

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIALCOPY NUMBER : 4PERSON GIVEN TO: H.M. ST. JOHNSREPORT ON MR JOHN SMYTH AND ZAMBEZI MINISTRIESA. Introduction

Zambezi Ministries is a Christian Organisation, headed by Mr John Smyth, which, inter alia, conducts Christian camps, called Zambezi Holidays, at Ruzawi School near Marondera. In May 1993 several parents of Christian Brothers College school for boys, who had attended camps at Ruzawi School conducted by Mr Smyth in April 1993, complained to several Christian Ministers in Bulawayo regarding severe beatings received by the boys on camps, compulsory skinny dipping, nude trampolining and allegations of Mr Smyth walking around in the nude at bedtime and at shower time in front of the boys.

The Christian Ministers approached, Reverend Brian Anderson of the Baptist Church Bulawayo, Reverend Peter Mackenzie of the Bulawayo Christian Centre, Reverend Ray Pountney, of the Baptist Church Bulawayo and Headmaster of Petra Primary School and Reverend Ian Spence of the Bulawayo Presbyterian Church, were already aware of allegations levelled against Mr Smyth over the past few years by Christian leaders in Mashonaland. They were of the opinion that complaints made to the Zambezi Ministries Board and Mr Smyth had seemingly been ignored. As a result, and having been asked to do so by the parents of the school boys, they approached Messrs Webb, Low and Barry, Legal Practitioners, of Bulawayo, for advice. This document is a summary of evidence gathered by Messrs Webb, Low and Barry, the abovementioned Christian Ministers and other Christian leaders since May 1993.

The following points should be stressed regarding the material:

- (a) every effort has been made to verify the information obtained and whilst the authors of this document are satisfied that the allegations are substantially correct, some of the information is hearsay;
- (b) the material is published in the discharge of a duty which the below mentioned Christian Churches in Bulawayo believe that they have, to protect young men going through Zambezi Holidays camps and to advise Headmasters and others, who are in a privileged position to receive the information, so that they can make up their minds as to how to deal with the problem;
- (c) accordingly this document is private and confidential and should only be shown to Headmasters of boys attending camps or of schools where Mr Smyth conducts missions, parents of boys attending camps and Christian ministers who are involved in a pastoral relationship with boys attending camps;
- (d) as far as possible the information is set out in chronological order.

B. HISTORY OF MR JOHN SMYTH'S INVOLVEMENT IN CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES WITH BOYS AND YOUNG MEN SINCE 1978

1. In the late 1970's Mr Smyth, then a British Barrister (a Queen's Counsel) lived near Winchester College School in the United Kingdom. Mr Smyth began to take an interest at Winchester College's christian group, called Christian Forum.¹

¹ See "The Road to Winchester" by the Headmaster of Winchester College Mr J Thorn at page 154 (a book published in 1970)

2. In or about 1978 Mr Smyth began a practice of beating boys. It started with him offering a seventeen (17) year old the choice of a beating or being reported for shop lifting.
3. Shortly thereafter the practice was started on four (4) seventeen (17) year olds with Mr Smyth beating them on the bare bottom with a gym shoe. The beatings were voluntarily accepted as a deterrent to masturbation.² Beatings varied from a dozen to 40 strokes.
4. From the summer of 1979 the frequency and severity of the beatings and the number of men involved gradually escalated. The context of the beatings was entirely that of a holiness meeting; prayer, praise and loving christian concern were expressed at every point. In all about 20 men were involved, some for a short time, others longer. The beatings were with garden canes and took place in a specially furnished garden shed.
5. The report compiled by Canon Ruston gives the following details: beatings for masturbation, pride, and undisclosed "falls" were administered. Eight men spoke of bleeding on most occasions. There was one attempted suicide. "Training beatings" of some 75 strokes were introduced. One man was beaten every 4/5 days one vacation. Semi-nakedness gave way to complete nakedness "for humility". For a training session a man undressed himself; for "falls" he was undressed by Mr Smyth.³
6. There was never the slightest evidence of overt sexual genital excitement or activity, though immediately after the beatings it was common for the man who had been beaten lay on the bed while Mr Smyth knelt and prayed, linking arms, kissing him on the shoulder and back. Separate from these post beating embraces men spoke of Mr Smyth putting his arms around them at emotional moments and one of being kissed on the neck. There was frequent association with sexual sins of a comparatively minor sort.⁴
7. In the spring of 1981 Mr Smyth was involved in the beating of a young man aged 21 years old. The young man was invited to stay at Mr Smyth's home in Morstead. Mr Smyth and the young man went for a long walk in which Mr Smyth asked the young man about his christian life. The young man admitted defeat in certain areas and Mr Smyth replied that he could help. He showed the young man biblical texts to support his assertion that help could be given by Mr Smyth beating the young man. The young man was told not to tell others about it as it was open to misinterpretation. The young man had his first beating that weekend, "probably about 20 or 30 strokes from a very stiff bamboo cane" which "even had a towelling grip made for it". The beatings took place in the special shed. The young man removed all his clothes save for a t-shirt. During the beatings Mr Smyth would count out the strokes; thereafter they had to pray in confession and praise. "The beating was very painful and one's buttocks were very raw and bleeding by the end. Sitting down was not immediately possible. We used to wear absorbent medicated pads under our under-clothes to keep the blood from leaking and to provide a cushion for our sore behinds. After that first weekend I was probably beaten once every month for the next 8 or 9 months or so. On one occasion I had 80 strokes but the normal amount was about 50. We were beaten sometimes for particular falls, others were just to show keenness".⁵

² Confidential report prepared by the late Canon Ruston of the Round Church, Cambridge.

³ Canon Ruston report.

⁴ Canon Ruston report. (The Canon Ruston report has been shown to Mr Smyth's lawyer, Mr Timothy Tanser of Messrs Scanlen and Holderness, Harare and Mr Smyth has read the same. We understand that he states that the report is "grossly exaggerated". In a meeting with the then National Director of Scripture Union Zimbabwe, Mr David Cunningham, in the mid-1980's in Zimbabwe, when asked by Mr Cunningham regarding the alleged incidents, Mr Smyth "dismissed it as a minor incident of youthful enthusiasm".

8. At the beginning of 1982 a Cambridge undergraduate was pressed by Mr Smyth to go down to his home near Winchester for a visit. Mr Smyth read the young man extracts from a book by A.W. Tozer and they discussed the meaning of the "Lord's discipline" in Hebrews 12:4-11. The young man returned to University and spoke to friends who told him that Mr Smyth administered corporal punishment to people to help them in their faith. Subsequently the young man met with Mr Smyth who was persuasive and quoted from Proverbs 13:24 and 1 Corinthians 9:27 to support his views. Shortly thereafter the young man went to Winchester. That evening Mr Smyth took him to a shed in the garden of his house. The young man had to take all his clothes off and bend double over some sort of bench. Mr Smyth took a cane and hit the young man six times, hard enough to bruise him, on his buttocks. Mr Smyth remained fully clothed. Afterwards they went back to the house where the young man slept the night. He was "in physical discomfort for a number of days afterwards".
9. The same young man's report goes on to say the following: "It is to my considerable embarrassment that I could have fallen for all this. However, to us involved at the time, new christians, young, impressionable and gullible, he seemed to be offering a pathway to holiness. Only after a few weeks agonizing reflection, following my beating, did I realise that this was a million miles from the New Testament Christianity, that every verse Mr Smyth had used he had twisted beyond recognition. Nor, I am afraid, did I realise that the secrecy, the nakedness, the psychological domination and the brutality were all marks of perversion of a most vicious kind."⁶
10. The beatings at Winchester stopped when the leader of the christian work Mr Smyth was involved in received an anonymous letter about him and, at the same time but independently, some of the young men involved sought advice from a church leader and brought everything to light.⁷
11. Fathers of two of the boys involved (and possibly John Thorn, the Headmaster of Winchester College) intended to instigate criminal proceedings. The offences were technically all criminal offences under Offences Against the Person Act of 1861, Section 47⁸. The fathers were persuaded not to do so by the good efforts of "senior christians" who made personal visits. They were persuaded not to do so on the understanding that Mr Smyth would give and sign an undertaking not to be involved in young peoples work ever again.
12. A signed undertaking was given by Mr Smyth not to be involved in young peoples work again. Only two copies of the undertaking were made. One was held by Mr Smyth and one was held by Mr Thorn. Mr Thorn says that the signed undertaking exists but that he cannot locate it. The signed undertaking was attested to by David Fletcher at present Rector of St Ebbe's Church, Oxford.⁹
13. At the same time Mr Smyth was disciplined by the Christian Church in the United Kingdom. He was forbidden to return to the christian work he was involved in and was asked not to engage in work with young people and to receive medical treatment. It was on condition that he met these requests that his activity was not publicized at the time. In England, Scripture Union, David McInnes and David Jackson (both respected christian leaders) were informed and also tried to counsel him. At the time Mr Smyth "ever only ascribed his activity to a misreading of scripture".¹⁰

