Twitter Thread by aoife moore.



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The first reaction to the Mother and Baby Homes report from the Coalition of Survivors is: "Cop out“.
"What occurred was but an aspect of the newly established State which was profoundly anti women both in its laws and culture and out of which emerged the Mother and Baby Homes."

Here is an overview of the 3,000 word report. Thousands of children died, in some years at a rate of 40%, with no concern from state or society. It details graphic and sustained mental and physical abuse of children and pregnant women. https://t.co/cASY7PtTzk

Resident F (14) was pregnant and taken to Castlepollard: "I was beaten by the nuns with a stick.
"You got beaten by sticks or by their hands, across your face, your head, arms, legs or torso." She said that nuns made her unblock toilets with her bare hands.

Resident (A) was raped by her boyfriend and became pregnant at 18, she told the commission she saw "about ten" deceased babies being sent for burial in what appeared to be shoeboxes.

I'm not going to keep pasting the testimony as it's upsetting for people who might choose not to read it for whatever reason. It's harrowing. I had to get up and walk away twice when reading it.

Minister Roderic O’Gorman: “The report makes clear that for decades, Ireland had a stifling, oppressive and brutally misogynistic culture, where a pervasive stigmatisation of unmarried mothers and their children robbed those individuals of their agency and sometimes their future.

“Publication of the Commission’s report is an expression of truth. For decades, Irish society was defined by its silence, and, in that, its complicity in what was done to some of our most vulnerable citizens."

The most important voices are the women themselves, so please try and read as much of what they have to say as possible: https://t.co/LnSlzsvqtC

Taoiseach: I met with survivors online today, the report describes dark and difficult and shameful chapter of recent Irish history. With real and lasting consequences.

MM: It makes harrowing reading and I appreciate the depth of bravery of survivors. A window into a deeply misogynistic society with serious discrimination against women.

MM: We did this to ourselves. We had a warped attitude to sexuality and intimacy. We embraved judgementalism and perverse moral control and the absence of basic kindness. All of society was complicit in it.

MM; Priests, nuns, doctors loomed large. Young mothers ended up in homes because of oppressive societal pressure. They should not have been there. Significant failures of state and society.

MM: I want to acknowledge the work of Catherine Corless whose work led to the establishment of this commission. Its production is testament of survivors and their advocates.

RodericOG: Institutions were places of callousness, cruelty and shame. This culture was ruthlessly enforced by prevailing attitudes in church, state and society, depriving women of their agency through shame.

RG: It is difficult to concieve of the scale of the heartbreak and the number of children and babies who died. The state failed to protect their most vulnerable citizens.

Second reaction email from survivors group. First Mothers call the report a "whitewash" which absolves the state and church of wrongdoing.

Anne Rabbitte emotionally saying she is "battling deep anger" to point fingers. "High on the list of accountability is religious organizations, the families, and as a mother, I wonder what sort of pressure I would have to be under to turn my back on my children?"

Reading witness stories: One child reported being whipped until she bled. Sexually abused regularly by another brother. Nun called her baby "a piglet". Another beaten in every placement, told his mother was a "whore".

"A staggering number of young girls didn't even know they'd had sex, consented to nothing, abuse, beatings or giving their baby away."

Q&A: MM says apology will go ahead tomorrow despite some requests to delay. Says apology is a catalyst for redress, want to move on reccomendations as soon as possible.

Taoiseach points out despite a staggering number of young girls becoming pregnant, no one referred this to Gardai, despite clear evidence of statutory rape.

ROG: On comments from survivors that they've been thrown under the bus says: "It's important we read the document as a whole."

MM:The church should examine the report comprehensively and apologize. Mothers were treated in a shocking way. We must draw distinction between Christianity and religion. The state did not follow through. The state had direct responsibility, no one seemed to comment on anything.

MM says it was not his office who leaked the report. MM says he commented on the issue itself and confirmed he'd be making state apology.

New: The Mother and Baby Homes report has been sent to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Taoiseach says it is "partisan" to ask if he would apologise on behalf of his own party who were in government for the majority of the time that these homes operated. Adds no one in politics raised any real concern.

The webinar with survivors and the Taoiseach was not "interactive" so there was no back and forth. Ministers took four or five questions submitted by email.

On burial sites being excavated: O'Gorman says a lot will depend on engagement with survivors from sites. There are two where questions remain - Bessborough and Sean Ross.

ROG: It's clear responsibility was widely shared. I don't see how you could read the report without seeing blame with the state and religious organisations.

That's it from the government press centre. Full copy of the press conference will be up soon, but special mention to Anne Rabbitte, who spoke at length about the abuse and testimony of survivors, whose voice was otherwise lost and accurately noted the anger everyone is feeling.

“We did this to ourselves. We treated women exceptionally badly. We treated children exceptionally badly. We had a completely warped attitude to sexuality and intimacy and young mothers and their sons and daughters were forced to pay the price for that.” https://t.co/2lvvFfIyRi