

MCH/MCH
62/55/128

District Welfare Office,
KATHERINE.

23rd. March, 1965.

THE DIRECTOR,
Attention Senior Social Worker.

BOYS REMANDED TO THE CARE OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILD WELFARE

On Monday, 22nd. March, 1965, the Welfare Officer was approached by Senior Constable Grant, of Pine Creek, with a request for assistance in finding overnight accommodation for four boys, aged 12, 13, 13 and 14 years, all of Darwin, who were to appear before the court in Katherine that afternoon on a charge of Illegal Use of a Vehicle.

2. The boys subsequently appeared before Messrs. Ryan and Pascoe, Justices of the Peace, and were remanded to the care of the Director of Child Welfare, until 10 a.m. Wednesday, 24th. March, when they are to appear before the court in Darwin.

3. Those involved were:

REDACTED aged 14
REDACTED aged 13
REDACTED aged 13
REDACTED aged 12.

4. REDACTED and REDACT are boys from Retta Dixon Home. REDACT lives with his parents at 61 Stuart Highway, Darwin.

5. The boys were given overnight accommodation at the Welfare Officer's home. Here, after a period of reserve, they quite voluntarily initiated a discussion of their reasons for leaving Retta Dixon Home.

6. Among other things they alleged that their cottage-"father", Mr. Pound, refers to them as "half-blackfellows" and says that he will "knock Satan, and the black-fellow, out of them"; that he ridicules their mothers as women-of-the-town in front of other people; that he beats younger children after stuffing their mouths with rag so that their cries can not be heard and then locks them in a small cupboard; that he force-fed a young child named Sandra, by holding her head backwards under a tap and banging her head down backwards on cement. Apparently this child has since died, of a supposed brain-tumor. The boys claim they are not allowed access to Mr. Pattimore with their grievances as has always been the rule, but are threatened, and afterwards punished, if they approach him.

7. Even allowing for school-boy exaggeration to what they must have considered a sympathetic audience, it does seem possible that there might be some aspects of conditions in this particular cottage at Retta Dixon, that could bear some investigation by the correct authorities.

8. A copy of this memorandum has been forwarded to the Assistant Director(Northern).

Marion Shoulders
for (W.J. FAINT)

