

Lambeth Palace London SE1 7JU

Confidential
2 March 1993



Dear Director

I am writing out of urgent concern for the Bishop of Gloucester, Peter Ball, whose file has, I understand, been forwarded to you following a meeting last Friday between the Bishop's representatives and officials of your department.

Since that meeting I have heard, from two quite independent sources, disturbing impressions of the Bishop's state of health. One of these is the psychiatrist who has been treating him for some time, and I enclose a copy of her report. I understand that Bishop Ball had believed that a decision about his case would be made on Friday, and the fact that there is a further delay may endanger further his already fragile health.

I am sure you will understand that in no way whatever would I wish to influence the decision about Bishop Ball which you have to make. I am, however, bound to ask that, simply for the sake of his health, that decision may be made as speedily as possible - even, dare I suggest, as a matter of urgency. I say this, well aware that you will inevitably be burdened with many items of work battling for priority in your timetable.

Although not technically the Bishop of Gloucester's employer, I hope you will accept that I have a legitimate interest in approaching you in this way.

With kind regards

Yours sincerely

Mrs B Mills QC
Director of Public Prosecutions
Crown Prosecution Service
4-12 Queen Anne's Gate
LONDON
SW1H 9AZ

+ George Cantuar

THE RT. HON. TIM RENTON, M.P.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA



As from Mount Harry House, Offham, Lewes, West Sussex, BN7 3QW

2nd February 1993

Mrs. Barbara Mills, Q.C.,
Director of Public Prosecutions,
4/12 Queen Anne's Gate,
SW1H 9AZ.

Dear Director

Peter Ball, the Bishop of Gloucester


I will preface this letter by saying that I have never written previously to the D.P.P. in support of or in opposition to anyone whose papers were about to come before you. I do so in the case of Peter, the Bishop of Gloucester, only because this is a man whom my wife and I came to respect profoundly during the years he was our suffragan Bishop of Lewes. He is a man of immense kindness, charity and humour, dedicated to serving God in the community. I imagine that it was just for this reason that he and his twin brother founded their own Order, to help bring people closer to a practical, religious life.

Peter, wearing his grey monk's robe and removed from all the normal episcopal trappings, might well be thought eccentric by some. Others, I am told, resented his opposition to women priests. But these are unimportant features in a man of outstanding Christian sincerity and goodness:

You will, I am sure, have received many letters from those whom he helped, practically and daily, in our Sussex community. I personally will never forget the leadership and guidance he gave [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] He gave us the clear lead forward after this tragedy that we all needed.

Peter has suffered terribly over the past six weeks, as can only be expected for someone who has dedicated his whole adult life to helping and providing Christian guidance, and who had just received the accolade of being made a bishop.



In all the years he was with us in Sussex, surrounded in his Order by young men, we never heard a breath of any suggestion of impropriety. However, I know him well enough to be certain that no punishment will be greater for him than any knowledge that he has broken his own vows of chastity. This alone will make him suffer for the rest of his life. To add the further shame of criminal action seems far too great a punishment.

I do hope you will not mind my writing to you personally, and that you will take these thoughts - which will be mirrored by hundreds in Sussex - into consideration when reaching your decision.

Your sincerely

Thos. Bentham



Lambeth Palace London SE1 7JU

Private and Confidential

5 February 1993



Dear Chief Constable

The Rt Revd Peter Ball

As you will be aware, I have been keeping an anxious eye on developments concerning my colleague Peter Ball, whilst being keenly conscious of the need to avoid any suggestion that I might be attempting to influence the police enquiries. However, now that a decision seems likely in the near future, I thought I should offer a few personal reflections to you about him.

I have known the Bishop for some ten years or so. He is well known for his wholehearted commitment to his Lord and the Christian Church. For him the expression of faith has taken a monastic form - which is not the taste of all Anglicans, but is an orthodox way nonetheless. It came as a terrible shock to me when I learned that an investigation was under way into allegations of indecent behaviour with an adolescent. This seemed to me at first most improbable; his whole ministry appeared to show that he is an honourable man, firmly concerned for the welfare of young people.

Indeed, the testimony from many young men whom he has helped over the years - and the list must run in hundreds - is such that if he is guilty of unprofessional behaviour it is quite unrepresentative of his style. For example, I have been told that 30 or 40 men have been ordained through his ministry. I was, myself, for seven years Principal of a Theological College in Bristol and during that time I taught several men who have passed through Peter's community. The unanimous reaction from all of them was unqualified praise for a wonderful man who had given them much to aim for in life.

I thought you should have my general reactions to Peter but, I repeat, in no way am I seeking to interfere with your investigation or influence the decision which the Crown Prosecution may have to make. I am totally committed to the principle that clergy should accept the highest possible standards of personal conduct. In particular, all clergy entrusted with youngsters should behave with priority, compassion and respect. Moreover, it is incumbent on bishops to set a lead in such matters.

