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Don Ower

From: "Don Owers" <REDACTED>
 To: REDACTED >
 Cc: "Peter Casson" <REDACTED>; "Peter Stuart" <REDACTED>; "Bob George" <REDACTED>; <bdavis@REDACTED>
 Sent: Wednesday, 10 July 2002 11:05
 Subject: sexual abuse - responses

John,

I have been waiting in vain, since our conversation last Friday, for some communication regarding the sexual abuse issues I raised at last month's DC meeting.

I think it would have been very helpful as well as courteous if I had been invited to have some input into whatever is to be proposed. I may have also been able to persuade one of the survivor's of Brandenburg's abuse to speak to a select group and let them know firsthand of how they want the church to act.

I repeat that the proposal foreshadowed in the DC papers, to form a group to discuss or re-formulate policy is not, in itself, acceptable to me. The Archbishop and other key people in the Diocese have known for at least three years of the probable extent of Brandenburg's abuse and nothing has been done to alert victims or their families. The DRG's response that nothing can/should be done is unfortunately typical of the church's response - a response which has generally put carefulness on behalf of the good name or finances of the church above the duty of care we owe to survivors and their families - both of whom I know from local experience can go through hell. Their suffering is extended and deepened by the church's de facto policy of keeping silent about its knowledge of sexual abuse. They feel betrayed and isolated.

*expressed in a
DRG letter to Diocesan
Council July 2002.*

I need to say very clearly to you that I am no longer prepared to be an accessory to this policy.

I will move tonight that:

This Council resolves that the Church's knowledge of the abuse carried out by Robert Brandenburg be communicated, with an apology, clearly and unambiguously to the community in Adelaide within fourteen days and that survivors of this or other abuse related to the Anglican Church in this Diocese be encouraged to contact designated persons* in order that appropriate pastoral responses may be offered.

*To be specified. I no longer have confidence that the contact person or the DRG can fulfill this role.

Could you please fax me a copy of the DRG's response.

Sincerely,

Don Owers
 St George's Anglican Church
 South Australia
<http://www.anglican-magill.asn.au>

10/07/02