⁶ Letter written by "Alistair" dated 7th July 1993.

⁷ Canon Ruston report.

⁸ Confidential memorandum to members of Zambezi Trust Board (Canada) dated 6th August 1990 compiled by the Board Members of the Zambezi Trust (United Kingdom) at page 3.

⁹ Zambezi Trust Board report at page 3. Mr T Tanser, Mr Smyth's lawyer, advises that Mr Thorn subsequently waived the undertaking given by Mr Smyth so far as his ministry in Zimbabwe is concerned. We have been unable to verify this.

14. In August 1984 Mr Smyth moved to Zimbabwe, where he began working for Africa Enterprises in partnership with Michael Cassidy, the Director of Africa Enterprise. It is not known how long Mr Smyth worked for Africa Enterprise but the partnership ended prematurely amid a lot of hurt and pain with threats of legal action.¹¹ At the same time the Board members of the Zambezi Trust (United Kingdom) "felt a slight unease concerning Mr Smyth's attitude to use of money (lifestyle) and his reluctance to seek or accept an effective pastoral oversight by a local senior christian" and "that Mr Smyth would not appear to have a 'sending church'".¹²
15. In 1985 or 1986 Scripture Union Zimbabwe heard that Mr Smyth was planning to concentrate on missions and camps in the independent schools in Zimbabwe. As this involved working in the same field of operation as Scripture Union, the then National Director of Scripture Union, Mr David Cunningham, asked to meet and talk with Mr Smyth about it. They met at Mr Cunningham's house in July of the relevant year (either 1985 or 1986); Mr Smyth assured Mr Cunningham that he had no intention of running boys camps in Zimbabwe and that he felt that God was calling him to organise missions in the independent schools. It therefore came as a surprise and shock to Scripture Union to learn that in August that same year Mr Smyth ran the first camps for boys from Peterhouse. Scripture Union were of the view that Mr Smyth must have known about these plans during his discussions with Mr Cunningham in July and he must have been planning the camp at the time when they had their discussion. Scripture Union was left with the impression that Mr Smyth had not been entirely honest and transparent in the way he presented things.¹³
16. Subsequent meetings were held with Mr Smyth as individuals and between the Scripture Union and Zambezi Ministries committees. These finally ended in frustration when Scripture Union had appeared to reach agreement on the different fields of operation at one particular meeting. Mrs Audrey Longley, who was the Chairperson of the meeting, drew up the minutes as she understood what had been agreed. Mr Cunningham was of the view that Mrs Longley's minutes were a fair record of the discussion but subsequently Mr Smyth dismissed the minutes as a completely false record of what had been discussed. After that there seemed little point in discussion and there have been no formal meetings since then.¹⁴
17. In 1988 Board members of the Zambezi Trust (United Kingdom) (a Trust set up to support Mr Smyth's work in Zimbabwe) Martin and Jill Kingston, were approached by a senior christian leader in the United Kingdom who was aware that Mr Smyth was continuing to work amongst young people in Southern Africa and increasingly was involving young men from the United Kingdom on a short term basis. The senior Christian leader was concerned for the implications this might have for the United Kingdom Trustees. It was suggested that because the Trustees were appearing to support Mr Smyth's youth work when it was discreetly known that Mr Smyth had been "banned" from this area, the Trustees own standing in other areas of christian endeavour might be compromised.¹⁵

¹¹ Zambezi Trust Board (Canada) Report at page 1.

¹² Zambezi Trust Board (Canada) Report at page 1.

¹³ Report compiled by Mr David Cunningham dated March 1993 for the Northern Region Director of Scripture Union, Zimbabwe.

¹⁴ David Cunningham report March 1993. See also *infra* paragraph 21 regarding the meeting held on the 30th January 1989 at Gatwick Airport attended by David Hope and Michael Beardsmore where minutes of the meeting exist but Mr Smyth's report of what was agreed is at variance with the minutes. Zambezi Trust Board (Canada) Report at page 3.

¹⁵ Zambezi Trust Board (Canada) Report at page 2.

18. In February 1989 the former Headmaster of Winchester College, Mr John Thorn, published his book "The Road to Winchester". In March 1989 Mr Smyth released a confidential statement referring to pages 154/5 of The Road to Winchester. Paragraph 1 of this report states "within a few days of the matter first coming to the attention of older christians in February 1982, John accepted that what he had been doing was entirely wrong and he has never sought to justify it since. By reason of pressures of professional and christian work he had for some years previously become completely dependent on sleeping pills, and there is no doubt that this extraordinary aberration of judgment was in some way linked with that".¹⁶
19. All "The Road to Winchester" states about the incidents is as follows: "I was told the extraordinary news that the neighbouring Barrister had gained such personal control over a few of the senior boys in the group, and had kept it after they left the school, that he was claiming to direct their burgeoning relationships with girls, and was, with their consent, punishing him physically when they confessed to him they had sinned. The World of Conservative Evangelicalism was reft in twain. Absurd and baseless rumours were circulated but he was an unhinged tyrant, the embodiment of Satan. He must be banished. And - quietly but efficiently - he was. He left the Winchester District and then the United Kingdom. He departed for Africa with his family and, by me, has not been heard of since. The Christian Forum was shattered".¹⁷
20. After reading the book and the statement released by Mr Smyth Reverend David Pope, a Board member of the Zambezi Trust (United Kingdom), contacted David Mackinnes, David Fletcher and Mark Ashton who confirmed the bare bones of the matter. David Mackinnes provided a copy of Canon Ruston's report. It became obvious to them that the Canon Ruston report contained considerably more detail of Mr Smyth's activities than appears in Mr Thorn's book.¹⁸
21. On 30th January 1989 David Pope and Michael Beardsmore met Mr Smyth at Gatwick Airport seeking to discuss (i) Mr Smyth's involvement in youth work; (ii) effective pastoral oversight and (iii) the Zambezi Ministries Board's unawareness of the Winchester episode. Minutes of the meeting were taken but Mr Smyth's purported perception of what was agreed is at variance with the minutes.¹⁹ Janet and Jonathan Brooks, Trustees of the Zambezi Trust (United Kingdom), relatives of Mr Smyth (Janet Brooks is Mr Smyth's wife's sister), had been kept in ignorance of the Winchester episode by the other Trustees because Mr Smyth had requested that none of his family be informed. Following the publication of Mr Thorn's book Mr Smyth informed Janet and Jonathan Brooks.
22. It was at this stage that the United Kingdom Trustees were concerned that Mr Smyth had not, from 1981 to 1989, submitted himself at any stage to professional help or specific christian counselling. The Trustees were further concerned as to what Mr Smyth's reaction might be if confronted with pressure to remedy the issues raised at the meeting held on the 30th January 1989. Mr Smyth's brother-in-law, Jonathan Brooks, a medical practitioner, therefore consulted a Christian colleague in psychiatry. Without Jonathan Brooks identifying Mr Smyth the colleague quickly understood the situation - it turned out that he had treated two of the abused young men. His opinion was that Mr Smyth should be stopped and that any risk to Mr Smyth or his family was outweighed by the potential risks to others, namely young people.²⁰
23. As a result, in May 1989, a Board member of the Zambezi Trust (United Kingdom), Jill Kingston travelled to Zimbabwe as the United Kingdom Board's representative to try to speak to Mr Smyth and to see the Zambezi Ministries Board (Zimbabwe) separately. She wished to discuss the issues raised during the 30th January 1989 meeting held at Gatwick Airport. Her time with Mr Smyth was not fruitful. Jill Kingston was effectively not allowed to speak with the Board members in Mr Smyth's absence. Her visit and discussion with the Zambezi Ministries Board on the 20th May

