



I was abused: Ex-ward

Says guardian, CCAS staffer molesters

By IAN MCDOUGALL, COURTS BUREAU - Tue, March 21, 2006

A former ward with Catholic Children's Aid Society was sexually abused first by his guardian and then by his social worker, court heard yesterday.

Paul Blackwell, 64, is facing 22 charges allegedly involving five victims over 20 years, assistant Crown attorney Cara Sweeny said as the trial began.

The first witness, now 43, was a CCAS ward in 1977 when he was placed with Blackwell and at first things seemed fine, the jury was told.

"It was one of the first times in his life he felt loved," Sweeny said.

But when the man took the stand, he described a recurring pattern of abuse that began with a trip to Florida -- he was 14 at the time -- when the pair shared a bed.

'TOUCHING MY GROIN'

"Paul had started fondling me," said the man, whose name is protected by a publication ban. "He was touching my groin ... I was a little scared ... I probably asked him to stop. I can't remember if he stopped at that time."

The abuse continued into the man's 16th year, when he was asked by a social worker if Blackwell was abusing him. He said there was nothing going on.

The worker invited him to stay over and also

sexually abused him, he said.

"There was no one I could talk to. They were both molesting me," the man said.

He said Blackwell's sexual advances, which had included oral sex and touching, gradually lessened after he turned 15.

EMBARRASSMENT

In the fall of 2004, he recalled seeing a police story on the TV news announcing Blackwell's arrest and asking that witnesses come forward.

He had thought before about going to the police, but the fear of embarrassment always kept him from going ahead.

Still angry about the treatment he suffered from his social worker, he contacted a lawyer about Catholic Children's Aid.

"I told him I was molested as a child, and I wanted to hold CCAS responsible for it," he said, adding the lawyer said he should go to the police.

"I was a little reluctant," he said. "I just didn't want to be in a position to have to tell somebody."

Blackwell is also accused of slipping one of his victims sleeping pills in milk, Sweeny said in her opening address.