

RE: SUICIDE OF REGINALD GEORGE PIESSE of 229 CANFORD STREET
CHRISTCHURCH – 14/10/83

To Whom It May Concern:

- 1) My name is Arthur Benjamin Townsend, aged 68, of Railway Street, Sefton, Phone Sefton 822, P.O. Box 60, Sefton

I knew the late Reg Piesse. The first I and others knew of his death was the Coroner's Inquest verdict published in the "Star" on 16/11/83. The funeral was not advertised.

- 2) Three weeks before his death I had sent a letter to the Religious Sect known as the Taylor/Symington Secret Sect of Exclusive Brethren. It was addressed to their Leader in U.S.A. and many other Leaders, including Christchurch and Rangiera. It was a challenge to the Sect to answer certain questions affecting my wife and I, who were contemplating taking action against the sect for defamation.
- 3) The only persons outside the Sect who know what goes on within, are those like my wife and I who have been expelled. There are many such in New Zealand who would give testimony on oath as to the coercions and intimidations and harassments and pressures that go on in secret. Wives are abducted from husbands and children from parents, and families are shattered. There are separations and divorces and mental and health breakdowns and suicides and violent deaths, as a result.
- 4) The Sect leader, named J.H. Symington, lives in Neche, U.S.A. and he controls the whole church throughout the world by telephono. This is why my letter (see para 2) was sent first to him, then later to about sixty leaders in different countries. The whole Sect everywhere would have known its very serious contents and the disastrous consequences if the matter proceeded. The late Reg Piesse would have been acquitted with this matter about three weeks before his death. There would be few members within the Sect better acquainted with the truth and evidence in my letter than he, because he had lived both in Rangiera and Christchurch and knew the facts intimately. He knew they would be incontestable, and the Sect would be very heavy losers. This would prey on his mind, and together with other numerous pressures experienced within the Sect, could be a major reason for his suicide. A close relative of his, Bevan Malcolm of Timaru, had committed suicide not long before, and for similar reasons of Sect pressure.

Over the last several years there have been about nine cases of suicide in N.Z and I possess the official Coroner's verdicts and depositions on most of them. I believe this matter requires urgent police investigations, especially if further violent deaths affecting the Sect are to be prevented.

As the present moment there is the case of Simon Field of Richmond. He is 21 years old and his wife has been abducted by the Sect and they are demanding money with what appears to be menaces. He is so frustrated that he had to submit to psychiatric treatment and later came before the courts for trying to avenge himself outside of the law. I know the situation intimately, and have travelled to

Richmond several times to try and help, but I must warn that the situation is tense and could end tragically.

Also in Richmond there is Simon's cousin named Stephen Field, whose wife and children were coerced away from the husband and father, ending in divorce. The details suggest conspiracy and criminal intent.

Reg Piesse was uncle to Stephen Fields.

Reg Piesse was also uncle to Bevan Malcolm who committed suicide in the same fashion in 1980 in Timaru. Mr. Malcolm Green (now a District Court Judge) submitted several pages of depositions at the Timaru inquest, speaking of Sect Coercions, Abductions, Pressures, etc, that Mr. Green considered resulted in Bevan Malcolm's suicide. Reg Piesse knew the details of these Sect activities intimately. They resulted in Bevan Malcolm's wife Sarah and Eight children being abducted and harboured by the Sect in Christchurch where Reg Piesse lived. Stephen Field of Richmond will swear on oath that when his wife and 2 children were coerced away from him, resulting in divorce, only the care and support of a neighbour prevented his committing suicide. There are a number of similar cases in N.Z..

Railway Road, Sefton
P.O. Box 60, Phone 822

5th December 1983

ARTHUR BENJAMIN TOWNSEND

3) RE: REGINALD GEORGE PIESSE, Christchurch. To Hon. D.F. Quigley, M.P.

After my brief interview with you on 5 December 1983, I wrote to the Police in Christchurch on 9/12/83, attaching a total of ten enclosures, some of which you have seen. I enclose a copy of that letter herewith. Also enclosed is a copy of the reply form Inspector Jamieson of the Christchurch Police dated 4/1/84. What the Christchurch Police did not comment upon was the close blood relationship between Bevan Malcolm of Timaru and Reg Piesse of Christchurch and the fact that they were both lifetime members of the Sect. Also the Christchurch Police make no comment regarding my statement that only days before he died, Reg Piesse personally would have been very worried about a serious issue I had represented by letter to the Sect Universal leader in U.S.A. as well as about sixty international leaders. Reg Piesse had a brother-in-law named Brian Suckling, who was prominent with the Sect in Christchurch.

Brian Suckling and several other leaders in Christchurch were sent this letter and although the later testified at Reg Piesse's inquest, his sworn affidavit to the Coroner makes neither any mention of this disturbing letter nor of any religious connections between himself and Reg Piesse. The only mention in the inquest depositions of anything that may have upset Reg Piesse, was by Police Constable Donally who said "Enquiries revealed that the deceased had been to a friend's funeral the previous day and this had upset him." No mention is made in the inquest depositions of the following significant matters:

- a) Deceased's membership of the Sect.
- b) The "friend's" funeral the previous day being that of a deceased Sect member, conducted in the customary "private" fashion behind closed doors, form the Sect's premises in McFadden's Rd. , Christchurch.
- c) It being at this funereal service that, according to Brian Suckling's inquest deposition "I last saw the deceased alive at about 12.30 p.m. on Thursday 13th October 1983, and on that occasion he appeared in good health."
- d) Any possible suicide note; or the very recent receipt by several leaders in Christchurch including Brian Suckling (his brother-in-law) of a

letter of international legal implications which exposed some evil doctrines and practices in the Sect as affecting me personally and my wife, who had been defamed in a overseas newspaper by a Sect leader. (This letter can be produced if required.

Then in addition to the above, the N.Z. "TRUTH" has recently published an article on the Reg Piesse suicide which is bound to arouse fresh concerns among the public, and more especially among those who knew the deceased and his family, as we do. I enclose a copy of the "TRUTH" article of 11/1/84.

In the light of such disturbing evidence, maybe you will see fit to represent the matter to the Hon. Ben Couch, Minister of Police, ad possibly also to the Hon. Jim Molay, Minister of Justice, and I and others promise to assist all we can in any enquiry that may ensue. A large number of the Sect's very confidential copyright "books of ministry" which reveal their teaching and practices internationally as well

as in N.Z., are in my possession. The contents are an authoritative and convincing exposure of the true situation within the Sect. They contain not only "ministry" based on assorted scriptures, which are frequently quoted altogether out of context, but unbelievably filthy and sordid language which all Sect members, including the children, are compelled to read and assimilate. A.B Townsend