'Special pleading' would be entirely inappropriate; at the same time, as Bishop Peter's Provincial and therefore his pastor, I believe I am justified in drawing to your attention the excruciating pain and spiritual torment which these allegations have inevitably brought upon a man in his exposed position and with his sensibilities. Whatever the outcome in law, he will have suffered grievously, as my own dealings with him since he was first accused have made abundantly clear to me.

cont ...



I am sending a copy of this to [REDACTED] the Bishop's solicitor.

May I add a word to acknowledge, as I have heard from several quarters, the scrupulous fairness and courtesy with which your officers have been conducting their enquiries into this case.

Yours sincerely

+ *George Cantuar*

The Chief Constable of Gloucester
Police Headquarters
CHELTENHAM
Gloucestershire





Royal Courts of Justice
Strand
London WC2A 2LL

3 February 1983

Dear Investor Murdoch

I send you a copy of the
letter I have written to
Chief Cattle. Thank you for
being so understanding when we
spoke on the telephone.

Yours sincerely
Anthony Lloyd

From: The Rt. Hon. Lord Justice Lloyd

2 February 1993

The Chief Constable,
Police Headquarters,
Holland House,
Lansdown Road,
Cheltenham,
GLOS.

Dear [REDACTED]

For five years the Bishop of Gloucester was our nearest neighbour in Sussex, and my wife and I have known him much longer. I am not going to write about the case, since I know nothing about what he may have done, and it would in any event be quite improper for me to seem to be influencing the decision which must rest with the Director of Public Prosecutions, and with her alone.

But at the same time I feel I must pass on what I know about Peter Ball himself. He is, quite simply, the most gentle upright and saintly man I have ever met. I remember some years ago hearing him preach about St. Francis, when he quoted the saying that St. Francis had set the world laughing, and then bathed it in his tears. It occurred to all of us who heard him then that if there is a latter day St. Francis, then Peter Ball is him.

And now he finds himself in this appalling situation. I have just spoken to him at length on the telephone. Because of his nature, as well as his position, he has obviously suffered far more already than any of us can imagine, and far more than a more ordinary human being would have suffered. He told me that if it goes on much longer, he feels he may well go off his head. I can understand and believe this. It is confirmed by what his brother [REDACTED] told me. So much has Peter deteriorated, especially in the last few days, that [REDACTED]

I find it difficult to accept that such an awful fate could have befallen so good a man. Whatever decision is taken, I do not see how he will ever recover.

I express these views as my own; but I believe them to be very widely shared among all the people that knew him and loved him in Sussex.



FROM THE HEAD MASTER LANCING COLLEGE SUSSEX
BN15 0RW

Tel: Shoreham-by-Sea (0273) 452213
Fax: Shoreham-by-Sea (0273) 464720

20th January 1993

Dear Detective Inspector Murdock,

I am writing to you in connection with the charge that I understand has been made against the Bishop of Gloucester, and I should like to explain to you the basis of my knowledge of the Bishop and his dealings with young people over the past 25 years.

I was Head Master of Rugby School between 1967 and 1981, and then became Head Master of Lancing College. Father Peter, as he then was, came to preach at Rugby School in the late 1960's, and at my invitation returned to the School at regular intervals thereafter, to preach and to give spiritual counsel to pupils and members of the staff. Several members of the School also became involved in his work setting up the premises of the Community of the Glorious Ascension at Watchett in Somerset. My wife and I stayed at the monastery on more than one occasion.

The spiritual influence of Father Peter was in my view of unique value to many pupils, and helped several of them to develop from fairly commonplace individuals into people of vision, generosity and strong Christian commitment. These pupils regularly talked to the Chaplain and myself about the help they received from Father Peter, and at no time did we or any of the Housemasters have the slightest cause for anxiety about the relationships which developed between Father Peter and themselves.

By the time I moved to Lancing in 1981, Father Peter had become Bishop of Lewes, and had set up the training scheme for school-leavers, "Give a Year to God". Subsequently he also founded the Community of Little Brothers at Litlington, providing an introduction to a dedicated Christian life for young people. Several ex-Lancing pupils became involved in these schemes, and here again one was struck by their personal and spiritual development, and the great benefit they received from the Bishop's example and teaching.

There can be no doubt that within the Church of England the Bishop of Gloucester is unique in his capacity to communicate the Christian faith and inspire young people in their quest for a closer relationship with God. He is able to achieve this because of his own exceptional spirituality and the rigorous self-discipline he imposes on himself. His life style, beginning with prayer in the small hours of each morning, must be almost unparalleled, and is clearly a foundation of his spiritual life.

