

From: The Rt. Hon. Lord Justice Lloyd

2 February 1993

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

Dear Mr. Pacey,

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 Michael told me. So much has Peter deteriorated, especially in the last few days, that Michael has had to call in a psychiatrist to prevent worse occurring.

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.

1099