¹⁶ A statement released by Zambezi Ministry March 1989.

¹⁷ The Road to Winchester pages 154/5.

¹⁸ Zambezi Trust Board (Canada) Report at page 2.

¹⁹ Zambezi Trust Board (Canada) Report at page 3.

²⁰ Zambezi Trust Board (Canada) Report at page 4.

- 1989 was preempted by Mr Smyth's distribution of a document that was strongly critical of Jill Kingston and indirectly critical of all the United Kingdom Trustees. It was apparent to Jill Kingston that the Chairman of the Zambezi Ministries Zimbabwe Board, Mr Richard Johnson, had been only partially briefed by Mr Smyth as to the Winchester episode and the events following.²¹
24. On the 22nd June 1989 the Trustees of the Zambezi Trust (United Kingdom) wrote to Mr Smyth (copied to Mr Richard Johnson) stating the basic facts of the Winchester episode but not the details. The document also stated the Trustees' understanding of Mr Smyth's undertaking at that time to withdraw from youth work invited him to withdraw from direct personal involvement in youth work and to accept an effective pastoral oversight from a local senior christian who would be fully aware of the Winchester episode. The Trustees felt that it was right to ask Mr Smyth to give an undertaking to withdraw from personal involvement in youth work and that in, the absence of such an undertaking, the Trustees would no longer continue as Trustees of the Zambezi Trust. The effective date for him to withdraw was 31st July 1989.²²
 25. In July 1989 Christopher and Jayne Smyth (Mr John Smyth's brother and sister-in-law) discussed Mr Thorn's book with Jonathan and Janet Brooks.²³
 26. In a letter dated 14th July 1989, sent to the United Kingdom Trustees, signed by Mr Richard Johnson for himself and on behalf of John Smyth, the Zambezi Ministries Board of Zimbabwe rejected the Trustees' proposals to Mr Smyth, accepted their resignation in advance and asked for no further communication regarding the matter.²⁴
 27. The United Kingdom Trustees resigned en masse save for Michael Beardsmore and Jonathan Brooks, who continued as caretaker Trustees from 31st July 1989 to 31st December 1989. In September 1989 Mr Jamie Coleman, a solicitor from London in his early 30's, who had attended several of Mr Smyth's United Kingdom camps, met with Jonathan and Janet Brooks. He spent four hours discussing the situation. He also met with the Kingstons and spoke with David Cook. Notwithstanding their concerns expressed, he felt he was able to take on the Chairmanship of Zambezi Trust (United Kingdom). He and John Smyth are at present effectively the only Trustees of the Zambezi Trust (United Kingdom).²⁵
 28. From July 1989, until September 1990, Mr Smyth's camps run by Zambezi Ministries grew in size and frequency. In April 1990 Reverend John Bell, a Christian Minister based in Bindura, was approached by George Niven, a teacher at PeterHouse, who was aware of the events that had occurred in the United Kingdom. Both John Bell and George Niven were involved at the time in camps run by Mr Smyth. At the time Reverend Bell had seen nothing untoward at camps save for one boy who had received a beating by Mr Smyth. Mr Niven and Reverend Bell decided they would find out if the United Kingdom story was true. As a result David Fletcher sent the Ruston report to them.
 29. In July 1990 Reverend Bell and George Niven met and decided to speak to Mr Smyth after the August 1990 camp. Accordingly in or about August 1990 they made an appointment to speak to Mr Smyth. Mr Smyth went to see Mr Niven first and then subsequently Reverend Bell. At the meetings Mr Smyth was defensive and angry and both Reverend Bell and Mr Niven felt that further meetings would be pointless.

21 Zambezi Trust Board (Canada) Report 6th August 1990 at page 4.

22 Zambezi Trust Board (Canada) Report at page 5.

23 Zambezi Trust Board (Canada) Report at page 4 (as a result of that meeting it is understood that Mr Christopher Smyth is of the view that Mr John Smyth's ministry with young people should cease).

24 Zambezi Trust Board (Canada) Report at page 5.

25 Mr Coleman was approached by Mr Coleman at a meeting held at Petra Primary School, Bulawayo,

30. On the 16th September 1990, Mr Smyth wrote to Mr Niven (the letter was copied to Reverend Bell). A portion of the letter reads: "I think you have heard from John Bell. However having thought and prayed through all you said I am grateful to you for bringing to a conclusion in my mind this difficult matter of whacking the unruly day scholars on camp with the T.T.B (Table Tennis Bat.) Although you say it is seen as a joke, certainly nobody resents it, in the light of all you say and the discussion I had with the Board in August, I have decided we must manage without it in future. I am sure we shall be given grace to cope in some other way." The letter was copied to Richard Johnson, Mr Tracey (a member of the Zambezi Ministries (Zimbabwe) Board) and David Flint, a financial supporter of Mr Smyth and Zambezi Ministries based in the United Kingdom.
31. On the 29th October 1990 Reverend Bell and Mr Niven went to see Mr Richard Johnson, the Chairman of the Zambezi Ministries (Zimbabwe) Board. It was an unsatisfactory meeting and they got the impression that Mr Johnson was of the view that the United Kingdom allegations were not properly founded and an overreaction. Shortly before they met, Mr Niven received a telephone call from Mr Smyth during which he uttered veiled threats regarding Mr Niven's career at Peterhouse.
32. After meeting with Mr Johnson, Reverend Bell and Mr Niven met once again and agreed that a forthcoming mission to Peterhouse be cancelled and that Mr Smyth should be encouraged to see a christian psychologist. Reverend Bell conveyed this to Mr Johnson in November 1990. At this meeting Mr Johnson was not concerned regarding the past as he believed that Mr Smyth's attitude was correct at that time. Mr Johnson did not feel that the problem was ongoing. He gave an undertaking verbally that he would look into the beatings. They further discussed other concerns they had at the time, namely Mr Smyth's living in dorms with the boys, showering with the boys, the fact of exclusive male camps and Mr Smyth developing intimate relationships with boys. They were also concerned about (what they termed) the questionable short term male co-workers Mr Smyth used on camps. Reverend Bell and Mr Niven offered to pay for the costs of a christian psychologist up to the sum of \$500.00. They also expressed concerns about what they perceived as Mr Smyth's avoidance of openness, attempts to manipulate communications by using, for example, "shuttle diplomacy", attempts to discredit Mr Niven, Mr Smyth's exhibition of anger, the veiled threat issued to Mr Niven and the lack of spiritual oversight at camps. Having conveyed all of this to Mr Johnson both Reverend Bell and Mr Niven felt they could do nothing further and since then they have not been involved in Zambezi Ministries.²⁶
33. During 1991 the incidents of nudity and beatings on Zambezi Ministries camps increased. In one camp held in 1991 the following happened on camp:
- (i) the younger boys - Forms 1 and 2 - were not permitted to wear under-clothing on the camp (this pertained not only during the day whilst activities were undertaken, but also at night when the boys went to sleep);
 - (ii) at shower times Mr Smyth would stand, in the nude, in the vicinity of, or just inside, the shower area and hand to the boys soap and shampoo for their showers;
 - (iii) one evening Mr Smyth lead the boys in prayers whilst he was naked;
 - (iv) if a boy was caught wearing underwear at any time corporal punishment was administered either to the naked buttocks or to buttocks covered with a pair of shorts only.²⁷