From conversations with him I know that the Bishop is acutely distressed by some aspects of late 20th Century culture, including its accent on materialism and sexual permissiveness which make it so much harder for people to realise their spiritual vocation. In this context I understand that he has used acts of penitence and contrition that are an expression of that deep concern. To the extent that young people have been involved in such penitential exercises, I can see that these may have been open to misunderstanding and misrepresentation, especially by any who have not grasped the "absolute" nature of the Bishop's religious commitment. The Bishop may have failed to judge the

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20th January 1993

appropriateness of such exercises for some of the young people whom he is so anxious to help. But the one thing of which, from my long knowledge of him, I am absolutely certain is that his intention towards all people, young or old, is wholly that of Christian concern and compassion, and that to harm any person would be completely abhorrent and alien to his nature. He may be guilty of an innocence that fails to anticipate how his teaching and example might be construed - the innocence that is also one of his most valued attributes. But there cannot be any doubt among those who know the Bishop well of his integrity, compassion and respect for all human beings, and particularly for the young people who have gone to him over so many years for help and teaching, and who have benefited so much from his guidance.

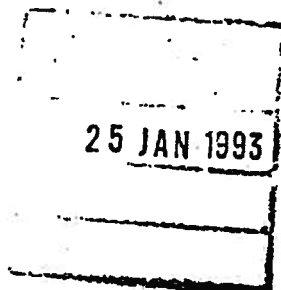
If I can be of any further assistance in connection with this matter, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me.


Yours sincerely,

James Woodhouse

Detective Inspector Wayne Murdock,
Central Police Station,
Bearland,
Gloucester.






The Chief constable
Gloucestershire Constabulary
Police Headquarters
Holland House
Lansdown Road
Cheltenham
Glos GL51 6QH

21st January 1993

Dear Sir,

The Rt Revd Peter Ball, Bishop of Gloucester

We are aware that the Bishop is at present under suspicion concerning the alleged indecent assault of a minor.

The Bishop has made a number of visits to this School over a period of more than ten years to preach and to give spiritual and pastoral guidance to boys and girls. In that time we and many others here have come to know him well.

Cranleigh is a School of approximately 550 pupils aged 13 to 18 years, most of whom board. It is our opinion that the Bishop's work and influence here have been wholly trustworthy. To put it directly, if bluntly, he has obviously spoken to many boys privately and confidentially yet they have never intimated later that anything was in any way untoward. Our boys are not notably reticent on these matters, and our work suggests that they would be quick to sense - and to report to others - the possibility of an unhealthy presence. On the contrary, the Bishop is popular among them and greatly respected for his humanity and his obvious strength of character.

We think that any investigations would usefully consider the Bishop's work in schools, which is very highly regarded by both teaching staff and pupils.

The Headmaster, who knows the Bishop equally well, has seen this letter and asks us to say that it has his fullest endorsement.

Yours faithfully,

Revd A.J. KEEP, BA STM
Senior Chaplain &
Head of Theology

Revd N.A.T. MENON,
MA, DipTheol
Chaplain & Housemaster



21 January
1993.

Dear Sir,

The Rt Rev. Peter Ball.

When I was Archbishop of Canterbury, I consecrated Peter Ball as Bishop in 1977.

Since then we have kept in touch & I have seen a good deal of the excellent quality of his work.

I know nothing of the events which have recently brought his name to the attention of the press. But I understand that in the near future the Bishop's papers will be forwarded to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

I write, therefore, to say that I have always had the highest regard & respect for the Bishop. I have known him as a godly man, totally devoted to his Church & to the people whom he has loved & served since his Ordination 37 years ago. He has had an unblemished record.

If I can be of further help, I should count it a privilege.

Yours sincerely,

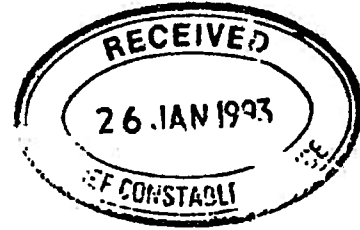
W David Ogden.

The Chief Constable
Police Headquarters
Cheltenham

Confidential

BISHOP'S HOUSE
NORWICH
NR3 1SB
(0603) 629001

24 January 1993



Dear [REDACTED]

Please forgive a letter from a complete stranger, but I have worked closely during the last eight years with two Chief Constables of Norfolk, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and I know that the breed, contrary to popular myths, is, like Bishops, approachable!

I can imagine what a difficult and sensitive task you have regarding the allegations made against the Bishop of Gloucester. I do not in the least wish to add to those difficulties, but simply to say something very briefly about this man, whom I know well.

His ministry, particularly to the young, has been quite exceptional. His gifts with the young are known and deeply admired throughout the land, and that reputation is now international. Experienced headmasters, fellow bishops and clergy often consult Bishop Peter about caring for the young, and he himself on numerous occasions has cared personally for those with problems when asked to do so. He has managed to communicate with the young so effectively that numbers of young people whose [REDACTED] through his influence, been given new [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] - but that is the experience of all who serve in the caring professions.


