



STATEMENT OF A WITNESS

In the matter of: Strike Force Zama
Place: Burwood Police Station
Date: 30 April 2015

Name: Galina STREKALOVSKY

STATES:

1. This statement made by me accurately sets out the evidence that I would be prepared, if necessary, to give in court as a witness. The statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I will be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything that I know to be false, or do not believe to be true.
2. I am 83 years of age.
3. I Aramais AROUSTIAN, am a Level 5 NAATI accredited Russian interpreter. For the purpose of this statement I will be interpreting English and Russian during the conversations between Detective MURRAY and Galina STREKALOVSKY.
4. I am a parishioner at the Church of All the Saints who have sanctified the Russian Land. The address of the Church is 18 Chelmsford Avenue, Croydon. I arrived in Australia in 1959 and I have been singing in the choir at the Church since 1963. I was thirty-six (36) years in the sorority and for twenty (20) years I was the President of the sorority. I often cooked and sewed robes for various people within the Church.
5. In January 2013 the Church hierarchy appointed Father Christopher to our Church. He was anointed as Christopher in the Church but his real name is Svyatoslav VAKHABOV. I first met Father Christopher in February 2013. Father Christopher served on Sundays and on Tuesdays he gave lectures. I saw Father Christopher at least twice a week sometimes more because I sang with the choir on Saturday and Sunday. Of course when he arrived we were all very happy. Our former Priest was Chinese and he couldn't give a sermon in good Russian. Then

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we had another Priest by the name of David LLOYD. He doesn't speak Russian also so when Father Christopher was appointed we could hear the sermons in Russian we could give our confessions in Russian. Every Tuesday he used to organise lectures in a lecture hall which were very interesting. Father Christopher is very educated in a spiritual realm. After we met, whenever Father Christopher needed help he would ask me.

6. When Father Christopher arrived at the Church I was no longer in the sorority. My husband had died and I was very sick. When we told David LLOYD how happy we were that we had a Priest that spoke Russian he said, "Don't be so happy he's only here until November. After that it will be me". I of course was very upset and this was at Easter time. We had His Eminence, Metropolitan Hilarion who had arrived from America. After a Church service one day I approached Metropolitan Hilarion and said, "We have heard stories that Father Christopher is only here until November after which he will be departing".

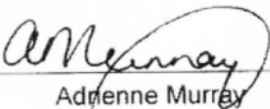
He replied, "Don't worry I've already applied for another Visa extension for him.

I said, "I did make some comments to the Father and so he is not leaving is he?"

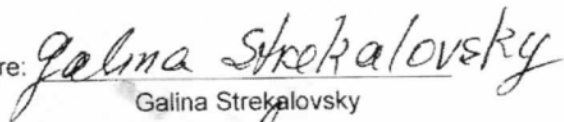
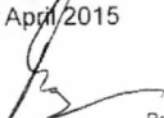
He said, "No".

7. At some point in July 2014 I saw that a new boy arrived in our Church and he was sort of helping like an altar boy. After the service I saw he was hanging around with the other altar boys. I did not know his name and I did not speak to him. His hair was about the same colour as mine, a light brown. He was not very tall, he was average build. He looked about fifteen (15) years old. During July I heard through members of the Church that there was some unpleasantness with Father Christopher caused by the fact that he had invited to Australia this boy. I then heard from our Administrator, Nicholas NEDACHIN that the boy had no right to live in the same house as the Father. I knew that the Church was against the boy's arrival in Australia as Father Christopher was not the boy's relative.
8. On 22 July 2014 I received a phone call from Father Christopher. Father Christopher said, "Galina, may I bring a boy around to your place. He can stay with you for two (2) or three (3)

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days?"

I said, "Of course."

About 6pm that day, Father Christopher bought the boy to my house. This was the same new boy I had previously seen at the Church. Father Christopher told me he had rung the boy's mother and asked her to change his ticket but he needed him to stay with me until this happened. He also told me he was being called into the Immigration Department the next day.

9. Father Christopher was about to leave to give a lecture at the Church when I said, "Come back here after you're finished. We will wait for you to have dinner."

The boy came in and I said, "Ok let's get acquainted. What's your name?"

