

MEMO : TO COUNCIL
 FROM : BR. A.J. SHANAHAN
 DATE : DECEMBER 9, 1992
 Re : PROPOSAL FOR A FUND TO ASSIST FORMER CHILD MIGRANTS

Ref: 4.15 Document

(See: Memos 367 revised, 395)

1. Today I represented Gerry at a meeting at Centrecare to explore a proposal by Joe Goerke (Centrecare) for some sort of fund to assist former child migrants (FCMs). Others present were Angela Ebert, Sr. Tania (Catholic Migrant Services); Isabel Andrews (Adoptions Counsellor, Centrecare); Tony Pietropiccolo (Director, Centrecare); Kevin Wringe (Catholic Community Care Commission.)
2. Joe Goerge will forward his own summary of the meeting. My understanding of the main outcomes is:
 - a) there was agreement that the idea of some sort of trust fund should be pursued
 - b) its scope could be wider than just travel assistance for reunions. Assistance in tracing family members and personal support and counselling are usually integral parts of "reunions". Therapy in a wider sense could also be part of its scope
 - c) such a fund would be a provider of funds, not a service-provider
 - d) action in this area is needed urgently. Angela Ebert says there is a backlog of search/reunion cases. So the legalities and setting up should not be too prolonged or cumbersome.
 - e) the fund should be directed to assist FCMs across the board, not just ones from CB or even Catholic organisations. Likewise, its support should be as broad as possible. (We don't want it to be seen as a CB "stunt").
 - f) some questions to be answered include:
 - i) are the trustees the ones who actually vet applications?
 - ii) do you look for trustees who are "experts" (i.e. counsellors, social workers, FCMs), or who are reputable and would attract public support?
 - iii) how will priorities be established in disbursing available funds among competing needs?
 - g) the next steps should be
 - i) to establish a steering committee to get legal advice on such charitable trusts and to draft proposed "terms of reference" for it.
 - ii) to convene a meeting of interested parties (representatives of FCM groups, religious orders, Centrecare, etc.) to look at the detailed proposal and try to win support for its early implementation.
 - h) the steering committee is proposed as:

Angela Ebert; a CB rep (?who?); Kevin Wringe; a suitable lawyer (Angela Ebert is to approach David McKenna, who is interested in this area).
 Are we happy with this? If so, who is our nominee?

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3. Other points to arise included:

- a) Margaret Humphreys of the Child Migrants Trust is currently in Perth and is said to be working here for "5 to 6 weeks" from December 1992". However, it was decided not to contact her since previous contact with her had not proved productive
- b) Angela Ebert signalled she is looking for another job. It is unlikely she will be replaced in the form her work currently takes.
- c) Some FCMs have told Angela and Sr. Tania that many FCMs had received a letter from Gerry indicating where they should go for information about their past and their family. They didn't know about it and were swamped with approaches. Could they have a copy of the letter? Could we let them know about any such moves in future (if, in fact, we did this.....?)?
- d) Tony Pietropiccolo asked if we were still prepared to put up funds, with other groups, to provide counselling services if government funds (State and Federal) are not forthcoming? It seems CCI may be interested in putting up funds also. Could we let Tony Pietropiccolo know our attitude on this?

A.J. Shanahan.