convey how a repetition can best be avoided.
- (c) I feel that some not over-elaborate form of education should be evolved of children placed in care, especially having regard to their often previous unfortunate backgrounds with the object of creating a sensible but not fearful awareness of <sup>the</sup> dangers which can arise; in other words a sensible and practical realism of proper sex education.
- (d) A complaints system should be considered which will effectively perceive, receive and investigate matters of doubt over the conduct of supervisory staff in charge of children so that important issues are not stopped at a lower level without proper scrutiny. In order to do this there should be a Police involvement as my enquiry shows a very real lack of awareness as to what is criminal misconduct or a tendency in that direction.



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- (e) Consideration should be given to the appointment of an officer of Inspector rank on each Division as the main point of liaison between the Local Authorities and the Police so that there is no hesitation over the channels available and the confidentiality of approaches which might arise from those in care of children who need views and guidance. These officers should be under another of appropriate rank at Force Headquarters for the overall co-ordination of the Force's efforts in this connection.
- (f) There should be practically based training of junior Detectives in regard to the detection of homosexual offences committed upon children, and once again I would suggest that the lessons to be learned from the Kincora enquiry should form the basis. This training should include the philosophical aspects of the development of good liaison as between the Police and the Social Services who have a responsibility for children who can be exposed to danger. The same aspects of Police work, particularly relating to decision-making and direction of operational work, should be included in the training syllabus for all Inspectors.

FINAL COMMENT

I am certain that from the exhaustive enquiries carried out by your own team and my own that there is no need for effort and time to be expended on further enquiries into this rather distasteful matter. It has already been more than fully ventilated and in my view from the many contacts that we have established, any further steps that might be taken would only serve as an undesirable platform perhaps for political or religious reasons and also to a lesser degree by a few who have entirely self-centred motives in wanting to be involved.



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As I believe I have indicated earlier, whilst the media must be given full credit for the initial exposure, subsequent publicity has not been well based and has virtually developed into a discrediting campaign against what I can best describe simply as "the establishment". There has been an inclination in my view for the headline writers and the orators to take the issue out of the context of the era in time when society in fact was more concerned for the preservice of other ingredients in life of more immediate significance.

It seems to me that the task for collective society in Ulster in writing its next page of history should be to ensure the future does not repeat the errors and omissions. It should be more genuinely accepted that any tragedy for a small element of society must be the fault of the whole in one way or another, and this cannot be more true than in the last decade or so !

Finally I must with every sincerity commend the assiduousness and the integrity of the investigation which has been carried out by your own enquiry team headed by Detective Superintendent George CASKEY and co-ordinated by Mr John WHITESIDE, your Assistant Chief Constable.