Suffice to say that Bishop Peter is known as a pastor of outstanding ability and sensitivity, whose ministry has been a great blessing to hundreds of young people, and who is held in great affection and admiration by all who know him well.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Nott

(Rt Rev P.J.Nott
Bishop of Norwich)

The Chief Constable,
Gloucestershire Constabulary,
Holland House,
Lansdown Road,
Cheltenham,
Gloucestershire,
GL51 6QH.



Tim Rathbone, M.P.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

26th January 1993

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Rathbone'.

RE: RT. REV. BISHOP PETER OF GLOUCESTER

Having been Member of Parliament for the Lewes Constituency since 1974, I have known Bishop Peter during his whole time as Bishop of Lewes.

Having come to know him well as Bishop, as friend and as doer of good works, I find it literally inconceivable that he would ever become involved with anyone in the way the newspapers have described or insinuated.

In all his works, and all his life, he has shown Christian humanity, care for those in need of a helping hand or a helping word and, especially, generous care of so many young men needing a good and supportive environment in which to readjust their lives in a positive way.

In all of this, he has drawn upon a steadfast faith and has used an ability to communicate that faith and share it with others, often with the help of humour, most effectively.

His life in the Church and in the Community is a shining example of applied and practical goodness of a very special, if not unique quality.

I sincerely hope that these facts will be borne in mind when assessing the validity of criticism from any quarter.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Det. Inspector Murdoch'.

Det. Inspector Murdoch
Central Police Station
Vearland
GLOUCESTER
Gloucestershire
GL1 2JP



7 HIGH CROFT MINCHINHAMPTON GLOUCESTERSHIRE GL6 9BJ

28th. January, 1993

Dear Chief Inspector Murdoch,

Reference : The Right Reverend the Bishop of Gloucester, Peter Ball.

I gather from some of the young Christians in Sussex that you have been taking statements from them about the Bishop and I hope that it is in order for me to write to you as someone who has known him for the past thirty two years and seen his involvement with young people throughout that time.

I was appointed as a young man to be Headmaster of Ellesmere College, Shropshire in 1961 and then to be Headmaster of Lancing in 1969 before going to be Head Master of Harrow in 1981. I retired in 1991 and am now Chairman of the England Sports Council. I have been a magistrate in four counties since the early sixties.

I first met Peter Ball when he came to preach at Ellesmere in the autumn of 1961. At the time he was setting up the Community for the Glorious Ascension in Stroud.

His influence for the good with the young was remarkable and I asked the Bishop of Shrewsbury if he could be elected a Governor. This duly happened and he has governed several schools since as well as becoming Chaplain to the Headmasters' Conference for a period of time.


On several occasions in all the three schools that I led I was faced with having to help 

sharing in the monastic life so that he could help them. On each occasion the boy returned to school and resumed normal school life with success. Peter's influence was remarkable.

He also took Lenten courses; something he has done in many schools and pupils flocked to him for confidential help and advice.

At Harrow we hosted a group of the young Christians involved in the Bishop's scheme in Sussex. They worshipped with us and by their example spread the Christian message.

There has never been an occasion when any child or parent has suggested that they were concerned about his relationship with the young. And that, sadly, cannot be said about all the adults for whom I was responsible and over thirty years of headship have had to report several to the D.E.S. and/or the Police.



Finally, I would wish to add that there is a deep spiritual dimension to the Bishop:- his own disciplined life of short nights with long periods of private meditation have given him in my eyes, and the eyes of many, an almost saint like quality. He is the only man that I have ever met in the established church who challenges one at a very deep level. He is so often physically exhausted by putting all other people before his own well-being. He has surrounded himself all his life with the young who are damaged and need help. He has changed the lives of many for the good.

Of course I would be prepared to do anything to see that the right action is taken and that justice is seen to be done for all who are concerned in this investigation.

Yours sincerely,

Ian Beer.

I.D.S.Beer,C.B.E.



THE WARDEN
RICHARD MORGAN, M.A.

RADLEY COLLEGE
ABINGDON
OXFORDSHIRE
OX14 2HR

TELEPHONE: ABINGDON (0235) 520294/520585

January 29th 1993.

Dear Inspector Muddoch.

I gather it may be helpful
for you to hear from those who have
known Bishop Peter Ball over a long
period of time.

I have known him for nearly ten years.
During that time I have entrusted young
men to him, firstly when I was Headmaster
of Chettleton College & now as Warden

of Radley. He has preached a crusade
at both these schools.

At no time has there been any
whisper of scandal. He has been an
immense force for good in the lives of
so many. As soon as I heard of
the accusation, I dismissed them in
my mind as impossible. His life is a
life of discipline.

If I can answer any question that
might help you enquiring, please telephone
me.

Yours sincerely,
R. M. Morgan