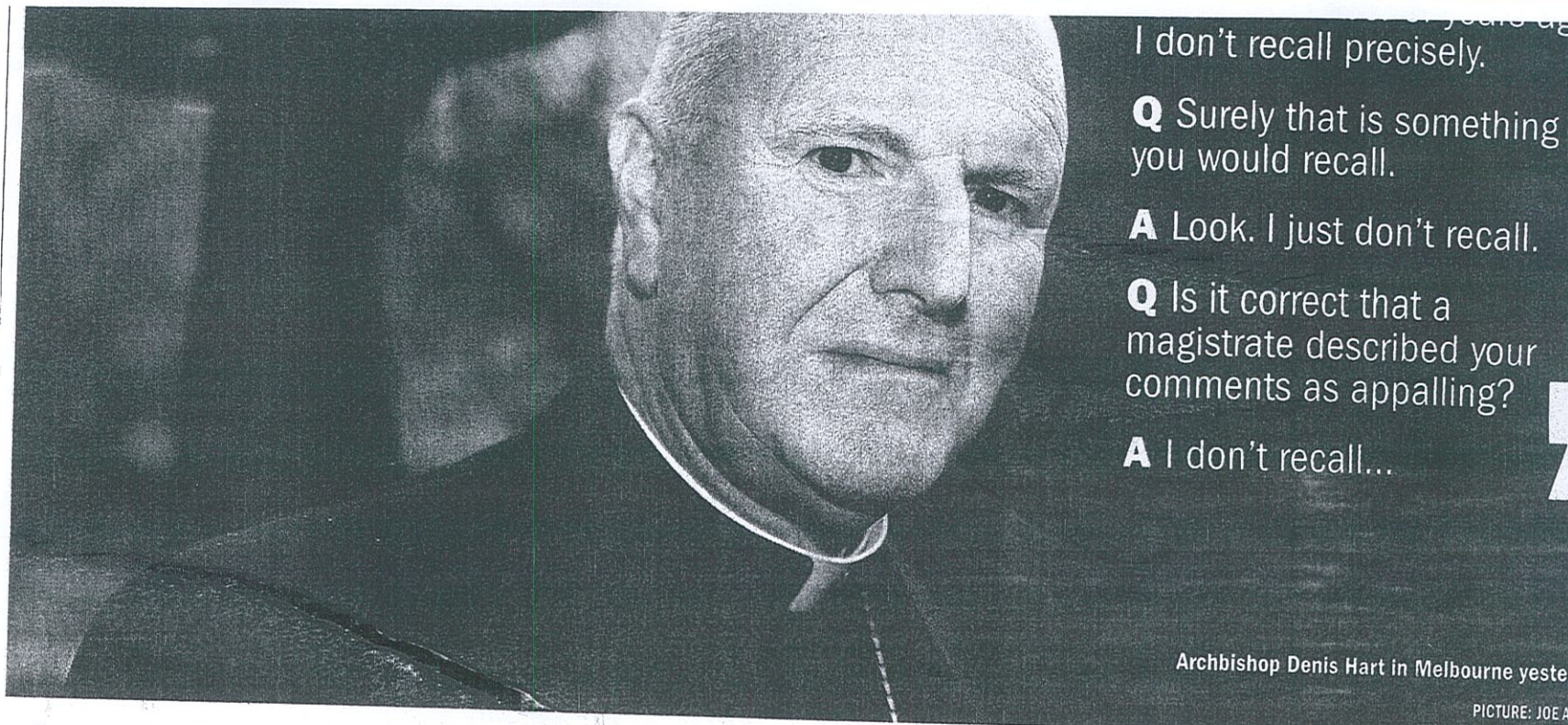


I not to tell the priest about police inquiry.
 omments from Melbourne ar General Les Tomlinson t there is a church sex abuse 'victims' industry" that seeks to loit victims to make money which the Archbishop yester- said "weren't helpful".
 alls from a victims collective, o are backed by two intere- e bishops, to review the Mel- bourne archdiocese's handling omplaints. Archbishop Hart l there was no need to review system. "I would much er concentrate on the com- sion that we need to show to ims . . . They are people who uld have expected more a priests and it is a tremen- s suffering to be let down by ple they trusted."



Archbishop Denis Hart in Melbourne yester
 PICTURE: JOE A

I don't recall precisely.
Q Surely that is something you would recall.
A Look. I just don't recall.
Q Is it correct that a magistrate described your comments as appalling?
A I don't recall...

The Age
 August 11,
 2009

Archbishop to abuse victim: 'Go to hell, bitch'

By **NICK MCKENZIE**
 AGE INVESTIGATIVE UNIT

MELBOURNE Catholic Archbishop Denis Hart told a woman who had been sexually abused by a priest to "go to hell, bitch" in conduct labelled appalling by a Victorian magistrate.

Archbishop Hart later apologised to the woman in the Melbourne Magistrates Court for what magistrate Anne Goldsborough described as "appalling words of abuse".

But last night Archbishop Hart repeatedly claimed that he "did not recall" his comments or the magistrate's rebuke in mid-2004. "It was a number of years ago, I don't recall precisely," he told *The Age*.

When put to him that he would surely recall the com-



ment because it had become an issue in court, he again said: "I don't recall."

Court documents confirm the archbishop's outburst after he was granted an intervention order against the woman, who had pursued him over her abuse

by priest Barry Whelan in 2001.

The magistrate said that a "very, very angry" Archbishop Hart had told the woman to "go to hell, bitch" after she knocked on his door at 1.20am in March, 2004. The woman was the subject of an earlier intervention order after she had thrown stones through a window of the archbishop's house and hassled him and his staff.

Delivering her findings in June 2004, Magistrate Goldsborough said: "Archbishop Hart has apologised for this appalling and ungracious act directly from the witness box in my presence."

The magistrate said she "did not consider he [Archbishop Hart] was fearful or had any apprehension for himself or others" when he found the

woman on his doorstep — but also described her conduct as unacceptable.

The magistrate found that the archbishop was angry that his privacy had been significantly breached as a result of the early morning visit.

But Ms Goldsborough rejected the archbishop's lawyer's claim that the victim's abuse was not a relevant factor in the intervention order court case.

"I am assured . . . by the archbishop himself that [he] . . . has a good understanding of the complex set of circumstances in which [the victim] finds herself at least in part caused by her . . . abuse by former father Barry Whelan."

In her findings, the magistrate also said that after attending the archbishop's house, the

woman had later asked for an apology from the archbishop over his comments and to staff over the phone that she wanted to kill him. Ms Goldsborough found that the woman "had no intention to carry this threat", but said it was "threatening and alarming".

"[The victim] says all of her behaviour illustrated in phone conversations is because she is hurt and frustrated," Ms Goldsborough found.

"While that may be understandable in one sense, it is absolutely unacceptable behaviour in all other senses," Ms Goldsborough found.

Whelan abused the woman in 2001 after his suspension from the priesthood in the 1990s for abuse.

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