Subsequently the mother of one of the boys who attended spoke to Mr Smyth regarding the prohibition of the wearing of underwear. Mr Smyth explained that the reason for prohibition was "the nuisance value of wet underwear having thereafter to be dealt with in the event that the boys had undertaken a swim or in some other manner had got their underwear wet. His view was that shorts themselves, being an outer garment, dried fairly quickly upon exposure to the sun but not so with underwear".²⁸

34. In December 1991 and August 1992 the following incidents were routine regular occurrences at Zambezi Holidays camps:

- (i) Boys were beaten with a table tennis bat on numerous occasions. Though given in a supposedly good natured manner, the punishment was sufficiently painful to make 13-14 year olds cry. Boys were beaten for a variety of offences including leaving shoes under beds, being late for meals, wet feet in the dormitory and noisy behaviour. One of the boys, from Falcon College, had a bat broken on him whilst punishment was being inflicted. The boys were only allowed one layer of clothing when being beaten.
- (ii) Mr Smyth was the only person who administered punishment to the children. A prize was given to the boy who received the most beatings - at the camp August 1992 the prize winner had been beaten 20 times.
- (iii) There appeared to be a discipline that enforced nudity during the camp, including the following:
 - boys were not allowed to close the doors when they went to the toilet;
 - boys had to walk in the nude from the dormitories to the showers;
 - if any boy wore a towel, it was pulled off by Mr Smyth with the comment "we are all men together here";
 - Mr Smyth regularly showered with the boys and continuously walked around nude in the ablution area;
 - night time activities were done in the nude, that is night swimming.
- (iv) The boys were all advised that they were not to wear underpants during the camp.
- (v) Mr Smyth gave a lecture on masturbation at both camps and said that it was alright to masturbate, but not "to be a slave to it".
- (vi) Mr Smyth was the only member of staff naked with the boys in the ablution area; other members of staff did not walk around nude in the dormitories or ablution area.
- (vii) All members of staff, including Mr Smyth's wife, were housed in separate staff quarters whereas Mr Smyth slept in the dormitory area and not with his family.²⁹

²⁸ Atherstone and Cook's letter dated the 19th July 1993. At a meeting held in Bulawayo on the 10th July 1993 attended by Mr T Tanser (Mr Smyth's legal practitioner), Mr David Coltart of Messrs Webb, Low and Barry, Reverend Christopher Hingley and Mr David Cunningham, Mr Tanser explained that the reason for a prohibition of underwear was a result of a complaint made to Mr Smyth that some of the boys on camp had dirty and smelly underwear and that Mr Smyth had as a result banned underwear to combat this problem. This conflicts with the explanation given above. See also Mr Smyth's explanation given on the 29th June set out in paragraph *infra*.

²⁹ Letter written to Messrs Webb, Low and Barry by a parent of two Falcon College boys, dated

35. During 1991 and 1992 Mr Smyth appears to have developed very close relationships with certain boys in Harare to the extent that he regularly invites them to play squash with him or to indulge in some other form of social activity with him and, indeed, frequently brings certain of the boys to school in the morning. A Harare lawyer has expressed concern regarding the significant power and authority Mr Smyth appears to wield over these boys. He goes on to say that whilst, objectively perceived, there does not seem to be anything untoward in this activity, his own impression is that the activity appears to be "calculated to establish very strong psychological relationships or bonds with the boys in question".³⁰

The concern expressed in this regard by the Harare lawyer should be viewed in the context of the domination of boys in the United Kingdom.³¹

36. In December 1992 a boy drowned on a Zambezi Ministries camp whilst skinny dipping at night. It was not noticed that he was absent until the following morning when his body was found.

37. In April 1993 several Christian Brothers College school boys went on camps conducted by Zambezi Ministries at Ruzawi School between April the 14th and 21st and April the 23rd and 30th. Shortly after the first camp ended the mother of one boy observed that her son had severe bruising on his buttocks. On the 27th April 1993 the boy was examined by a Doctor B MacAullay, M.B. CH. B. who in a report dated the 28th May 1993 observed: "on examination I found a large, old bruise 12cm x 12cm on the left buttock. The bruise was about one week old".³²

38. Some of the parents of Christian Brothers boys who had attended the camp met and approached their respective Christian Ministers. As a result, and as explained in the introduction above, the parents and the Christian Ministers approached, and thereafter took legal advice from, Messrs Webb, Low and Barry on the 26th May 1993. On the 27th May 1993 Mr David Coltart, a partner in Messrs Webb, Low and Barry, contacted David Fletcher in Oxford and the Canon Ruston report was sent to him by facsimile.

39. Mr Coltart then asked the parent of the seven Christian Brothers College boys involved to record statements from their sons individually. It was stressed that there should be no discussion regarding the matter with other parents or boys so as to prevent collusion.

40. The statements recorded from the boys revealed that the following had occurred during the April camps:

- (i) compulsory swimming in the nude;
- (ii) Mr Smyth frequently walked around the boys dormitory in the nude and showered in the nude with the boys;
- (iii) frequent, and sometimes severe, beatings were administered to all of the boys who recorded statements;
- (iv) boys frequently jumped on a trampoline in the nude, an activity described as "flappy jumping";
- (v) boys were ordered to sleep without any underpants on and on one occasion one boy was ordered to take off his underpants because it was said "(they were) too tight, inhibiting the development of my sexual organs";

³⁰ Letter written to Messrs Webb, Low and Barry by a parent of two Falcon College boys dated 13th July 1993.

³¹ Statement dated 7th July 1993, referred to at paragraph 9 supra, "The Road to Winchester", referred to at paragraph 19 supra and Margaret Henning's report infra marked "Annexure B" at pages 2 and 3.

³² Medical report written by Dr B MacAullay dated 28th May 1993.

- (vi) Mr Smyth gave a talk about masturbation and after the talk came to one boy in particular and asked him what he thought, how many times did the boy masturbate, what did he masturbate with and did he do it with clean thoughts.³³
41. Having collected the statements from the various boys, Messrs Webb, Low and Barry were asked to advise the parents of the boys involved what action could be taken against Mr Smyth. The parents were advised that on the face of it, Mr Smyth was guilty of assault and *crimen injuria* and that the incidents could be reported to the Police for criminal prosecution. The parents were also advised that action could be taken in terms of Section 14 of the Immigration Act to have Mr Smyth deported. While some of the parents were keen to institute criminal proceedings against Mr Smyth some of the other parents were fearful of the consequences and many were concerned about the ramifications for the christian church.
42. As a result Messrs Webb, Low and Barry were instructed to write to Mr Smyth setting out the allegations and inviting him to respond to them. On the 23rd June 1993 Messrs Webb, Low and Barry wrote to Mr Smyth stating, *inter alia*:
- (i) because of the serious nature of the allegations (which were set out in brief), Mr Smyth should be given an opportunity to respond;
 - (ii) the parents and Christian Ministers involved were cognisant of the devastating consequences a criminal trial would have on the boys, their parents and the christian church in Zimbabwe;
 - (iii) that because of the serious nature of the allegations, and because of the information received from the United Kingdom, it was believed his camps should be brought to a halt in fear of long term damage that could be done through them to the christian church and other boys and young men;
 - (iv) Mr Smyth was encouraged to meet with Mr Coltart and the Christian Ministers.³⁴
43. On the 28th June 1993 Mr Smyth met with Mr Coltart at the offices of Messrs Webb, Low and Barry. Responding to the allegations contained in the letter Mr Smyth:
- (i) admitted that all boys were asked to swim in the nude at night but denied that they were ordered to do so;
 - (ii) did not respond to the allegation of walking around in the nude;
 - (iii) admitted that boys were beaten but stated that was the only way to control an otherwise relaxed camp and that much of it was done in fun;
 - (iv) admitted that boys had trampolined in the nude but denied that he had ordered them to do it and said that it had happened when the boys came back from a swim and that his junior leaders were involved; he only observed the practice from a distance;
 - (v) admitted that boys had slept in the nude and said that the reason was because one parent sometime back had complained that boys sleeping next to his son smelled and since then the boys had been ordered not to wear underpants;
 - (vi) denied that there had been detailed discussions/questioning regarding masturbation although he admitted talking to the boys in general terms and said that some boys had spoken to him privately on their own initiative;

