

040311 Proposed response to Fisher.txt

From: Aspinall, Archbishop Phillip
 Sent: Thursday, 11 March 2004 5:38 PM
 To: Elliott, Rosslyn
 Subject: RE: FW:

Ros,

I am happy with this to go. It reads like it's to go over your signature. Are you happy with that?

Please fix the spelling of transparency and proof read again.

Thanks

-----Original Message-----

From: Elliott, Rosslyn
 Sent: Thursday, 11 March 2004 9:32 AM
 To: Archbishop
 Subject: FW: FW:

Phillip, is this OK with you? Ros

-----Original Message-----

From: Teresa Adamson [mailto:REDACTED]
 Sent: Thursday, 11 March 2004 8:40 AM
 To: RElliott@anglicanbrisbane.org.au
 Subject: RE: FW:

Ros, In the light of your earlier, positive discussion with Mr Fisher and +Phillip's wish to provide a written response, see below draft.

+Phillip would need to sign off on the content. I would also suggest providing a copy of the Archbishop's op ed piece in The Australian in April 2002.

Thanks, Teresa.

Dear Mr Fisher,

I have spent some time doing general searches to help you with your request, at Archbishop Aspinall's instruction.

The Archbishop called for a Royal Commission in April 2002. He has repeated the reasons for this on a number occasions, prompted by ad hoc media requests. That date alone says very little, however, so I have searched the public record to provide, for you, the context in which the call was made and the rationale which underlined it.

To quote the Sydney Morning Herald, 17 April 2002, 'Howard cool on calls for royal commission':

"I believe that an inquiry at the Commonwealth level would be the most valuable because dealing effectively with child sexual abuse raises national issues. The value of uniform mandatory reporting arrangements, uniform screening procedures and dealing with criminal justice issues across jurisdictions all need to be examined ... These are not matters that concern only Brisbane or Queensland."

In that same article the Archbishop's additional belief about the merits of a royal commission were paraphrased thus:

"... he believed a Federal Commission could examine the wider issues of dealing with child sex abuse in the community, not just the Church."

The Archbishop's call for a Royal Commission stemmed from a serious desire to examine multiple allegations made against church workers and church

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 hierarchy in Brisbane diocese, including the scathing court ruling made
 against the diocese in the Toowoomba Preparatory School matter (2001).

His stated and genuine desire was to see those complaints examined without
 fear or favour, to the fullest possible extent of the law and with evident
 transparency. Such also gave practical expression to the Archbishop's wish
 for existing legislative complexities surrounding this matter (as quoted in
 the Sydney Morning Herald article, cited above) to be discussed and remedies
 examined.

The record shows Archbishop Aspinall's Royal Commission request was rejected
 by the Prime Minister and Queensland's Premier. It also shows that, in the
 face of those refusals, the Archbishop convened an independent inquiry
 headed by Peter O'Callaghan, QC and international child protection advocate,
 Professor Freda Briggs and briefed them to act without "fear or favour" to
 the fullest extent of the law.

Since he called for a Royal Commission, Archbishop Aspinall has been
 occasionally asked by media about this topic. He remains of the view that
 there is a need for a serious, concentrated study of the
 cross-jurisdictional issues and inconsistencies surrounding laws, criminal
 codes and other protocols regarding the sexual abuse of children. He also
 remains willing to give careful and warm consideration to any honest,
 truth-searching and ethically rigorous attempt to deal with current and
 historic child sexual abuse issues.

I hope the above information is of some assistance and apologise for the
 extended reply. I wish you all the best for your upcoming international
 research tour.

>From: "Elliott, Rosslyn" <RElliott@anglicanbrisbane.org.au>

>To: "REDACTED"

>Subject: FW: Date: Tue, 9 Mar 2004 17:02:06 +1000

>

>

>

>-----Original Message-----

>From: Aspinall, Archbishop Phillip

>Sent: Tuesday, 9 March 2004 5:01 PM

>To: Elliott, Rosslyn

>Subject: RE:

>

>

>OK. Just chat with her about sending the dot points then in response to
 >Fisher's request for information to be emailed.

