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11/04/19

More about Durning

One of my referees to the Royal Commission, Jim Keeball, commented on the adverse reputation Durning had amongst students at Silverstream. A student newly arrived at the school, like Keeball, could not avoid learning about the priest. Two students of that time (~ 1955) were Fred Bliss and Vince Curtain. These two men would have learned about Durning as students, and around the time they became Rectors at Silverstream they were each confronted with the dangers of not dealing with a pedophile according to the law. When student Alan Woodcock was exposed as an active pedophile in the early eighties, the two, one-time Rectors didn't know what to do. They consulted with **Mr H**

Mr H

The outcome of it all was that Woodcock was spirited away out of legal reach, firstly to Australia thence to London, and doubtless with cash that I had unwittingly put in the plate as part of the weekly donation.

I wouldn't mind betting that **Mr H** was rewarded with a handy payment for services rendered. His acceptance of money would confirm his guilt in the conspiracy about Woodcock to my mind. More of my plate money.

The Police telephoned me to inform me of Police's decision not to pursue the matter with the Society of Mary (because of their discovery of aged Minto relatives unaware of any wrongdoing on his part). My word against theirs. My reaction to Police was instantaneous; "O, I will take an axe to the cursed things." Police's answer; (he was the Head of Wellington District) "I can understand that." Which is not the tenor of answer one would expect from a policeman to an aggressive stance like that.

Another unexpected answer was given to me by the Acting Head of the Society of Mary at the meeting which wasn't a meeting twixt us and them. I asked him the fate of the two priests who violated me, Minto and Durning. "They are dead." was the answer. Not; "They both have died." or "They have gone." or "What a eulogy they got." Simply; "They are dead." Heavily nuanced with relief, and a look of sheer happiness that the wreckage the priests had helped cause was now over.

They each had Durning as a guide and blueprint.

GRO-C