

Anglican Church Diocese of Grafton
 The Right Reverend Keith Slater
 PO Box 4
 Grafton NSW 2460

Richard 'Tommy' Campion
 REDACTED

Dear Bishop

October 15, 2007

Church of England North Coast Children's Home

I respond to your letter dated Tuesday, 14 August 2007.

It was intimidating and in no way did you address my issues in an acceptable manner. It revealed no understanding of the abuse, in fact, tends to minimize my suffering as you have shown no insight into the profound outcome of the abused victims; only recrimination for not bowing to the classification of the Anglican Church.

Your letter was indecorous. You assumed. You cast aspersions on my integrity. You lied.

Bishop, what about the moral value? Don't the words 'bloody fair go mate' mean anything to you and the church? It appears nothing has been learnt from the Hollingworth tragedy.

You are hiding behind the 'unfair rules' of the Anglican Church and treating me unjustly.

Just as you have in your August 14, 2007 letter, let me summarise the recent process:

* You make reference of me seeking legal representation: That is not your decision. I sort legal advice because the situation was beyond my capabilities. You can't deny me of that. Then you have to consider my lack of faith for the Anglican Church.

* You questioned that I encouraged other people to place their complaints in the hands of a lawyer: How could I be so heartless not to help others? They were abused too. I didn't 'force' them to see a lawyer. I searched Australia to find victims who were abused in the North Coast Children's home and 39 come forward. (There were ten more that came forward who didn't see a lawyer). Bishop, would you have searched Australia to find victims who were abused in an Anglican Home? How could I have been so selfish to think only of myself? That is not in my blood. You should be proud of me for trying to help others, but no, you are bitter. I could have taken reparation from Mr. Comben and walked away, but I didn't, instead, I thought of others. That, my buddy, is called integrity.

* Yes, you met with CA [REDACTED] and I in [REDACTED] but as far as care and concern, there was about as much as a lion would have for its prey. You were stony-faced, unmoved and you lacked feeling and lacked compassion. On that day you showed no love for your fellow man.

* With three witnesses to back me up, you did not state our meeting was not connected to a process of mediation. That was another lie.

You are putting the church before a victim – a victim who is still battling with grief.

I am an innocent man. I am being treated as guilty and although the cost to my well-being is great I will continue to seek justice. **I will not be a silent victim.**

Just because the church has come to an agreement with the other people from the home, I am not tied into a law that said I had to accept that. I did not agree at the settlement and I don't agree now. I did not sign anything giving authority to anyone.

In your letter you wrote: 'If the Diocese now proceeded to renegotiate with you at a significantly higher level of recompense then it would actually impinge upon your integrity, and be viewed by others as a betrayal.'

You are wrong to put me in that dirty mould? You have impinged on my integrity. You betrayed me with your assumptions.

In this horrible situation which you proffer; I am willing to write to victims who accepted the 'compassion' reparation and put your concerns to them. I will show them what you have written in your letter. I will explain my view on your words and what has occurred since they accepted the 'compassion' reparation. We will then see what they think, without you assuming it.

* On Thursday April 12, 2007 Mr. Comben was quoted in The Australian. He said: "We have made an offer on the basis that the church is a church of compassion and wants to make a passable approach to people who have apparently been damaged in a place that had some sort of connections with some church people."

* The words: 'people who have apparently been damaged in a place that had some sort of connections with some church people,' are bloody cruel. Mr. Comben's words are a load of tripe and show contempt for the people who were in the home. You, Bishop Slater, and you, Mr. Comben, damn well know that.

You obviously believe the 41 victims are lying? They will hate to have the words Mr Comben said; rubbed in their faces again.

* The truth is the people you talk of, who were innocent children back then, weren't apparently damaged, they were severely lamaged – some damaged beyond repair.

* The children's home wasn't a place that had some connections with some church people. The church people were ordained members of the Anglican clergy, and the home was a place that had very strong connections with them.

