**[UNPUBLISHED]**

Dear Editor,

The headline over the News Letter story of 9 January on the release of government papers regarding decriminalisation of homosexuality in Northern Ireland read “Same sex-law was not enforced, files reveal”.

The story states the papers make clear that “for several years prior to the law being liberalised in Northern Ireland it was not being enforced in the province.” However my case at Strasbourg was given huge impetus because the authorities did recommence enforcing the law for acts between adults that were not criminal in England.

The cases involving nearly 30 committee members of the two gay campaigning groups were eventually dropped in 1976 on the instruction of the Attorney General in London. The European Court of Human Rights case started then but took six years to conclude by which time enforcement seemed to have been suspended.

You also report Rev Ivan Foster saying he believes “the law change had contributed to an increase in child abuse” but he provides no evidence. Child abuse existed before reform and afterwards but the law has been more rigorously enforced in recent years particularly against Catholic clergy who had been effectively left unprosecuted earlier. It must also be noted that the most prominent abuse case, at the Kincora working boys home in Belfast, and the conviction of an employee who was a Free Presbyterian preacher occurred before the law was changed in 1982.

Yours sincerely

Jeffrey Dudgeon