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The original statements are held by Messrs Webb, Low and Barry. See the Synopsis of the statements prepared by Messrs Webb, Low and Barry annexed hereto marked Annexure 'A'.

- (vii) admitted that what had happened in the United Kingdom was wrong (Mr Smyth appeared to be aware of the Ruston report) and said that he had received medical treatment and that he had suffered a "breakdown" at the time when this happened.³⁵
44. On the 29th June 1993 Mr Smyth attended a meeting at the offices of Messrs Webb, Low and Barry which was also attended by his son Mr P J Smyth, Reverend Peter MacKenzie, Reverend Ian Spence, Reverend Chris Hingley (the Anglican Chaplain at Whitestones Primary School, Bulawayo), Reverend Brian Anderson and Mr Mark Kluckow (the National Director of Youth for Christ Zimbabwe). Responding to the specific allegations contained in the letter Mr Smyth:
- (i) confirmed the points he had made to Mr Coltart the day before;
 - (ii) admitted taking photographs of boys showering on camps for promotional purposes but said that he had only taken photographs from the shoulders upwards (new information);
 - (iii) denied the allegation of walking through dormitories in the nude;
 - (iv) said that possibly somebody else had caused the severe bruising suffered by the one Christian Brothers College boy (this was after the medical report had been read out to him).
45. Mr Smyth asked that the allegations contained in the Ruston report should not be read out in front of his son as it was a "Board matter". He stated that whilst what he did in the United Kingdom was wrong and he had received treatment, people like David Fletcher were probably "jealous" of his successful work in Zimbabwe.³⁶
46. At the conclusion of the meeting held on the 29th June 1993 Mr Smyth agreed that those present should meet with the Board of Zambezi Ministries. The Christian Ministers present advised that if needs be the Bulawayo Churches involved were prepared to fly the Board members to Bulawayo so that the issue could be discussed in full. The meeting concluded with an agreement that as Mr Smyth was staying in Bulawayo that week, as a matter of urgency, members of the Zambezi Ministry Board would fly to Bulawayo. The meeting concluded at 1.00 p.m. At 2.30 p.m. on the 29th June 1993 Mr Smyth telephoned Mr Coltart to advise that he was returning to Harare and that it would not be possible for him to remain in Bulawayo. As a result of this information the Chairman of the Zambezi Ministries Board, Mr Richard Johnson, was contacted direct and invited to come to Bulawayo. Mr Johnson declined the request as he said he was too busy.
47. On the 30th June 1993 Mr Coltart was contacted by Mr Smyth's lawyer, Mr T Tanser of Messrs Scanlen and Holderness, of Harare, who asked that the allegations be sent to him. As a result Mr Coltart drafted a synopsis of the allegations annexed hereto marked Annexure 'A' against Mr John Smyth and these were sent to Messrs Scanlen and Holderness by facsimile on the 2nd July 1993.³⁷ On the 5th July 1993 the Ruston report was made available to Mr Tanser. On the same day Mr Tanser telephoned Mr Coltart on behalf of Mr Smyth advising that he had been instructed that:
- (i) the Ruston report was exaggerated and false;
 - (ii) the Bulawayo Ministers should be careful as they may face a defamation action;
 - (iii) all future dealings should be between Mr Tanser and Mr Coltart.

³⁵ Minutes of meeting recorded by Mr Coltart dated 28th June 1993.

³⁶ Minutes of the meeting held at Messrs Webb, Low and Barry on 29th June 1993 recorded by

48. On the 7th July 1993 Mr Coltart received a facsimile message from Mr Dave Pope, the Director of Salt Mine Creative Ministries in the United Kingdom, the former member of the United Kingdom Board of Zambezi Trust mentioned above. The facsimile advised that Mr Jonathan Brooks, Mr Smyth's brother-in-law would send detailed information regarding the reasons why the United Kingdom Board resigned. On the 8th July 1993 Jonathan Brooks sent Mr Coltart, by facsimile, the confidential report to members of Zambezi Trust Board (Canada) and other documents. In a telephone conversation between Janet Brooks and Mr Coltart on the same day Mr Coltart was advised that, notwithstanding their close relationship with Mr Smyth, their opinion was that Mr Smyth needed help and that he should not be allowed to continue in ministry in Zimbabwe.
49. On the 10th July 1993 Mr Tanser met with Mr Coltart, Mr David Cunningham and Reverend Christopher Hingley. During this meeting a formal response was handed over to Mr Coltart in the form of a letter from Messrs Scanlen and Holderness which stated, *inter alia*, that:
- (i) they (the Zambezi Ministries Board in Zimbabwe) had now had an opportunity to enquire into, and discuss the allegations made in Messrs Webb, Low and Barry's letters dated the 23rd June and 2nd July 1993;
 - (ii) these extensive enquiries had led them to the conclusion that "nothing improper whatsoever has occurred on the camps and we totally reject your clients allegations of criminal conduct";
 - (iii) Messrs Webb, Low and Barry's clients should be assured that Mr Smyth and his Board were considering very carefully what steps should be taken at future camps to ensure as far as possible "that there is no misunderstanding of what goes on at camp"³⁸
50. In the course of the meeting Mr Tanser handed to Mr Coltart a document entitled "extracts from unsolicited letters received from campers and parents after Ruzawi camps" prepared by Mr Smyth.³⁹
51. At the meeting with Mr Tanser it was stressed that the Bulawayo Ministers wanted to meet with the Zambezi Ministries Board as it was felt that they did not appreciate the seriousness of the allegations. It was pointed out that the Bulawayo churches involved would be prepared either to fly members of the Zambezi Ministries Board to Bulawayo or for the relevant Ministers to fly to Harare to meet the Zambezi Ministries Board.
52. On the 20th July 1993 Messrs Scanlen and Holderness sent a letter by facsimile to Messrs Webb, Low and Barry advising that Mr Smyth had received notification from the Ministry of Home Affairs rejecting his appeal against the refusal of a permanent residence permit. The appeal had been outstanding for many months. The letter further advised that Mr Smyth had been directed to attend at Immigration to make arrangements for his departure. It concluded by stating that the Board of Zambezi Ministries had instructed that in the circumstances they did "not see anything (was) to be gained by meeting with (Webb, Low and Barry's) clients."⁴⁰ On the same day Mr Coltart telephoned Mr Tanser to advise that the Immigrations Department decision had no bearing on the fundamental problem of Mr Smyth's ongoing involvement with young boys. During the conversation it was stressed that the Bulawayo based churches were prepared to fly the Zambezi Ministries Board to Bulawayo together with Reverend Tim Neill and David Vincent (pastor and friend respectively of Mr Smyth).