True facts of my time in the North Coast Children's Home:

**The Anglican Church owned and ran the North Coast Children's Home.
(This information is from the Freedom of Information offices).**

**The matron, at any one time, held the Conduct License of the home.
The Anglican Church held the Control License of the home.
The matron, at any one time, answered to the Home Board and the Home Board answered to the Anglican Church.
The matron and the staff were employed by the Home Board and the Home Board answered to the Anglican Church.
(This information is from Mr. Tony Madden who was the Manager of DOCS in Lismore for twenty years).**

**The Anglican clergy had a free-run of the Children's Home – anytime - day or night.
The Anglican clergy were involved with fund-raising for the home.
The Anglican clergy, the Bishop and Archbishop were at the home for openings of buildings linked to the home.
The Anglican clergy worked close with the children in the home.
The Anglican clergy held church services in the chapel of the home with the children - also at St Andrews Anglican Church.
The Anglican clergy had discussions with the matron which related to the children.
The minister's residence was in the mix of the home, St. Andrews Church and the Archdeacon's residence.
The Anglican clergy spent time alone with the children of the home.
Some of the Anglican clergy took the children on 'outings.'
Some of the Anglican clergy gave 'treats' to children in the minister's residence.
Some of the Anglican clergy beat and sexually abused the children.
The matron beat the children.
The staff beat the children.
One particular member of the clergy beat the children with a belt from around his waist - sometimes with the belt buckle – a belt which was wore over his long black cassock.
(This information is from the writer of this letter, Richard 'Tommy' Campion. I lived in the home for 14 years.
I breathed it all. I am willing to take a professional lie-detector test to prove all the facts the church denies).**

Mr. Comben never lived in the home nor visited it; therefore he is assuming his quotes written in The Australian. He lied.

It is bloody appalling that Mr. Comben and the Diocese of Grafton, which includes you Bishop Slater, made those denials.

Judging by happenings of the past, it is known that people in religious organisations often move from a position of denial as a first reaction rather than checking out the history of the involvement that they have over time.

{Perceptibly, it would be a concern if one person said they were abused in the North Coast Children's Home. If there were two people who said they were abused in the Home you would have to take positive steps to help them. If there were three people who said they were abused in the home you could not possibly ignore them. In this case, 41 people signed statutory declarations stating they were abused in the North Coast Children's Home, an Anglican home, and the Anglican Church people made a mockery of it. You, Bishop Slater and you Mr. Comben did not believe the people. Why is that?

New Testament: Mark 10:13-16 People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth; anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.

Bishop Slater, again I acknowledge the question in your August 14, 2007 letter. You asked: "What would help you to move on from these things of the past?" Another of my answers is below. Please add it to the list I have already supplied

*** There is no disputing who holds the hand of responsibility. You cannot offer care and turn it into abuse. No mater who in the home and church community committed these crimes against the harmless children, the guilt and responsibility belongs to the Anglican Church, and that can not be disputed.**

Consequently, the Anglican Church can not ignore the truth and must admit guilt for the abuse of the innocent children who lived in the Church of England North Coast Children's Home in Lismore, New South Wales. The children suffered years of hell - years of violent physical abuse, sexual and psychological abuse. The abuse was beyond understanding and left many children crippled with pain; many damaged beyond repair. Early April 2007, Rev'd Pat Comben; Diocesan Registrar of the Anglican Church in Grafton said: "the Anglican Church is a church of compassion." Drawing from Comben's spiritual words it is time for the Anglican Church to address this crisis so to help in the healing process of victims and to set the record straight for the years ahead.

Even though you have factual events of abuse you, The Right Reverend Keith Slater - Bishop of Grafton and Rev'd Pat Comben, will not accept the abuse happened. If you have a heart and truly believe in God, you have to acknowledge the truth. The truth is the Anglican Church is accountable for the abuse of, conservatively, 100 children. If you don't admit the abused happened, it will be something you will regret for the rest of your lives.

You may take solace that you did not commit these atrocious acts on the children, but people that were under your church's guidance did. Some of those people are still alive and one is known to be still working for the church.

Footnote: You will find more answers to your August 14, 2007 letter in a letter I sent to you dated September 27, 2007.

I wait for your reply, hopefully, with positive news.

Regards,

Richard 'Tommy' Campion

c.c: CA
c.c: CLAN