



FORTUNE MANNING
LAW PARTNERSHIP

Vol ID: 1

Doc ID: 1.18

Page: 1 of 4

3 April 2003

WITHOUT PREJUDICE

Graeme Houston
C/- Frank and Hazel Houston

REDACTED

AUSTRALIA

Dear Graeme

AHG [redacted] - FRANK HOUSTON

1. We act for the AOG in New Zealand.
2. On Monday 17 March 2003 representatives of the Assemblies of God in New Zealand and Lower Hutt Assembly of God met with AHG [redacted] in Wellington to listen to the details and circumstances of his complaint of alleged sexual abuse at the hands of your father, Frank Houston in 1972.
3. After listening to and questioning AHG [redacted] in depth, Kem Price and his associates are of the opinion that his explanations are very believable. He presented, we are instructed, as an intelligent articulate person with a genuine grievance.
4. At this meeting Kem presented your letter dated 23 January 2003 to AHG [redacted] and updated him on Frank's health, reading to him in the course of the meeting the doctor's letter.
5. Previously AOG have in good faith endeavored to mediate AHG [redacted] complaint with you (as Frank's representative), but without success. But they have been unable to even arrange for us to discuss the ramifications with your counsel.
6. AHG [redacted] laid out at the meeting his requirements to avert legal action. He wishes to have a meeting with either Frank and/or his representatives to:
 - (a) Receive an acknowledgement that the offence took place.
 - (b) Receive an apology.
 - (c) Negotiate financial compensation.

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Graeme Houston

Vol ID: 1Doc ID: 1.18Page: 2 of 4

2

7. There is absolutely no doubt in the mind of Kem Price and his associates that AHG AHG genuine and is intent upon issuing proceedings in New Zealand against Frank and the Church. AHG acknowledges there are potential legal difficulties in terms of succeeding against AOG-NZ but is in receipt of clear and competent legal advice as to his remedies against Frank.
8. Jurisdictionally AHG acknowledges there are real problems in him suing Frank in Australia, but equally clearly there are no impediments to him commencing proceedings in New Zealand and serving Frank in Australia. There is ample precedent in terms of recent case law developments in both Canada and Australia to found an action against Frank, less so against AOG. These causes of action fall outside of the ACC legislation in New Zealand which in generally prohibits compensation claims for personal injury.
9. Once these proceedings are issued and served against Frank there will be an extended time period for filing a statement of defence due to the fact that Frank resides within an overseas jurisdiction. Thereafter the matter will proceed under normal case management practices associated with a domestic court case.
10. In view of your advice that your father denies the circumstances alleged against him by reason of the fact that he cannot recall the incidents it would seem almost inevitable that AHG will succeed if he can present his evidence in a credible and believable way. Kem Price's assessment of AHG is that he will do so. His assessment as to AHG's believability is founded on the assessment of the basic facts originally presented, and also some small factual matters raised by AHG AHG including, for example, Frank's insistence he should tie AHG tie. This struck a real chord with Kem knowing of Frank's proclivity in relation to ties. Additionally AHG explained how the abuse arose by referring to WFH'S habit of play fighting with young people. These are but a couple of examples.
11. If AHG were to succeed in obtaining an award of damages from Frank (which seems highly likely) the ability to enforce in Australia a New Zealand judgment through the Reciprocal Enforcements of Judgments Act will rapidly follow.
12. Kem is clearly of the opinion that AHG is not prepared to let this matter drop and his threat to issue legal proceedings is no bluff.
13. There is an opportunity for the matter to be potentially resolved for a sum of money that would be considerably less than the expenditure on legal costs of defending, to say nothing of any award of damages.
14. We sincerely believe that the course of action you are currently adopting, is going to be a very non-productive for Frank in the end result.
15. We urge you to reconsider the concept of allowing the writer to discuss the matter with your counsel. Nothing the writer can say will bind you to any particular course of action but AOG is concerned that your current attitude is counter productive to the

Graeme Houston

Vol ID: 1

Doc ID: 1.18

3

Page: 3 of 4

interests of your father, which despite all, is still a matter for Christian concern by them.

Yours faithfully

FORTUNE MANNING



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cc Brian Houston

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AUSTRALIA