³⁸ Scanlen and Holderness letter to Messrs Webb, Low and Barry dated 9th July 1993.

³⁹ The document contains extracts from some 181 letters written to Mr Smyth by campers. During the meeting Mr Tanser stressed that the TTB's (the euphemism used to describe the beatings given with table tennis bats) were part of the fun of the camp, a point which consistently comes through the document. For example letter 43 says "I enjoyed the TTB I thought it was quite a laugh"; Letter 44: "I think being in the north wing with you in charge makes camp all the more fun (not to forget the TTB)".

53. On the 21st July 1993 Mr Tanser telephoned Mr Coltart to advise that the Zambezi Ministries Board was not prepared to meet with the Bulawayo Ministers but that they would send a letter explaining their position.⁴¹ Mr Tanser advised that Mr Jamie Coleman, remaining Trustee of the United Kingdom Board, would be travelling to Zimbabwe shortly and that he may be prepared to meet with the Bulawayo Ministers.
54. On the 24th July 1993 Mr Jamie Coleman met with two of the parents who had lodged complaints, Mr Coltart, Reverend Anderson, Rev Spence, Rev Hingley, Rev Pountney and Mr Kluckow at Petra Primary School, Bulawayo. In the course of the meeting Mr Coleman made, inter alia, the following points:
- (i) he admitted that the substance of allegations against Mr Smyth, as contained in the synopsis sent to Messrs Scanlen and Holderness on the 2nd July 1993, was correct and agreed with the Zambezi Ministries Board that whilst the behaviour was odd there was nothing improper about Mr Smyth's conduct;
 - (ii) the beatings and nudity were justified in the context of a weak church; Zambezi Ministries was aimed at portraying Christianity as a rugged, manly religion;
 - (iii) he conceded that what went on in Zimbabwe would not be allowed to happen in the United Kingdom but said that Zimbabwe seemed to have a different attitude towards beatings and pointed out that he had noted that the Zimbabwean courts had only fined accused persons \$600.00 for whipping others; he also said that the beatings complained of by the Ministers and parents would not be viewed in the same serious light by other sections of the Zimbabwean community;
 - (v) he said that the principles contained in Matthew Chapter 18 (in the New Testament), namely that complaints against a christian should be addressed within the church, should be followed and that there should be no threat of court action and that lawyers should not be involved; having been made aware of the desire of the Bulawayo Ministers to meet with the Zambezi Ministries Board he agreed to arrange a meeting between the Zambezi Ministries Board and the Bulawayo ministers.⁴²
55. On the 28th July 1993 Rev Anderson, Rev Spence, Rev Pountney, Rev Hingley, Rev MacKenzie and Mr Kluckow flew to Harare and met with Mr Johnson, Mr Griffiths Malaba, Mr Martin Tracey, Mrs Gill Tracey (all members of the Zambezi Ministries Board), Reverend Tim Neill, Mr David Vincent and Mr Jamie Coleman. At the meeting it was agreed that the allegations levelled against Mr Smyth were not in dispute; what was in dispute was the interpretation of those actions. The Bulawayo Ministers attached the following interpretation to the facts, namely:
- (i) excessive beatings were a manifestation of sexual sadism;
 - (ii) excessive insistence of nudity of the campers was a manifestation of voyeurism; *sexual the engagement show for some other people needs to*
 - (iii) the excessive nudity on the part of Mr Smyth was a manifestation of exhibitionism; *appearing in sexual activities*
 - (iv) these were all "paraphilia" (sexual deviations) and abnormal, or maladaptive, and could have extremely dangerous long term effects on those involved (the boys).
56. The Zambezi Ministries Board disagreed strongly with these interpretations whilst conceding that Mr Smyth did have an unusual ministry style. In conclusion it was agreed by all that it was possible that Mr Smyth had a psychological problem. To this end the Zambezi Ministries Board agreed to discuss and make a decision on the following suggestions with immediate effect:

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The promised letter was never sent to either Messrs Webb, Low and Barry or to any of the Bulawayo Ministers involved.

- (i) for the upcoming Zambezi Ministries camps in August the following restrictions would be enforced:
 - (a) there would be no TTB or beatings of any kind;
 - (b) there would be no nudity at all by campers except for normal showering activities;
 - (c) there would be no nudity at all by Mr Smyth whether showering or in the dorm or in the pool;
 - (d) Mr Smyth would not have access to the dormitory or showers during the camp;
 - (ii) an individual (agreed upon by both Zambezi Ministries and the Bulawayo Ministers) would be present at the camp to ensure the restrictions were complied with;
 - (iii) within 30 days of the date of the meeting Mr Smyth would be required to have a psychological profile/evaluation carried out by two christian psychologists, one chosen by each group; furthermore it was agreed that a synopsis of the concerns and evidence would be given to both psychologists.⁴³
57. On the 30th July 1993 the Bulawayo Ministers became aware of a letter written by Mr Smyth to the parents of campers coming on his forthcoming August camps which were clearly aimed at justifying the nudity and beatings on camp. Relevant extracts from the letter are as follows:
- (i) "(I) try instead to be something of a father figure to the camp, encouraging the younger leaders to care for their campers in the way the best of big brothers should. To this end, we use christian names all round, the younger leaders sleep in the dormitories with their campers, and we all (including myself from time to time) have our showers with the boys".
 - (ii) "(We) must however have good discipline and experience has shown that with so many high spirited boys we need some form of sanction. I never cane the boys, but I do whack them with a table tennis bat when necessary. Such are the opportunities for pranks that I sometimes have to use this fairly liberally to deter high spirited naughtiness and to ensure obedience and reasonable standards of tidiness. Although most of the boys regard TTB (as it is affectionately known) as little more than a joke, I try to keep a balance between making a sufficient deterrent and not allowing it to spoil the happy atmosphere at camp. Very occasionally if the boy offends in a more serious way, I will whack him with a slightly bigger bat which the boys call 'jokari'".
 - (iii) "(T)he last thing at night the dormitory leaders will some times take their group for a short swim in the pool; or just a plunge if it is chilly. Various strict safety rules operate for after dark swims. The boys run down in their towels and skinny dip. Occasionally we have a day scholar who finds this a bit strange, but having done it once he discovers it is all part of the all-boys-together fun of the camp".
58. On the 3rd August 1993 Reverend Anderson telephoned Mr Johnson and Mr Johnson advised Reverend Anderson the following:
- (i) he had read the minutes compiled by Reverend Anderson but suggested some amendments which were agreed to;
 - (ii) the Board had met and fully agreed to the suggestions contained in the minutes;
 - (iii) the Board had met with Mr Smyth on the 1st August 1993; the meeting was very difficult and painful; Mr Smyth was faced with the demands and had strongly reacted against them; he was given time to think through them;

