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## Survivor Calls for Inquiry in Mount Cashel Abuse Scandal

By Richard Foot  
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A survivor of Canada's worst child abuse scandal is calling for a public inquiry into the horrors inflicted on boys at the Mount Cashel orphanage in Newfoundland, as well as other Christian Brothers institutions across the country.

The St. John's man, who cannot be named under a court-ordered publication ban, says an inquiry -- or a truth commission, similar to the one being planned for survivors of Indian residential schools -- should be convened so the hundreds of Canadians who were terrorized as children in Christian Brothers' facilities can tell the full story of their suffering.

He says Canada should follow the example of Ireland, which last week released the results of a nine-year commission of inquiry into the widespread abuse of children at facilities run largely by the Christian Brothers, an international Roman Catholic teaching order headquartered in Rome.

The report chronicled beatings, rapes and ritualized terror perpetrated on thousands of children in Ireland's church-run orphanages and schools from the 1930s to the 1990s.

"A climate of fear, created by pervasive, excessive and arbitrary punishment, permeated most of the institutions," the Irish report said. "Children lived with the daily terror of not knowing where the next beating was coming from."

The St. John's survivor, who lived at the now-defunct Mount Cashel orphanage during the 1950s, is a well-known Newfoundland professional and community volunteer who managed against all odds to build a life for himself, despite being savagely beaten and sexually abused as a boy.

He is now one of 50 Mount Cashel survivors with civil suits still before the courts. He has never gone public with his case, he says, because of the shame he feels, and is known in court documents only as "John Doe."

Mr. Doe says the conditions and suffering described by the report out of Ireland read like a "mirror image" of his time in Mount Cashel.

"Just like they did in Ireland, we need an inquiry in Canada before it's too late, before too many of us die," says Mr. Doe, 69.

"We need to invite all the survivors in, get their stories, hear what happened, and let the people know what went on."

From 1989-1990, a Newfoundland royal commission, led by retired Ontario judge Samuel Hughes, did investigate the Mount Cashel scandal; however, its work was focused only on a police coverup of the abuses and on a select group of victims housed in the orphanage in the 1970s and '80s.

Newfoundland Premier Danny Williams first rose to prominence as the lawyer who represented many of those victims. He declined to comment on Friday on Doe's call for a new inquiry, or truth commission.

Doe says the full story of the suffering inflicted at Mount Cashel, and at other Christian Brothers' facilities such as St. Joseph's training school near Ottawa, has never been publicly aired. Yet the emotional and legal fallout continues.

His lawyer, Geoff Budden, says hundreds of Canadian men, now living across North America, remain traumatized by their experiences. Many lead broken lives filled with alcoholism, addiction and failed relationships, while others have managed to hold down jobs and create families, in spite of their childhood

trauma.

"It's a tribute to their character and human spirit, how many have built lives for themselves, and become good fathers and role models," Mr. Budden said.

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