Twitter Thread by Holly Cairns TD

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I asked the Taoiseach to ensure that the coroner carries out its duty in respect to the mass infant and child deaths in mother and baby homes■.

It is the duty of a coroner to hold an inquest when a body is found in their district. See here: ■■ https://t.co/jQmq6ex1GK



The Government Action Plan■published in response to the report makes no mention of inquests or accountability and simply does not reflect the magnitude of the crimes committed. In fact, it seems like a blatant attempt to avoid these very issues.

■■ https://t.co/En5DMKBxfA

We need to make sure survivors get justice.

If you agree, I am asking you to email your TDs, the Taoiseach & the Min for Children to tell them there needs to be an

inquest into the deaths, as well as redress, access to data, a commission for the disappeared and further research.

If you need some help getting started, you'll find a draft email template here: ■https://t.co/h5v4LY3mkr

I recommend reading the joint statement from Adoption Rights Alliance, Justice for Magdalene laundries and the Clann Project: ■■ https://t.co/0dijRv26up

I have also put together a brief Q+A below on what has happened and will happen next in terms of the Report of the Commission of Investigation into Mother and Baby Homes■■■.

Q. Where can I read a copy of the report for myself?

A. Right here: https://t.co/teNIYFIgAs

Q. What are the failings and shortcomings of the Mother & Baby Commission Report?

A. There are many.

Since its publication, the report has been broadly rejected by survivors, advocacy groups, human rights lawyers & the general public.

Some of the main issues identified:

This is a good article from @Elaine_Loughlin that touches on this issue ■■ https://t.co/6NE2Xzsres

1. There appears to be a concerted attempt throughout the report to shift blame from state and church to society at large.

The opening page alone created a narrative that appears designed to abdicate responsibility to "society", therefore denying survivors the justice they deserve.

"Women who gave birth outside marriage were subject to particularly harsh treatment. Responsibility... rests mainly with the fathers of their children and their own immediate families. It was supported by, contributed to, and condoned by, the institutions of the State and the Churches. However, it must be acknowledged that the institutions under investigation provided a refuge — a harsh refuge in some cases — when the families provided no refuge at all."

2. The report contradicts the survivors' lived experiences.

This is an excellent article written by @CaelainnH, author of Republic of Shame■■ https://t.co/y8eUATfzN4

I recommend taking a few minutes to read this article by Legal academic @maireadenright, it goes into great detail about the report's failings and shortcomings and it is so, so important that this is recognised: ■ https://t.co/0dijRv26up

3. There is a bizarre failure to acknowledge the reality of the crimes committed in the language used.

For example, the report frequently refers to the "women" who gave birth in these institutions. Yet we know that at least 11% were children aged 12-18. The reference to women implies that a child had the same capacity to consent as an adult. They were children.

More here by @aoifegracemoore ■■ https://t.co/TA8uvyRS8Z

4. The needs and rights of survivors were not centred in the creation or publication of the report.

This was all too clear in the way survivors were treated when the report was published.

Survivors did not receive the report before everyone else despite this being stated as fact in a government press release and reported widely by the media.

Not one survivor had a physical copy of the report on the day it was released. Instead, after certain sections were leaked to some media outlets, survivors were invited to a webinar where they were told of the report's findings (they were on mute and no questions were answered), and directed to a link where they could download the 3,000 page report.

Q. Why do these failings and shortcomings matter?

A. They matter because unfortunately this report and its flawed findings will colour what happens next.

Q. What's happening next?

A. In the coming year there will be legislative debates on:

-Rights of access to birth information and institutional records

-Legislation on the inquest, exhumation and reburial and

-Financial redress and its relationship to access to justice, particularly where liability rests with corporate and religious entities.

Advocates are working to ensure that these actions are not tied to the Commission's flawed findings. It will be difficult, however, to undo the harm already wrought by this Report. And that needs to be addressed too.

Q. Why haven't Government responded to the clear flaws in the report?

A. I don't have an answer for this. It feels like they're hoping it will go away & disappear back under the carpet. This happened after the McAleese and Ryan Report and others. We cannot let this happen again.

Q. What needs to happen next?

A. We all need to make sure this doesn't fall out of the headlines. We are calling for an inquest (amongst other things) into the staggering numbers of infant deaths at the mother and baby homes.

Q. How likely is that to happen?

A. It can happen if enough public pressure is put on the government to do it.

Q. What can I do to help?

A. You retweet this and email your TDs, the Taoiseach and the Minister for Children to them you support this call for an inquest as well as urgent action in the areas of redress, access to data, a commission for the disappeared and further research.

We have put together a draft email template here ■■ https://t.co/h5v4LY3mkr to help get you started.

And you can find your local TD’s contact information here: ■■ ■ https://t.co/1AUouJFOMn