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### Paedophile ring in Cornwall (Transcript)

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**CBC:** Turning now to a special investigation by CBC National Radio News. Tonight on the World at Six we continue with 'Breach of Trust' the story of how a group of powerful people sexually preyed on generations of young boys in Cornwall, Ontario. Our investigation has found at least 50 people who say they were sexually abused by at least 20 men. The list includes men from the city's religious, professional and business establishments. We advise listeners the report contains sexually explicit language. It has taken four separate police investigations to try to uncover activities that were swept under the rug by people in authority in the community. But as Maureen Brosnan reports the roots of abuse run deeper than anyone suspected.

**REPORTER:** This is Cornwall, Ontario on the banks of the St. Lawrence River. An hour from Montreal an hour from Ottawa. One of the oldest cities in Ontario. It's a quite little traditional mill town. Forty-seven-thousand people live here, most of them blue collar workers with religious roots that run deep. Three out four people here call themselves Catholic. But behind the quiet veneer of respectability lies a dark secret.

**RON LARUE (victim):** It's huge, it's big, it's been going on. I can't say it's been going on since over 50 years but I know it's been going since I was little, since I was eight or nine years old. It was there.

**CBC:** Ron Larue knows all about the secret he was part of it. As a school boy he says he found out what it felt like to be molested. First by a priest who was more interested in his body than his confession.

**LARUE:** Touch, he liked touching us. He liked to make you feel comfortable. And you're a scared kid, you don't say nothing at first. You're looking at a priest, you think you're looking at God. And then you think about it when you get home. And you say, all he's touching you, is it alright? Can't be, doesn't seem right.

**REPORTER:** LaRue got caught up in the cycle. He grew up to become part of what he calls the clan of paedophiles in Cornwall. Men who preyed on young boys. There was one thing all clan members had in common - the Church. Many had attended Catholic school together. Some had gone into the seminary hoping to become priests. They went on to prominence and power and many of them are active members in their local parishes and in groups, such as the Knights of Columbus. LaRue says they met regularly, sometimes daily, for coffee and lunch. They shared stories.

**LARUE:** And the world gets around from these guys, these paedophiles. Little guys, you know I know him. We can get him, we can get him he's no problem. I thought he won't even tell anybody.

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**REPORTER:** According to LaRue the ring included priests, lawyers, teachers, police officers, probation officers. They often preyed on the vulnerable, young boys from broken homes or those who got in trouble with the law. Ted Carney is now in his 40s. He says he was abused by three members of the group, including a probation officer who coerced him into sex.

**TED CARNEY:** He started molesting me about two weeks after my second appearance in probation. And then he just me sit near him and then there was petting and hugging and I felt uncomfortable. And when I tried to pull away he'd say you have to cooperate and things like that, you know.

**REPORTER:** Carney says he went a long with it. He talks of parties at the probation officer's house. There was pot, booze and sex and lots of young boys.

**CARNEY:** I remember going to a fucking cottage and there was a bunch of young guys, probation guys, and there was drugs there and people were smoking pot and he was okay. And he went into a room with a young boy, a guy about maybe 14.

**REPORTER:** Over the years some of the abusers became more violent. This young man says he was tied up and subjected to bestiality and torture at the hands of a family friend.

**UNIDENTIFIED:** It got worse and worse because the more things went on, it was unbelievable. I don't know how graphic you actually want me to be or not. We were afraid, very afraid of retaliating. Punishment was taking a steak knife out of the drawer and hitting us.

**REPORTER:** For years there were rumours on the streets. But it wasn't until six years ago that the first hints of all this came out. That's when the Roman Catholic Church struck a deal with a young man who claimed he'd been abused by a parish priest. Documents show the local bishop agreed to an arrangement. The Church paid the man \$32,000. In exchange the man would not press charges. As a result the Crown and police decided to drop it. But news of the agreement leaked out. Another police force came in to take a second look at the sex abuse allegations and the way they'd been handled. In total there have been four police investigations. Three suspects have committed suicide. So did one victim, others have tried. One priest was finally charged then a teacher. But the stories kept coming. Stories about wild parties, pictures and videos of young boys. Finally in the fall of 1997 the Ontario Provincial Police set up Project Truth.

**LARRY EDGAR (OPP):** The mandate was to investigate historical sexual abuse in the Cornwall area...

**REPORTER:** Larry Edgar heads the Criminal Investigations Branch of the OPP. He says so far Project Truth has arrested 12 people and laid close to 80 charges. Some incidents date back 30 years. Others are as recent as last December. Some of the people who have come forward say they were abused by as many as five men. And police admit many of the accused know each other and travelled in the same circles. But they insist there is no ring, no common thread linking the cases. Police say gathering evidence for this case is not easy.

**EDGAR:** Memories fade, people are difficult to locate, documentation is non-existent. There's also reluctance of victims to disclose that they've been sexually abused.

**REPORTER:** But an investigation by CBC Radio News reveals there are photos, old court records,

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church records and other documents. Yet Project Truth has never asked for any search warrants to obtain them. In some cases interviews with those involved produced new leads that were never followed up. And as each new person comes forward with a story of abuse it opens up a new door.

**LARUE:** If I didn't come out and say anything, the other kids, they wouldn't have said anything. They would have left it alone.

**REPORTER:** Most of these people say they just want the men who abused them punished.

**UNIDENTIFIED:** I want it stopped. I want to see them get what's coming to them. You know, I think they definitely deserve to be punished for it, definitely.

**REPORTER:** Police say they expect to wrap up their investigation in the next two months. They say they have no plans to lay further charges. But new people have come forward as recently as two weeks ago to tell their stories of abuse. And for them the investigation is a long way from over. Maureen Brosnan, CBC News, Cornwall Ontario.

(National)