- (iv) "he felt there would be a parting of the ways between the Board and Mr Smyth"; he "was very concerned about the TTB's but was not convinced of the seriousness of Mr Smyth's nudity", "he was in the process of writing a strong letter to Mr Smyth again putting the demands to him" and " the Board was an advisory Board only and thus Mr Smyth could, if he wanted, simply do what he wanted".⁴⁴
59. On the 17th August 1993 Reverend Anderson again telephoned Mr Johnson to find out what response had been received from Mr Smyth. The following was advised to Reverend Anderson:
- (i) the Board was only an advisory Board and it had made strong recommendations to Mr Smyth;
 - (ii) Mr Smyth agreed that the TTB's had got out of hand;
 - (iii) Mr Smyth had stated that even if he was assessed by clinical psychologists he would not be believed or cleared in the eyes of the Bulawayo Ministers (to which Reverend Anderson responded that Bulawayo Ministers would accept the recommendation of the independent psychologist);
 - (iv) Mr Smyth's Minister, Reverend Tim Neill, Board member Martin Tracey and himself had told Mr Smyth that he had nothing to lose by having the assessment done.⁴⁵
60. Having not received a satisfactory response from Mr Johnson, Reverend Anderson wrote to Mr Johnson on the 19th August 1993 asking Zambezi Ministries to put in writing what its stands were on the following issues:
1. corporal punishment at camps;
 2. Mr Smyth's nudity in front of the boys;
 3. enforced nudity of the boys;
 4. Mr Smyth's own contributions to the discussions on masturbation;
 5. Mr Smyth's preparedness to be examined by two clinical psychologists;
 6. the present relationship of the Board and Mr Smyth with particular reference to accountability.
- In the letter it was stressed that the matter was one of extreme urgency and the letter requested that a response be received by the 28th August 1993.
61. During August 1993, between the 10th and 17th August and the 19th and 26th August, Mr Smyth conducted two camps at Ruzawi School. At a meeting on the first night of camp with the camp leaders (boys aged between 17 and 18) Mr Smyth spoke to the leaders in general terms about how to handle situations when one found oneself being attacked. In the course of the talk Mr Smyth made the following points, namely that:
- (i) a group of Bulawayo based Ministers (he did not mention their names) were attacking him personally;
 - (ii) these Ministers did not follow the dictates set out in Matthew Chapter 18 in that they went direct to a lawyer without discussing the matter with him first;

⁴⁴ Minutes of telephone call between Reverend Anderson and Mr Richard Johnson on the 3rd August 1993 recorded by Rev Anderson.

⁴⁵ Minutes of telephone conversation between Rev Anderson and Richard Johnson on the 17th

- (iii) these Bulawayo Ministers had tried to blackmail him and told him that if he did not resign his post as leader of Zambezi Ministries and give up all the assets of the ministry then they would get his work permit taken away;
 - (iv) the Bulawayo Ministers wanted Mr Smyth to give up his assets to them and asked, rhetorically, what the Bulawayo Ministers could possibly want with his assets;
 - (v) all this had happened mainly because of beatings which had taken place involving Christian Brothers College boys during the April camp and that he had met with the Chairman of the Zambezi Ministries Board the previous night and agreed that there would be no beatings and that it would only be used as a last resort.⁴⁶
62. During the same camp, attended by the camp leader (referred to paragraph 61 *supra*) the following occurred:
- (i) a group of leaders asked Mr Smyth what would happen if they took a bakkie (motor-vehicle) without his permission and were told that they would get TTB's. The following day the leaders deliberately took the bakkie knowing that they would be given TTB's and were in fact given TTB's by Mr Smyth (this was apparently done in "fun");
 - (ii) on one other incident a boy was beaten for swearing;
 - (iii) Mr Smyth did not walk around the dormitories in the nude but showered with the boys in the nude.⁴⁷
63. On the 20th September 1993 Mr Johnson wrote to Reverend Anderson in his capacity as Chairman of the "Zambezi Ministries Advisory Board". The letter states, *inter alia*:
- "It is our belief that he is not "sick" or sexually or psychologically disturbed, but is instead a strong, forceful Christian with a deep commitment to converting and disciplining young men, equipping them for life as Christian leaders.
- We also believe that his failure in Britain should not be allowed to negate the many successful years of youth work before and since the Winchester incidents.
- In reply to specific questions in your letter of August 18.
1. Limited corporal punishment is now administered in "last resort" cases, in the company of one or more witnesses, and every incident of TTB is logged, with reasons.
 2. John's nudity in front of boys is rare.
 3. John does not force boys to skinny dip. Leaders frequently encourage a brief swim before lights out, if it is not too cold, and peer pressure to skinny dip may be experienced by some boys.
 4. John is sensitive to the possible embarrassment of any boy on the subject of masturbation, but believes it is a matter which should be frankly but carefully discussed.
 5. We cannot force John to be examined by one or more Christian psychologists. We have recommended this course of action, to clear his name. (However, we have met with a psychologist and, separately, an eminent Christian psychiatrist, the latter in Johannesburg, and their conclusions, based on a full disclosure of the facts, and personal discussions, encourage me in the position of the Board and myself).

⁴⁶ Statement recorded from a camp leader by Mr Coltart on the 10th October 1993. We are not prepared to give any further details regarding the boy in question as this was an undertaking given to the boy.

⁴⁷ Statement recorded from camp leader on the 10th October 1993

6. We are an advisory board, with power to dismiss John. The assets of Zambezi Ministries are vested in the Board.

To sum up: we continue to support John in his work with young men".⁴⁸

64. At the beginning of October 1993 at the Heads of independent schools meeting held in Nyanga Mr Smyth's lawyer, Mr T Tanser, met with Reverend Pountney and made the following observations, namely that:
- (i) both he and the Zambezi Ministries Board were absolutely convinced that Mr Smyth was not sexually or psychologically disturbed and that his ministry should continue;
 - (ii) the allegations against Mr Smyth were a personal vendetta perpetrated by individual ministers;
 - (iii) the Bulawayo Ministers should, in the light of this, take whatever course of action they saw fit;
 - (iv) Mr Smyth had now been granted permanent residence status by the Department of Immigration and that he would no longer be leaving Zimbabwe as envisaged in July 1993.
65. Previously on the 9th September 1993 Messrs Webb, Low and Barry had written to Mrs Margaret Henning, a consultant clinical psychologist, enclosing the Ruston report, the statements of the young British men dated the 7th July 1993 and 8th July 1993 (see footnotes 5 and 6 *supra*), copies of letters written by parents dated the 13th July 1993 and the 19th July 1993 (see footnotes 29 and 27 *supra*), the synopsis of incidents which occurred during Mr Smyth's April 1993 camp, the document prepared by Mr Smyth entitled "extracts from unsolicited letters received from campers and parents after Ruzawi camps", and a copy of Mr Smyth's letters to parents of prospective campers dated July 1993 (see paragraph 57 *supra*). Mrs Henning was advised that the Zambezi Ministries Board were adamant that there was no connection between what was happening in Zimbabwe and what happened in the United Kingdom. Mrs Henning was asked to give her comments and advice. On the 5th October 1993 Messrs Webb, Low and Barry received a report from Margaret Henning (which is annexed hereto marked Annexure 'B'). Her final recommendation is as follows:

" I recommend strongly, therefore, that Mr Smyth should immediately desist from work with young people. Although the current abuse is more subtle than that which occurred previously in England it is potentially equally damaging, especially as a younger age - group of victims is involved".

66. On the 12th October 1993, Dr T Brown compiled a report on the basis of the same material given to Margaret Henning and her report.⁴⁹ In his report⁵⁰ Dr Brown, *inter alia*, states:
- (i) "Like Margaret Henning, whose report I have seen, these comments are prepared on the third party information supplied. I have had no opportunity to interview John Smyth. I have never met John Smyth. On the basis of these documents, my conclusion fully endorse those findings of Margaret Henning. Her report is a clear statement of the psychological implications of the behaviour and practices of John Smyth".
 - (ii) "There is only one safe course of action. It is to take steps to end any involvement (John Smyth) may have with young people".
 - (iii) "My recommendations are that:
 - (a) John Smyth should cease from all work with young people forthwith.
 - (b) The children and young people who have come under his influence should be monitored to assess any detrimental developments in their behaviour.
 - (c) The schools where his ministry has been in operation should watch closely for any signs of changes in behaviour patterns amongst the boys".
67. In a meeting held in Bulawayo on the 13th October 1993 attended by Dr Brown and Mr Coltart of Messrs Webb, Low and Barry, Dr Brown was asked to comment on paragraph 5 of Mr Johnson's letter referred to in paragraph 63 *supra*. Although the paragraph does not actually say so it implies that a psychologist and a psychiatrist have advised that there is nothing deviant regarding Mr Smyth's conduct and no danger to young men. Dr Brown expressed surprise that a psychologist and a psychiatrist could come to that conclusion if full disclosure of all the abovementioned facts have been made known to them.⁵¹

⁴⁹ MA (Cantab); BSC (Psy); MSC (ClinPsy); BD; Mth; Phd. Dr Brown happened to be visiting Bulawayo and the opportunity was taken to let him have sight of the material in our possession to obtain a second opinion. Dr Brown is an advisor to the Baptist Union of Great Britain for Ministers and their families. He is a practising psychotherapist and a Director of the Green Pastures Centre of Healing. He is an Executive member of the Churches Counsel for help and healing in England and is Warden Designate of the Order of St Lukes in the United Kingdom. He advises all these bodies of matters concerning both victims of abuse and those responsible for abuse. Report on written material re: John Smyth/Zambezi Ministries by Dr T Brown dated 12th October 1993.

