As instructed, on 19/1/48 I accompanied the Institution Officer and Clerk-In-Charge of Records when an inspection was made of St. Joseph's Boys' Town, Bindoon. We were escorted over the different sections by Brother McGee.

Brother McGee stated that most of his regular staff were away on vacation; the boys too were on holidays from school, and for these reasons conditions were not up to normal standard.

We saw the 3 dormitories where the younger boys slept and the side verandah where the older boys are accommodated. The beds were made, but the floors were not as clean as could be desired. The beds and bedding were in good order. Each bed had a fibre mattress, one pillow, a blanket, a bedspread, and two freshly laundered sheets and pillows. A freshly laundered towel hung at the head of each bed. A chair (and in the dormitories a rush mat) were beside each bed. There were no cupboards, lockers, or shelves where the boys could keep their belongings. The verandah used by the older boys was untidy and unswept. There were articles of clothing strewn about the floor and on the chairs in a very careless manner. There too there were no cupboards, wardrobes, or pegs for the boy's clothing, etc. The premises were said to be free from bugs.

The shower room, which is detached from the dormitory section, had showers on two sides. The showers on one side were not in working order. There was a tray containing soap and nail brushes on the floor. One broken comb hung by string from a nail in the wall. There were no "dirty" heads.

Brother McGee said the boys had a hot shower before going to bed each night. The distance they have to walk from the showers to their beds, over a dusty floor, would, I should think, have a very bad effect on the bedding.

We saw one schoolroom. Conditions here were deplorable, and, apart from a piano, there were two tables, some forms, and a plank erected on bricks. The children sang two songs, the latter being "Home Sweet Home".

The recreation-room contained only two tables and a form. There were no books, handicraft materials, games, or gymnastic equipment in evidence. This building contains a talkie machine and is used for picture shows during the winter months. A picture show is held fortnightly and sometimes shorts supplied by the Shell Oil Company are shown between times.

All the floors are of granolithic. In most cases they looked dusty and grubby. This was said to be due to building operations which are in progress. All of the windows were dirty, fly-specked, and smeared, and many had broken panes of glass.

The only laundry facilities at the Home were two troughs in a room with an uneven rubble floor. Brother McGee said that the sheets, pillowcases, and all large articles were sent to the Home of the Good Shepherd for laundering. He also stated that women living in the district frequently helped with mending.
10. A modern dairy is almost completed, with electric milking machine, and separator, etc.

11. Dining-room: The dining-room contains small tables and at each from 6 to 10 boys sat on stools for their meal. The tables (some bare boards, others covered with lino or musamine) were set for the midday meal. Delf crockery was used and there was a sufficient supply of cutlery for each boy.

12. When the kitchen was inspected, preparations for the midday meal were in hand. The flies were troublesome here. Shelves held plates of soup and on the table were small serves of meat, carrot and thick gravy on plates ready to be passed through the servery. This was topped off with bread and jam. There is a plentiful supply of milk and butter.

13. Before going to lunch all the boys washed their hands and faces, had a hairdo, and put on a shirt. Some wore ill-fitting clothes; some were grubby. This may have been due to carelessness and the prevalence of dust. When the meal was finished an enamel basin containing warm water was brought to each table and each boy washed his small plate, cup, saucer, and cutlery — there was no soap or dishcloth, and only some of the boys used a teatowel.

14. We saw the 82 migrant boys, whose ages range from 9 to 15 years. I was told that most of the boys were foundlings and, with the exception of two, 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. One lad said he had had the condition for about 3 years. It seemed to me that at least two of the lads were still infected.

15. One was suffering from a very badly infected left ear. The mother was full of pus, with an offensive smell. He said he was deaf on his left side; Mrs. Warner, the Matron, had been treating his ear with peroxide.

16. While in the grounds the lads wore khaki shorts. Some were without shirts and foot covering; none wore hats. Nearly all the boys had tanned skin, but there was no evidence of scalding. Four or five of the boys spent quite a lot of time making cement bricks and putting them to dry; others sat aimlessly about the grounds. There seemed to be a lack of land and equipment for relaxation. I do not recall seeing any shady trees in the area near the Home. Brother Meade said that usually the boys had a dip in the creek each morning and afternoon and that they had been forbidden to go there unless accompanied by an adult. He stated that all of the boys seemed to be healthy and were beginning to adjust themselves to the new surroundings very satisfactorily. Six or seven were selected each fortnight to make up a team, with the brothers, to play cricket against teams in the surrounding districts.

17. About 60 children arrived about a week before the school closed for the summer vacation. No medical history or school records had accompanied any of them. On that account time will be needed at the beginning of the school year to grade the boys.

18. I recommend that each child be given a thorough medical examination, including a chest X-ray and sight test. (Attached is a press cutting regarding migrants to Canada, a number of whom were found to be suffering from TB on arrival).
It would also be advisable for all the boys to have a mental test; possibly this could be arranged through the University.

19. For the wellbeing of the lads domiciled in the Home, the management should be asked to have installed at an early date:

- A locker for each lad.
- Schoolroom furnished with desks, cupboards, maps and pictures.
- Recreation-room furnished with small tables, chairs, books, and games (meccano, etc.)

Thus providing the boys with comfortable surroundings where they could relax, read, and amuse themselves along constructive lines.

20. I told Brother McGeely that I would contact Dr. O'Donnell, Skin Specialist, regarding the children who were suffering from head ringworm, and/or the effect of same. It is likely that ray treatment will be necessary for some of the boys.

21. [REDACTED] should be seen by an Ear Specialist as early as possible.

[Signature]

INSPECTOR.

PE/B
21/1/48