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Mr Paul Burns  
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February 2015

*Dear Mr Burns,*

Thank you for your letter of 25<sup>th</sup> January addressed to the Attorney General.

Two issues arise. The first is your complaint as to the way in which your letter of 21<sup>st</sup> January was handled, the second is whether the matters raised in your first letter are matters for the Attorney General.

Whilst your original letter made it clear that you expected it to be seen only by Rowena Collins Rice and the Attorney General that is not, I am afraid, the way in which Government Departments work. This office receives a great deal of correspondence over a very wide range of issues. No Minister, and this includes the Attorney General, or Director General could be expected to see or respond to all mail, whether the writer requests that or not. The Attorney General and Director General have delegated to their officials the discretion to deal with mail that is addressed to them, only bringing to their attention those matters which, in their officials' view, need their personal attention. Similar processes apply in all Government Departments and your letter was dealt with in compliance with our standard practice that applies to all received correspondence.

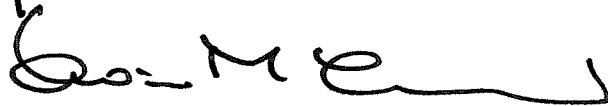
I turn now to your issues as to the conduct of your case before HHJ Butler. The majority of the points you raise in Appendix A of your original letter are complaints about how the trial judge exercised his discretion in determining the issues before him. Such issues, whether of fact or law, can only be dealt with within the court processes themselves by way of appeal. The Attorney General cannot intervene in the matters raised. To the extent that you raise issues about how the judge behaved in court and the allegations you make as to his treatment of you personally, these are matters for the Judicial Conduct Investigations Office. I am afraid, however, that any complaint has to be made within three months of the incident complained about.

During any break which occurs whilst a witness is giving evidence or being cross-examined, that witness is warned not to talk about the evidence he or she is giving to any other person. I understand that this is what happened at your trial. Once an

incident of this nature occurs, it is for the trial judge to determine how best to deal with it. In your case, the judge called the person the witness spoke to and allowed you to cross-examine him. It was then for the judge to determine whether a fair trial of the issues could continue. The Attorney General cannot go behind that decision. It was open to you, at the end of the proceedings, to consider whether or not to appeal.

Although you mention perjury and the possibility of perverting or attempting to pervert the course of justice, it is not entirely clear to me who you are making those allegations against. In any event, such allegations of criminality can only be investigated by the police.

I can only repeat what was explained to you by Mr Magee which is that the Attorney General cannot assist you in the matters raised in your correspondence.

Yours sincerely  


Kevin McGinty  
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