

Main Report, 2.5.3) and is said to agree with the concerns that both Murtagh and the Home Office had about a particular Christian Brothers residential institution in the Liverpool area. We note, from material provided to us by the Inquiry, that not only was Monsignor Bennett a regular attendee of CCWC during the main period of post-war Catholic child migration, but he was also a member of the CCWC's Emigration sub-committee which we understand from evidence from the Catholic Church to have had particular responsibility in relation to the CCWC's child migration work.¹³ We have also noted elsewhere that Canon Bennett was aware of the lack of regular reports being received from children sent to residential institutions in Australia.¹⁴ Indeed Canon Bennett commented on the lack of such reports in a letter to the Home Office dated little more than a month after Helen Murtagh's letter to the Archbishop of Birmingham in which she noted Bennett's shared concern with her about a particular Christian Brothers institution in this country. We also note, from Fr Stinson's report on his recruitment visit to the UK (discussed in Fourth Addendum, 6.4, 6.6) that, by 1952, Bennett was said to be actively opposed to child migration.

1.24 We note that Canon Charles Flood also attended meetings of the CCWC in the period in which he was aware of Home Office concerns about standards of care at St Charles School in Brentwood, which was run by the Christian Brothers (Main Report, 2.5.4).¹⁵ The Home Office's complaint that it had raised concerns with the school's board of governors in 1952 which had not been addressed two years later appears to reflect similar interactions between external inspectors and Christian Brothers institutions in Western Australia that we noted in our Fourth Addendum (6.10, 8.11-8.13).

Question 11: Main Report, 2.5.6. The CCIICSA have asked us to clarify our reasoning behind the suggestion that knowledge of problems with Christian Brothers residential institutions in England would have necessarily led to concerns about residential institutions run by this order in Western Australia, 'given the autonomous structure of religious orders such as the Christian Brothers within the Roman Catholic Church, and the autonomy of individual houses within such orders.

1.25 At the time of writing our Main Report, we were of the view that, given the potential vulnerability of children sent to institutions overseas, it could have been reasonable for the officials within the Catholic Church to question whether problems with standards at Christian Brothers residential institutions in this country were replicated in institutions to which child migrants were being sent in Western Australia. We also noted in our Main Report (2.5.5) that at the time of writing that report, we had seen no indication that the Catholic Church in England and Wales had any specific monitoring system in place to check the standards of those overseas institutions.

¹³ CHC000537, para 207.

¹⁴ Seventh Addendum, 8.6.

¹⁵ See, e.g., CHC000432, also CHC000430.