

Summary of meeting with Mr David Gould in my office Thursday, 16th October, 1997 at 3.30 p.m.

David arrived promptly. He began by affirming the process that had been announced by me with regard to an Inquiry into sexual offences by clergy. He expressed the hope that the rest of the church in Australia would take note of it and do something similar as he felt the problem was right through the church.

I explained what we were trying to do and referred to the Terms of Reference as well as to our commitment to assist those who were hurting for whatever reason.

David expressed his concern that in the past the church was only concerned for itself or for the reputation of its clergy. He was quite concerned lest anything should be "swept under the carpet". My emphasis was upon the objectivity and independence of the Inquiry as I re-emphasised that the calibre of the members of the Inquiry and their independence from the church as well as their public standing would be vital factors.

He expressed the view that he did not want to talk about the Diocesan Sexual Harassment Response Group process which he admitted he was already into. I confirmed that I wanted to respect the independence of that process and be open to its recommendations and would not do anything which might compromise it in any way.

He also expressed a concern that I might see him in some way as an enemy of the church. This gave me the opportunity to speak about his relationship to God and his own spiritual journey and how he would need to seek help as I perceived that he himself was looking for a re-establishment of the faith and trust that he once had in the life of the church. He agreed with this and said that he was already in close contact with one Anglican priest whom he felt was helping him considerably.

David spoke about the need for the church to be able to set an example and perhaps to be of help to the whole of society, for he felt that sexual abuse and sexual offences were disturbingly a feature of life and he did not now why it was so.

He said he had nine questions to ask of me and had brought notes to which he referred. I think I only managed to record and recall seven of them. They are as follows:

1. How would the results of the Inquiry be released and publicised? Would it all be there except for the removal of the names of people who might be accused?

My answer was that we had not prescribed a method of reporting and that the Inquiry would have access to legal advice, but that I regarded it as essential to its integrity that everything would be in the open unless there was the need to respect the request of people who came forward or there were legal reasons why something could not be publicised.

2. What will be the composition of the Inquiry?

I talked in general about the need for there to be both men and women, a Clinical Psychologist, access to appropriate legal advice, and the like. He made the suggestion that it might be good for a "survivor" to be part of the panel.

3. He enquired about the relationship of the Inquiry to the Police.

I said that the wishes of people coming forward would be respected but that the Inquiry would co-operate with the Police as fully as possible. I indicated that there was close liaison taking place with the Police.

4. He asked about clergy who had been here and who might be accused and who are now interstate, or clergy who might be accused of something which they did interstate and they are now serving here. How would the Inquiry deal with these things?

I said I did not know how they would deal with them but, whatever the terms of the Inquiry indicated, that we wanted people to come forward and tell their story. We would respond then to the recommendations made by the Inquiry no matter where the offence occurred or where the priest was now living. He realised the limitations for the church's jurisdiction as well as for Police jurisdiction.

5. He was very concerned about what he called the "cancellation" of *Market Place*.

I explained that in fact the contract with them was running out. But he had a conversation with the Editor of *Market Place* and asked if we could make sure our November edition of *Tasmanian Anglican* is included with *Market Place*. He said that it was important that his story should be as widely heard as possible and it looked a little bit as though it was being covered up. In any case *Market Place* would be distributing many copies in Tasmania to make sure it was seen. I responded by indicating that it was a contractual matter that had long been in place and I felt it would be difficult to alter it, that we were in fact already in the process of going to a different publisher. The article had been delayed a month after there was some discussion between the Editor of *Market Place* and our own journalists here.

6. He posed the question as to whether the church is competent to judge the material collected by the Inquiry. In this he alluded to the fact that it may be that Bishops or Assistant Bishops or others in positions of leadership in the church will be revealed to have known some matters which they have not dealt with except by moving people around to different positions.

I agreed that the church was not competent to judge the material itself but would be dependent upon the Inquiry and the recommendations it made and that we were committed to seeing those processes through.

7. David referred to "counselling" which is mentioned in the Terms of Reference for the Inquiry. As I knew he was receiving counselling why had I not offered to pay

for it? I mentioned the development in our thinking as we had responded to the issue, and that there needed to be an objective assessment made with recommendations either from the Inquiry or the D.S.H.R.G. This ensured that the action was not just "up to me".

That to the best of my memory is the course of the questions which he asked. I think there were several others, but I did not make notes of them at the time.

He expressed disappointment that the church in announcing the Inquiry had not given him advance notice of the matter.

He indicated that he knew the things that were happening in Burnie including access to somebody on the Parish Council with whom he discussed things after my meeting with them last Monday. He also said that he knew that the Reverend Susanne Chambers was going to make an announcement in church next Sunday. He indicated strong criticism of the fact that he alleged that they, the Reverend Jonathan and the Reverend Susanne Chambers, had been appointed to Burnie without knowing fully the background. I declined to engage on matters concerning my clergy.

He also made the observation that he was amazed how many people knew about the people who had offended against him. There seemed to be many rumours about these people that he had named and he was amazed that in fact these matters were not known officially. In the course of this he mentioned the Reverend Canon REDACTE REDAC as being the Rector of REDACT whom Lou Daniels had warned him about - "don't go down to his shack because he only wants one thing!". I said this was the first time I had heard mention of the name of REDACTED (REDACTED is living in retirement in the southern part of Tasmania).

I asked if there was anything else which he wanted to tell me and he said "no". He did not raise the question of money or compensation and I felt it prudent not to raise it myself.

This report was dictated on the afternoon of Thursday, 16th October, 1997 about an hour and a half after the completion of the interview.

Additional Note: Clearly my memory is at fault here as recourse to records shows that David had in fact named REDACTED at an earlier interview.

*H. Oliver
21/10/97.*