The boy said, [REDACTED]

I said, "I'm Aunty Galina. How did you meet our Father, can I ask you that question?"

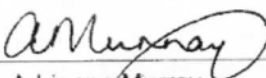
The boy said, "I'm from Belarus and in Belarus we have a regular television program which the Father conducts. My mother is very religious and she very often goes on pilgrimage. Whenever there is something that she doesn't understand she will approach Father Christopher. On one of these television programs they showed Australia. I fell in love with your wonderful old buildings and I want to grow up to be an architect."

I said, "How old are you?"


He said, "14. I asked my mother can you ask Father Christopher to somehow send me to Australia? Mother rang Father Christopher and he replied that if she were willing to bear the costs of the whole lot I'll try and get a Visa for your son."

That's all I managed to say. The boy was very polite and quiet. At that point there was ring on


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the doorbell. I said to the boy, "It sounds like Father Christopher has returned early."

When I walked out into the corridor, through the door I could see a tall man. Father Christopher is a tall man so I didn't ask anything I just opened the door.

10. I saw there was six (6) tall people outside, all of them who I originally didn't see. When I saw them I got scared and said, "No, no! I'm not letting you in here."

The one at the front presented his identification and I saw he was from the Police. I started to cry and tremble and said, "I haven't done anything wrong. I saw there was also one of the female police officers there as well."

One of the police asked me, "Are you Galina?"

I said, "Yes."

11. At that point the boy heard I was talking to someone and crying so he came out from the dining room. The police asked me, "Do you have a boy called [REDACTED]"

I said, "Yes."

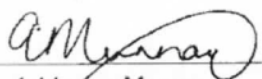
The police officer said, "We are taking him away."

I said, "No I won't let you! When Father Christopher returns because he is only here temporarily then you can take him."

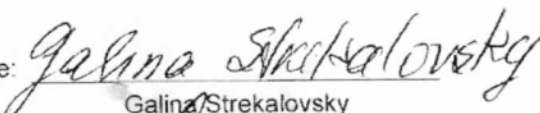
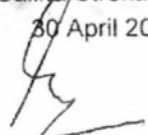
12. One of the police men took out a ring of keys and shook them in front of me. He said, "Father Christopher is already in the Police Station, these are his house keys." The boy of course doesn't speak a word of English so I had to more or less interpret for him.

I said to the boy, "They want to take you away."

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He said, "Can I not go?"

I said, "No there's nothing I can do. This is the Police." The boy got very upset at this.

The police officer said, "Give me his things."

All the boy had was one bag. I gave them that one small bag. It was a small backpack but I don't remember what colour it was.

The police officer said, "Give us all his things."

I said, "That's all there is."

13. They took the boy away and I saw two (2) of the police got in the police car but a couple of the other policemen were waiting on the foot path. Then my neighbour came out and said, "Galina are you alright?"

I said to the policeman, "Why don't you come inside?"


The police man said, "No, no we're waiting for a car."

14. I didn't know what to do so I began to ring people. I tried to ring Father Nikita CHEMODAKOV and Father George LAPARDIN but I was told by Father George's wife that they were both in Brisbane and wouldn't be back until Thursday. Then I tried to ring Father Alexander KRZHENEVSKY. This was in the evening and apparently he works at night time so I told his wife everything. His wife said, "Don't worry I'll ring him at work."

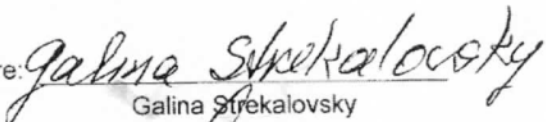
15. I thought I had to tell somebody that Father Christopher was arrested so I rang Helen ENGEL who is the elder Sister in the Church now and I explained the situation. She said, "Don't worry I'll get somebody from the sorority and we'll go to the Police Station."

16. Father Christopher was supposed to be giving a lecture at 7 o'clock that night. I rang my friend, Ada DRONOVA who was supposed to come to the lecture. I said, "What's going on?"