⁵⁰ Report on written material re: John Smyth / Zambezi Ministries by Dr T Brown dated 12th October 1993.

⁵¹ Minutes of meeting held at Messrs Webb, Low and Barry on the 13th October 1993 recorded by Mr Coltart. The following should be noted regarding Mr Johnson's letter:

- (i) Mr Smyth refused to be examined by a psychologist.
- (ii) It seems from the letters as if Board members and not Mr Smyth met with the psychologist and psychiatrist.
- (iii) The letter uses the phrase "based on a full disclosure of the facts", in other words not the various documents which have been forwarded to the Board and it is a matter of speculation as to what facts have been placed before the psychologist and psychiatrist.

C. CONCLUSION

1. The Christian ministers involved in trying to address the problem had hoped that the Zambezi Ministries Advisory Board would listen and act on their concerns so that:
 - (i) John Smyth would be encouraged to seek medical treatment and counselling so that he and his family could be protected as much as possible in the circumstances;
 - (ii) the ministry conducted by Zambezi Ministries could continue with another person at the helm thus fostering what is clearly a valuable and effective ministry in Zimbabwe;
 - (iii) minimal disruption could be caused to the schools and the young boys and men involved with Zambezi Ministries. The reason the ministers and parents sought legal advice at the very beginning and the reason they approached Mr Smyth direct was because they had been advised by others that the Zambezi Ministries Advisory Board was subordinate to Mr Smyth and entirely influenced by him. Following the initial meetings with Mr Smyth his request that the Minister deal with the Board has been honoured. Sadly the original advice given by others has proved to be correct, namely: the Zambezi Ministries Advisory Board either cannot or will not understand the seriousness of this matter.

2. On a number of occasions the Zambezi Ministries Advisory Board members have defended their actions because John Smyth has conducted a valuable and effective ministry. In their first justification given through their legal practitioners, Scanlen and Holderness, on the 9th July 1993 they refer to the synopsis of relevant extracts from nearly 200 unsolicited letters as proof of the success of the ministry and justification that no action should be taken. Ironically it is that very synopsis which has been the focus of concern in Margaret Henning's report.⁵² In Mr Johnson's final letter to Reverend Anderson on the 20th September 1993 he says: "We believe that (Mr Smyth) has a most valuable and effective ministry with young men. The fruits are clearly evident, in the large number of new school boys who have come into a living faith in Christ, and have retained a vigour of their faith into their University or early working days. At the last camp, there were 40 leaders - all brought to Christ through Mr Smyth and Zambezi Ministries". No-one disputes the effectiveness of Mr Smyth's ministry. However two important points are missed:
 - (i) In John Thorn's book "The Road to Winchester" the following is written: "The numbers in Christian Forum grew. In the mid-70's it could claim about 80 attending members. In a way, they seemed a kind of back-bone of virtue in the place. They seldom smoked or drank. They were above suspicion of any involvement in drugs. Many were people of great influence in the school, and it seemed a good influence. How could a school which claimed to be Christian refuse to at least tolerate a group who wished to take the commands of Christ literally and not just give to him the lip-service which seemed enough for the ecclesiastical establishment..... Christian Forum was shattered. It kept going for a few more years, its numbers steadily declining, hampered by the fact that two of its surviving leaders found it difficult, for reasons which escaped me, to speak to one another or pray together. About a year ago, the remnant decided it was time to disband. Christian Forum is no more".⁵³

From the above we can assume that Christian Forum was a wonderfully successful ministry conducted by Mr Smyth. However in the midst of that ministry there were serious goings on which have seemingly not only affected the faith of many of the boys who were in that ministry but also which have had serious long term psychological effects on the boys. In the end what seemed a wonderful ministry came to naught.

⁵² See page 4 of Margaret Henning's report annexed hereto marked Annexure 'B'.

- (ii) The potential psychological damage to the boys, as disclosed by Mr Smyth's synopsis and Margaret Henning's report, are extremely serious and cannot be ignored. The fact that the majority of the boys on camp may be unaffected and may not suffer psychological damage is irrelevant; if there is a reasonably held belief that some of the boys may suffer psychological damage then, no matter how successful Mr Smyth is, he should not be allowed to continue; the end cannot justify the means when the means are so dangerous.

From recent statements made by Mr Smyth to his camp leaders (see paragraph 61 *supra*) and people close to him (see paragraph 64 *supra*) it would appear that a misinformation campaign has been started to portray the Bulawayo Ministers as men who are out to blackmail Mr Smyth, who are conducting a personal vendetta against him and who are keen to take over his assets. Not only are these allegations patently false but anyone believing them ignores the following:

- (a) the Bulawayo Ministers have the support of parents of boys who have been abused, members of Mr Smyth's family, former members of Zambezi Ministries Trust in the United Kingdom and eminent Christian leaders in the United Kingdom and Zimbabwe;
- (b) this is not the first time in the last few years that concerned individuals have attempted to deal with the situation;
- (c) the Bulawayo Ministers involved have every reason to want to support Zambezi Ministries (and its camping ministry), as it is entirely compatible with their own ministries and not in any way in competition with their ministries. However because of the allegations which have been levelled against the Ministers by Mr Smyth in particular and, seemingly, those close to him, it is necessary to show that the concerns expressed in this document are shared by the wider Church in Bulawayo and for that reason the contents of this document are endorsed by the leadership of the below mentioned churches and parachurch organisation.

3. We, the undersigned churches and parachurch organisation accordingly make the following recommendations:

- (i) Mr John Smyth should cease from all work with young people forthwith.
- (ii) The Zambezi Ministries Advisory Board should encourage Mr Smyth to have medical or Christian pastoral counselling.
- (iii) The Zambezi Ministries Advisory Board should invite Mr Smyth to accept a continuing pastoral oversight by a local senior christian who is fully appraised of the matters set out in this document.
- (iv) The children and young people who have come under Mr Smyth's influence during the last few years should be monitored to assess any detrimental developments in their behaviour.
- (v) The schools where Mr Smyth's ministry has been in operation should watch closely for any signs of changes in behaviour patterns amongst the boys.
- (vi) Headmasters should stop Mr Smyth from coming to their schools and should terminate contact with Mr Smyth.

DATED AT BULAWAYO THIS 19TH DAY OF OCTOBER 1993.

Signed on the original

For and on behalf of the Eldership of the
Baptist Church
George Silundika Street
BULAWAYO

Signed on the original

For and on behalf of the Eldership of Bulawayo
Christian Centre
6 Apsley Crescent
Bradfield
BULAWAYO

Signed on the original

For and on behalf of the City Presbyterian
Church
Jason Moyo Street
BULAWAYO

Signed on the original

For and on behalf of Youth for Christ
(Zimbabwe)

NOTE:

The originals of this document and the other documents referred to in the footnotes of this document are held by Messrs Webb, Low and Barry and are available for inspection by Headmasters, parents and Ministers on request.