

P.D. No. 109 B

TASMANIA POLICE

STATEMENT

Name of Witness	STONE Surname (in capitals)	Ronald Francis Given Names
Address	REDACTED	QLD REDACTED Age D.O.B.
Occupation	Bishop of the Anglican Church of Rockhampton	REDACTED Phone
Name and Address of Employer	The ? of the Synod of the Diocese of Rockhampton, 164 Musgrave St, North Rockhampton 4702	REDACTED Phone

Date:

Time commenced:

STATES -

My full name is Ronald Francis STONE. I am currently the Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Rockhampton. I have held this position since the 13th December 1996. Prior to that I was the assistant Bishop in the Diocese of Tasmania. This was from 1992 through till 1996.

Sometime after 5.35pm on Monday 21 November 1994 I was present in the Bishop's house situated at REDACTED Sandy Bay. I observed as the Right Reverend Phillip NEWELL made a phone call to Lou DANIELS who was the Rector of Burnie and Arch Deacon of Burnie.

Bishop NEWELL informed Lou DANIELS that some serious allegations had been made against him by a parishioner regarding her stepson. He also advised Lou DANIELS that I would be shortly leaving Hobart to come and interview him and I would advise Lou DANIELS of my time of departure, which I did so at 7.50pm.

I arrived at the Burnie Rectory at about 11.35pm. I spoke to Lou DANIELS for about an hour. I indicated to him that I would be endeavouring to interview the parishioner who had made the allegations about him. I indicated to Daniels that the parishioner was a REDACTED REDACTED. As far as I am aware DANIELS did not respond to this.

I stayed at the Rectory that night in a room provided for visiting Bishops. That following morning DANIELS left the Rectory to lead a service at St. Georges Church, Burnie which was scheduled that morning. I did not speak to him that morning. As soon as DANIELS had left, I left the house and at 7.40am contacted REDACTED by mobile phone.

At 11 am that morning of the 22 November 1994 I interviewed REDACTED the step mother of BYW at their family home. I took rough hand notes of our conversation. Subsequently at 11.35 am I interviewed REDACTED's son REDACTED in her presence at the family home. I took rough notes of this conversation. At 12.10pm (after arrangements being made) I interview BYW at his residence situated at REDACTED. This interview was conducted in the presence of his step mother REDACTED. Again I took rough notes of that conversation.

STATEMENT - Continued

Name of Witness	STONE Surname (in capitals)	Ronald Francis Given Names
--------------------	---------------------------------------	--------------------------------------

I have sighted the notes that I have referred to and they are the original notes of the interviews I conducted between all three persons.

At about 1.15pm I returned to the Rectory. Lou DANIELS was present. I acquainted DANIELS with the fact that I had interviewed REDACTED and BYW and outlined the seriousness of the allegations which had been made. I may have reminded him that the police had been acquainted with the matters under discussion also, as well as a number of other people.

I acquainted DANIELS with the fact that BYW had indicated serious allegations of a sexual nature over a period of time since he was 13 years of age. These allegations included oral sex, intended masturbation, propositions regarding anal protection and that he was the person who had done these things and suggested such things. I have no recollection of DANIELS acknowledging or refuting these allegations. DANIELS was visibly distressed and shaken by what I had told him.

As a result of making these allegations to DANIELS I put to him that there were 3 options open to DANIELS and myself. I was authorised to take this decisive action under the circumstances if required in my judgement due to the seriousness of the complaints that had been made and the breach of trust that the allegations represented.

He was offered three agreed options. They were decided upon as a result of my conversation Bishop NEWELL and I before hand. These options were suspension, letter of resignation and withdrawal of licence. I believed that DANIELS as a member of the executive of the Diocese would have fully understood the implications and machinery associated with each of the agreed options. I suggested to DANIELS that in the light of the seriousness of the allegations made by BYW and that the fact they were being investigated by the police that he should make contact with his legal advisor concerning the options. DANIELS left the room and returned with a letter of resignation a short time later. It wouldn't have been more than 10 minutes. Prior to handing me his letter of resignation, DANIELS went into the study. I am not aware of what took place in the study but he did return shortly thereafter with a letter and handed it to me.

DANIELS handed me the letter of resignation which was not in an envelope. As a result of reading the letter I made arrangements for a Chaplain from Hobart, Eric CANE, to come to Burnie as soon as possible that day to provide counsel for DANIELS. At 1.40pm I advised Bishop NEWELL of DANIELS letter of resignation. I then set in place arrangements for an acting Rector of the Parish and had telephone conversations with the Diocesan Advocate and Mr Andrew ABBOTT. These arrangements were made away from the Rectory by mobile phone and as a consequence of having received DANIELS resignation.

At 2.55pm I phoned DANIELS and informed him that I was going to meet with the Assistant Clergy and I wanted to see him again. I returned to the Rectory at 3pm and this time we agreed that the public announcement would be that he had resigned for personal reasons.

STATEMENT - Continued

Name of Witness	STONE Surname (in capitals)	Ronald Francis Given Names
--------------------	---------------------------------------	--------------------------------------

My next meeting with Lou DANIELS was at 8.50pm outside the Rectory. I went to say goodbye to DANIELS and check on the provision of counselling for him which, was to be conducted by ? Eric CANE.

On Wednesday 11th February 1998 I was shown a hand written letter. This is the letter of resignation provided by Lou DANIELS to me on the 22 November 1994. The letter is addressed to The Bishop of Tasmania. The contents of the letter, and the signature on the back of it is that of Lou DANIELS. I am positive about that.

I am positive that the allegations made by BYW are the only matters I addressed with Lou DANIELS and no other complaints for other persons were pursued. The matters related to this alleged sexual misconduct with this boy, BYW. These allegations were the only ones put to Lou prior to his resignation. I was there to pursue the complaint made by BYW only. My belief is that the letter of resignation for Daniels relates to those complaints only, and this is my belief at the time I accepted his resignation and then took other consequential actions.

At the time of handing me his letter of resignation I do not recall DANIELS commenting on the contents of it except to say "there is my letter of resignation".

I am prepared to attend court if required.

R. F. STONE

Statement taken at REDACTED, North Rockhampton on 11/2/98

REDACTED

Det Const