

CONFERENCE OF LEADERS OF RELIGIOUS INSTITUTES IN NEW SOUTH WALES

CLRI (NSW)

ABN 52 476 362 010
Member of Catholic Church Religious Group

Senator Amanda Vanstone
Minister for Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs
Parliament House
Canberra

Monday 24th May, 2004

Dear Minister Vanstone,

Re: DIMIA search at Doyle's Restaurant

I write on behalf of the Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes of NSW, a body which represents several thousand Catholic Religious men and women across the State.

Late last week your Officers from DIMIA conducted a search at Doyle's Restaurant for workers whose visa status might be 'illegal' or 'irregular'. The search was conducted with some surprise to the owner, Mr Peter Doyle. However, as you explained on Angela Cattern's ABC radio program, the DIMIA Officers were accompanied by a journalist/photographer from the Daily Telegraph. Your explanation for the presence of the photographer was that he had made prior arrangements with DIMIA and so was 'on assignment'. You also made it clear that you were very happy for the journalist to report the story as it was good for the Australian public to be aware of such searches.

The CLRI (NSW) is delighted that the Minister is now allowing the media to report on the workings of DIMIA. It has long been the view of the CLRI (NSW) expressed to the previous Minister that the presence of journalists in our on-shore and off-shore detention centres would be most welcome. Indeed we have called for this quite strongly in the past believing, as you do, that democracy is best served when the voters really have a clear and unambiguous description of *all* the workings of DIMIA.

May we deduce from the presence of the journalist at Doyle's during the search that DIMIA will now allow journalists to visit both on-shore and off-shore detention facilities? Such reporting would be a natural extension of the Minister's openness towards the media covering *some* of the workings of DIMIA.

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We look forward to your response so that we may communicate this to our members across the State as we prepare for the federal election.

Yours sincerely,

Julie Morgan
On behalf of the CLRI (NSW) Social Justice Committee