



NSW POLICE SERVICE

P???

STATEMENT OF A POLICE/WITNESS

In the matter of: James Patrick FLETCHER
 Place: Maitland Police Station
 Date: 2 June, 2003

Name: Colleen Margaret Rebecca TIMOSHENKO Tel. No: _____
 Address: _____
 Occupation: Education Advisor

STATES:

1. This statement made by me accurately sets out the evidence which I would be prepared, if necessary, to give in court as a witness. The statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything which I know to be false, or do not believe to be true.
2. I am 64 years of age.
3. I have been employed with the Catholic Schools Office since 1969 as a schoolteacher & in other positions. I currently hold the position of Education Officer Data Analysis with the Diocese Maitland-Newcastle Catholic Schools Office. From 1986 to 1988 I was the principal at St Joseph's Primary School, Dungog.
4. I remember Father FLETCHER arriving in the Dungog parish about Christmas time 1987. I can say that he was different to any other priest I had dealings with in that he visited the school on virtually a daily basis. (With the exception of Tuesday when he had the day off & visited his mother at Mayfield.) His visits weren't so much to see the children but to talk with staff in the staff room.

Witness: _____

Signature: _____

Colleen M.R. Timoshenko
 Colleen Margaret Rebecca
 TIMOSHENKO

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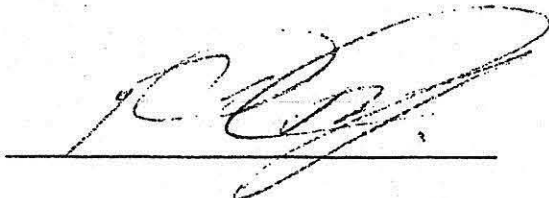
5. I did not have a personal liking for Father FLETCHER because I objected to a number of aspects of his behaviour. I would be safe in saying that this personal dislike would have been mutual. I heard Father FLETCHER telling numerous risqué jokes & stories that I found offensive. Talking to others I am also aware that they also took objection to these jokes but most did not voice this openly. The staff after a period of time would comment that they wished he would cease visiting & let them get on with other things. His visits were disruptive & encroached on the staff's personal time in the extreme. I had never seen this type of excessive behaviour from a priest in all my years of teaching.

6. I also observed Father FLETCHER's behaviour within the parish. He developed a contact with families where there were a large number of boys. Some of these families that come to mind are: UR 70's family in DUNGOG, UR 77 from Main Creek & AH's family from Glen Oak. Father FLETCHER visited these families on a regular basis for what appeared to me to be meals & company. This finally did create problems within the parish church community.

7. I recall Father FLETCHER befriending BJ I saw that he used her very much as his connection with the Clarence Town community. BJ was a very willing supporter & worker for the church & that community. As time went by I saw a close relationship develop between BJ & her family with Father FLETCHER. I am aware that he was a regular visitor to their home. He would often travel past their home & from my perspective it was his practice to call in there nearly every time he drove past their home. I would travel that road every day & see his car go there very often.

8. I remember AH as a young boy. I remember he was a very attractive young child & well balanced. I remember that not long after the arrival of Father FLETCHER that AH & his brother became altar boys. I remember conversations I had with BJ after AH started at St Peters High School in Maitland. BJ was concerned that AH's studies had dropped off & he appeared to be having difficulties settling into high school. I am also aware that over time AH started drinking alcohol to excess & became violent on occasion. I am also aware that he was declared bankrupt & made a suicide attempt. This behaviour was in complete & total contrast to the way in which I knew these boys were being reared. I know that the other three of BJ's sons have not presented with this same magnitude of problems & behaviours.

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9 On the 4th of February 1997 I spoke with Bishop Michael MALONE. He had asked me to meet with him. He told me that he had a matter of a sensitive nature he would like to talk to me about. He said, "Why would the past director advise a principal in this diocese not to leave boys alone with Father FLETCHER?" I said, "I have no idea." This meeting & this question came completely by surprise to myself. He said, "Do you have any reason for concern in this regard?" I said, "While I was principal in Dungog no child made any disclosure to me regarding Father FLETCHER." He said, "I am pleased to hear that & I will pass this information on to Father BURSTON. (Who at that time was the Vicar General) He will be pleased to hear this too." We then spoke about Father Vince RYAN & I made a comparison to the family background of both Father RYAN & Father FLETCHER. I would say that I had been expecting more probing questions about Father FLETCHER but this did not eventuate. I remember hoping that I would be asked further questions because I wanted to tell him what I thought of Father FLETCHER's morality.

CONTINUED ON 5TH OF JUNE 2003

10. I have been asked if I can recall AH ever being alone with Father FLETCHER. I have thought about this & cannot put an exact time on it. It was between 1990 to 1992 that AH was in his altar boys' clothing & left Clarence Town Church with Father FLETCHER. I cannot now remember the car itself but the number plate was JFP-004. I can recall the occasion when BJ said something to me about either she or BI would go up & get AH later or Father would bring AH back & have lunch with them.

11. I would also like to mention that I found Father FLETCHER used subtle threats on occasion. As I have stated earlier we didn't always see eye to eye & I got the impression that he would like to see me leave his parish. In 1988 he mentioned to myself that there was a vacancy expected at our Catholic School in Raymond Terrace. He said, "You might like to apply for that." This came across very bluntly to myself that he would like me to go. On a later occasion he commented to me, "Mons COOLAHAN is a friend of mine." At the time Mons COOLAHAN was the Director Of Catholic Education & it was said in such a way to imply that he could have me transferred if he so desired. I found this behaviour very disturbing for a priest.

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This might be accepted in most situations as part of human behaviour when personality clashes occur, but what stood out to me was that Father FLETCHER did not attempt to negotiate with myself or display any pastoral care for myself as one of his parishioners. I had never experienced such behaviour from a priest. I saw this as Father FLETCHER using his power & position in the church to manipulate situations to his own advantage. I later received a transfer from St Joseph's School Dungog to the Regional Office in Newcastle. I cannot say with absolute certainty, but I've always felt that my transfer out of Dungog (be it to the regional office or elsewhere) was something Father FLETCHER wanted. The point I would like to make is that he did not back away from using a threat & carrying it through. A lot of people did not see & probably would not want to see this side of Father FLETCHER.

Witness:



Paul R Fox
D/Sif.
5/6/03

Signature

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TIMOSHENKO

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