>

>Thanks

>

>

>-----Original Message-----

>From: Elliott, Rosslyn

>Sent: Tuesday, 9 March 2004 3:21 PM

>To: Aspinall, Archbishop Phillip

>Subject: RE:

>

>

>I emailed Teresa a copy of my notes after I had made them. R

>

>-----Original Message-----

>From: Aspinall, Archbishop Phillip

>Sent: Tuesday, 9 March 2004 2:24 PM

>To: Elliott, Rosslyn

>Subject: FW:

>

>

>Ros,

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>
 >Would you mind calling Teresa please and filling her in on your
 >conversation with Fisher.
 >
 >
 >I suggest you email him the dot points Teresa prepared. Check that out
 >with her in the light of your conversation with Fisher.
 >
 >Thanks
 >
 >
 >-----Original Message-----
 >From: REDACTED
 >Sent: Tuesday, 2 March 2004 2:04 PM
 >To: PAspinal@anglicanbrisbane.org.au
 >Subject:
 >
 >
 >Phillip,
 >
 >Two matters, with attachments. Have sent two/three emails over the
 >weekend
 >
 >
 >but have got a Big Pond mail delivery delay message for each --- hope
 >these reach you.
 >
 >1.) REDACTED
 >
 >An updated draft cover note to Harrower is attached. As recommended on
 >an email of Saturday, this should be attached to a "Report of the
 >Brisbane Diocese" regarding the REDACTED matter.
 >
 >This note must stand as a single, self-explanatory document in the
 >event it is separated from our report.
 >
 >I understand Jackie is working on something of this sort. As previously
 >advised, such must be carefully checked and error free in its final
 >form - if in doubt leave out.
 >
 >This draft must be read conscious of its limitations. I have worked
 >from the
 >
 >holes apparent in the document, am not a lawyer, have not seen
 >Brisbane's response nor our source documents.
 >
 >Language: 1.) You may be uncomfortable with some of the terms used - if
 >that
 >
 >is the case we will change. They have been specifically included with
 >an eye
 >
 >to characterizing, in plain language, the substance of the report and
 >the processes which lead to it. They would also constitute strong
 >grabs, should this document be leaked and headlines drawn from it; 2.)
 >I have steered away
 >
 >from calling REDACTED's document a "report" - such vests it with an
 >undeserved credibility. It may or may not make a difference - but it
 >could if there is subsequent coverage, and that is reason enough to
 >include it.
 >
 >Embargoed to media: The mention that you are currently considering
 >providing a copy of Brisbane's report to the media on an embargoed
 >basis further underlines your rejection of the REDACTED document and
 >serves as a warning that you will not cower before Raisenoods. An
 >embargo would likely not be respected and would not be our first option
 >- but at least Bishop Harrower will know that Brisbane diocese backs

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>its performance (privately and publicly) in this matter. If the
REDACTED document becomes public, we will have little choice but to
>support Brisbane diocese's actions with a record of fact.
>
>Tone: Bishop Harrower needs be left in no doubt that you take this
>matter seriously. Even if you chose to soften some of the language used
>- or if you
>
>prefer a different cover note entirely - the tone must remain firm and
>non-accepting of any process designed to validate untruths and to
>ignore matters of fact.
>
>Legal check: A legal person should read the cover note once you have a
>version you are satisfied with. I know you have consulted Robert
>Cunningham,
>
>but would respectfully suggest Peter Applegarth.
>
>What do you think?
>
>2.) Fisher
>I've also attached the dot points for Ros. I can't think of a non-cute
>way to do it - and cute would be all wrong - but I think a donation to
>Mr Fisher's overseas tour is warranted.
>
>Teresa
>
>

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