

speed and vigour. No doubt Lucette would report to London and there would be further discussion there, perhaps including the C.R.O. Meanwhile he would arrange for what had been said to be reported to London from this Office.

(vii) As to the ban imposed by Mr. Downer, Pritchard said that was a matter for the Australian authorities who would no doubt consider the matter with care. Lucette confirmed that he had had a sympathetic hearing at the Department of Immigration that morning.

*See memo
later **
6. An Assistant Secretary from the Department of Immigration went down to Sydney last week to have another look at the position. When I was in the Department a day or two ago I was given an opportunity to see the relevant file in confidence. The report brought back by the Assistant Secretary was an encouraging one - confirming the sturdy faith of Lucette (not that there was nothing to worry about, but that all proper steps had been or were being taken and that the homes themselves were "clean" - with no evidence that they had been otherwise as far back as anyone could reasonably go). I saw also a recommendation to the Minister that the official ban should be lifted but I do not know yet - though I may well find out soon - what is the decision. I saw the Assistant Secretary concerned myself and he said he had had "a pretty thorough look round".

(9) 7. On the point in C.R.O. telegram No. 178 Saving, this is one on which the Acting High Commissioner had already (before the telegram arrived) asked me to sound the Department. At that time they did not seem to think there were any grounds for extending investigations - certainly only by such an extension, and an intensive one, could there be any satisfaction that similar occurrences did not take place in the institutions of other Societies. Such an intensive investigation would certainly raise a lot of dust - and it is important to remember that, in the present case, one of the facts which has become clear is that irregularities have not taken place in the Barnardo's homes. So far also there has been virtually no publicity - apart from the initial articles in "Truth" which did not mention names or places. But do not suppose that we have lost sight of this point or will neglect an opportunity to raise the matter again - it is a delicate one. I doubt for example whether, when such an affair is discovered in the United Kingdom, it normally leads to a nation-wide investigation in all children's institutions. It may be too that the Australians have taken more notice of our reference to this matter than we have been allowed to know and intend by discreet means to emphasise the need for those in charge of children's institutions to be more than usually on guard. One thing we do know is that the Minister, Mr. Downer, is a most conscientious man and has expressed himself in forthright terms on paper about the duty of the Australian authorities as guardians of the moral welfare of children in institutions here.

Downer's anxiety