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She said, "I'm shaking. I'm standing next to the Church right now and police aren't letting us enter the Church premises. The police asked what we are doing here and I told them we have a lecture in the hall. The police asked what the lecture was about and I told them it was about the Bible. I saw five (5) or six (6) people walk into the Church premises and lead Father Christopher out. The police said there won't be any lecture tonight, you can go home. The people who had come earlier were already in the building but they couldn't understand why Father Christopher was arrested."

17. I waited for a long time until 2 o'clock in the morning. At 2am Helen rang me from the Police Station. She said, "We are here. It turns out that David LLOYD and Nick NEDACHIN have made a complaint against Father Christopher.

I asked Helen, "Why did the police arrest him?"

Helen replied, "These two made a complaint against him."

18. Helen rang me again and said, "When the police bring the boy back to you, ring this number." She gave me telephone number to ring but I don't remember what it was. I waited til 4 in the morning but nobody arrived. Then Helen rang me again and said, "What's going on, you haven't rung me?"


I said, "They haven't brought the boy."

Helen said, "David LLOYD said that the boy could not be returned to me because I'm a single woman. David wanted to take him with him but the boy said that he didn't want to go because he doesn't speak English."

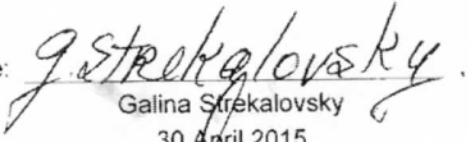
The boy stayed at the Police Station.

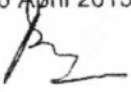
19. About 9am on 23 July, Father Christopher came to see me. He said, "Galina, can I ring somebody on your phone because they have taken everything from me?"

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From my phone he rang the boy's mother and I heard him ask the mother had she spoken to the boy because he was in the Police Station. Father Christopher told me that she had spoken to the boy.

20. Father Christopher was called out to the Immigration Department and was to go at 3 o'clock in the afternoon on that day. I rang Helen and said, "Can you take him there because I don't feel well. I'm not healthy, I can't do it."

Helen said, "Ok. Take him back to his own home so he can get a change of clothing and we'll pick him up from his home."

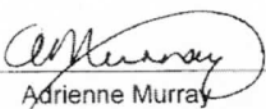
I took Father Christopher back to his unit at the Church. From what I know from what Helen told me after, she picked him up and took him to the Immigration Department.

21. About 7:30pm that night, I rang Helen to find out what happened. Helen said, "The Immigration Department told Father Christopher that on the 18th July his Visa had been revoked and although he was still serving in our Church on the 20th nobody told him that his Visa had been revoked. He was told he was going to be brought in because he didn't have a Visa. Father Christopher said to the Immigration officer that if they buy him a ticket he would return right now. The Immigration officer said that they couldn't do that but they asked him to fill out a form asking why he wanted to stay in Australia. I said, 'look I speak English can I help him fill out the form? I was told I could help him but we only had 10 minutes."

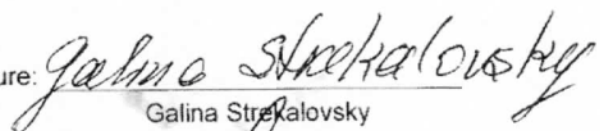
Helen continued to say, "Since all these terrible things are happening in the Ukraine we can't ask him to return there because of all the problems. I was told it would be decided pretty quickly. About half past four the Immigration officer said that since the working day is over, that they haven't finished and that he has no Visa they have to take him to Villawood."

22. About a week or so after this, I visited Father Christopher and he didn't know why he was there. Of course we have a sort of split in the Church about what happened but the Church did appoint a solicitor for him. This is the only time I have visited Father Christopher but I speak to

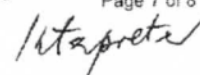
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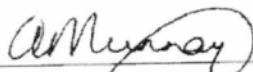
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him on the phone about once a week. He always asks me how long he will be there and if there is any news.

23. For six months I was unable to sing at the Church. Since the new Priest has arrived I have returned to the choir. I have not seen the boy, Ilya since he was taken from my house by police. Helen told me that the boy returned home to Belarus on 24 July 2014.

24. I Aramais AROUSTIAN, have read this statement to Galina STREKALOVSKY who agrees the content of this statement is true and correct.

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