

COIN

COMMISSION OF INQUIRY NOW

Justice for victims of Catholic Clergy Sexual Assault in Victoria

The Hon Georgie Crozier MLC,
Chairman, Family and Community Development
Committee, Parliament of Victoria, Spring Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

19th September 2012

Dear Ms Crozier,

**Inquiry into Handling of Child Abuse by Religious and Other Organisations –
COIN Submission no 15: Prosecuting the RCC Hierarchy:
*Details of RCC Officials involved in appointing, managing and responding to sexual abuse
allegations and disciplining abusing priest(s)***

COIN recommends that the Committee, in co-operation with Victoria Police, compile, from various sources, details of clergy holding official positions in the RCC hierarchy (wherever now working or residing) who may have been involved in appointing abusive priests to parishes, and/or moving them between parishes, and/or generally managing/supervising or “disciplining” them. Such details may be sourced from publications (eg. C. Foster, *Hell on the Way to Heaven*); public websites (eg. Broken Rites: <http://brokenrites.alphalink.com.au/>); court documents; police records; victims submissions, etc. The following details are suggested which may form the basis of both a better understanding of the Church’s response, and of possible criminal prosecution.

- 1) Official’s basic details:
 - Name;
 - Age today;
 - Current residential address;
 - Still in Holy Orders/retired/position held today (eg. Bishop).

- 2) Historical role (ie. when complaints forwarded to official/officials knowledge of priest(s) crime:
 - Relevant position(s) held and in what diocese;
 - Dates when held various position(s);
 - Whether responsibilities included appointing, managing or disciplining etc. priests in the relevant diocese (and/or complaints concerning them);

- 3) Details of complaints of sexual assault re priests(s) under official’s ‘supervision’:
 - Names, dates, details of victims abused when official held office;
 - Name, details of alleged clergy abuser/convicted abuser;
 - Names, dates, details of complaints made to or managed by official when official held office;

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4) The handling of complaints of sexual assault:

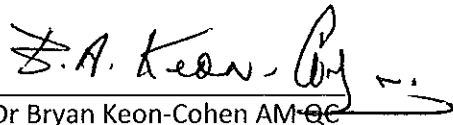
- Official's role in the handling of complaints;
- Names of other Church personnel involved in handling complaint(s) (eg. relevant Bishop);
- Church 'processes' or 'procedures' activated, if any;
- Resolution of complaints, if any;
- Criminal convictions/court proceedings, if any, and outcome;
- Other relevant particulars.

COIN recommends that the Committee call these church officials before it to question them about their knowledge of clergy sex abuse, if any, during their period in office; and their responses to specific complaints of abuse at specific times concerning priests in Victoria when they held the relevant office. Such questions might include:

- Confirmation/elaboration on the above details;
- How did the official handle complaint(s)?
- Who did he report to?
- Who were his supervisors and their role in decisions concerning complaints/abuser(s), if any;
- What decisions were made/steps taken to address the complaint?
- Which Church processes and procedures were followed in a particular case (eg. Melbourne Response)?
- How was the complaint resolved?

COIN requests that this submission be placed on the Committee's public record.

Yours faithfully,



Dr Bryan Keon-Cohen AM QC
President, COIN



Ms Viviane Gautschi
Secretary, COIN