

MEMO

To: The Registrar, Anne Hywood
From: Archbishop Jeffrey
Date: 8/12/2005
Topic: Meeting with Mark King Wednesday 8/12/2005

On Wednesday 7 December 2005 I again meet with Mr Mark King. Mr Geoff Barber was with me. The Rev. Andrew King again accompanied Mr Mark King.

The primary conversation was relating to two key issues

1. Mark's comments following a letter written from myself to him following our previous meeting
2. A response from myself and a discussion relating to the 5 point proposal for an "ethical settlement" as previously proposed by Mark

The letter

The meeting commenced with clarification about communication methods. I clarified that I had committed to respond to Mark and had done so through the letter. Mark was of the view that he wanted to meet again, hence the current meeting which was subsequently arranged. Mark raised issues of the tone of the letter and sort to develop a more personal response. He provided as an example the use of the opening address of "Mr King"

5 point proposal

Responsibility

After some discussion Mark sought clarification about the accepting of responsibility for victims of abuse. I said to Mark that I believed that the Church had a responsibility to victims of abuse. However I challenged his notion of systemic cover up and pointed to the complexity for those at the time seeing the extent of abuse occurring.

Testing of claimants

Mark said he believed that victims should only be "discriminated" between on the basis of assessed damages and that the damages should be acknowledged as legitimate. I said that nevertheless, the Church needed to have the capacity to reasonably test claims. After a period of discussion he acknowledged this, but he did question the need to have further tests on claimants who already had several independent reports.

Legal costs

The cost of legal support for claimants was raised. During the meeting I indicated that in my thinking the funding of abuse claims and the funding of claimants legal costs were separate and that I was prepared to consider both.

Support to Claimants -Testing claims in court

I gave an undertaking that I would consider financial support for victims of abuse whose situation meant they were in financial difficulties. This would not be set aside if someone wanted to test their claims against the diocese in court. I did not make a specific undertaking in regard to the diocese possibly funding legal actions against it.

Pastoral Support

The notion of pastoral support was raised by Mark. The support to him provided through St Peter's Cathedral was discussed. The need for specialist support was highlighted by Mark, given the complexity of the support required.

I gave an undertaking to expand accessibility to professional counselling and support services offered to victims of abuse to include those who have made claims related to Mr Brandenburg.

Mark took the opportunity to stress the need for a self referral support service for victims which operated independently of a complaints process.

Quantum of funds / delays in settlement

Mark wished to discuss the topic of quantum of funds. I said I was not in a position to discuss amounts being considered in the current negotiations. Both parties expressed frustration about the time delays in the process. The delay due to the Eyre Peninsula enquiry was discussed.

Mark made a specific request for personal contact to be made by me to his lawyers in an attempt to progress the negotiations. I gave my commitment to do all I could to progress matters and assured him that I would try to ensure that the Church was not a cause of further delay.

Other matters discussed

Mark took the opportunity to raise the issue of support to those people who have been involved in the broader cause of abuse victims. He specifically discussed the work of The Rev. Don Owers, and his brother Andrew (Andrew was asked to leave the room during this time by Mark). I said I had had recent conversation with Don, but was not in a position to disclose the content of the conversation. I made it clear that I had a pastoral commitment to Don.

+Jeffrey

Thursday December 8 2005