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The Anglican Church of Australia  
The Most Reverend Dr. Philip Aspinall – The Primate  
PO Box 241  
Brisbane QLD 4001

Richard 'Tommy' Campion  
REDACTED

Dear Dr. Aspinall

October 24, 2007

**Church of England North Coast Children's Home**

This is an official complaint concerning the Anglican Church Diocese of Grafton.

The church has a clear duty of care and in this situation; it is something they have lost sight of. Not everything the church believes is on the surface.

No doubt you have been informed of the compensation claim of 41 people who once lived in the Church of England North Coast Children's Home in Lismore, New South Wales. In my day it was a home of hell and fury – of hatred and abuse.

while back 39 of the victims took the 'compassion' payment the Diocese of Grafton offered. The victims signed a Deed of release and the church than 'pushed' them from their mind.

My sister, CA and I, did not accept the 'compassion' payment as we believe justice wasn't being served and the church did not act within their protocol. The 'compassion' payment did not fit right with our, collectively, 22 years of living in the home, and the abuse we suffered.

There is something drastically wrong when the Right Reverend Keith Slater, Bishop of Grafton and Reverend Pat Comben, Diocese Registrar of the Anglican Church Diocese of Grafton, denies there was abuse in the home and denies the North Coast Children's Home was owned and run by the Anglican Church.

CA and I have always known their confidence to be untrue. We have told them many times, but they brushed us aside.

In August 2007, we received details from the offices of the Freedom of Information that proved the Anglican Church owned and ran the North Coast Children's Home. That was during the time CA and I was living there.

We also have information from Mr. Tony Madden agreeing on that matter. Mr. Madden was the manager of DOCS in Lismore for 20 years. He spent much time connected to the home. He lived and breathed those 20 years with the children, the matron, the staff and the clergy; in between shuffling child endowment payments through to the Anglican Church reserves.

In August, I wrote to Bishop Slater of our findings and I am still waiting for a meeting to present him with the truth. This can not wait any longer. We need to move along and get this out in the open.

Importantly the information needs to be acknowledged by the Anglican Church Diocese of Grafton, but it can not be left in their hands to deal with. They are an adversary – they loose sight of the truth when it comes to us.

The Anglican Church refuses to admit guilt for the abuse of the children, and that is a damn sin. If 41 people who lived in the Children's Home presented Statutory Declarations to the church stating the abuse they suffered, which they did, the man on the street would believe they were abused – but the church do not.

The fact that the people who were in the home, who were children back than, were abused, it is the truth, and it cannot be denied, no matter what Bishop Slater and Mr. Comben says.

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CA lived in the home for eight years and I lived there for 14 years. We do not know how we survived those ferocious years and we are annoyed and hurt that we are still fighting for our rights.

**It saddens us deeply; as during our 22 years in the home we believe the Anglican Church would be accountable for the abuse of, conservatively, 100 children. That is a bloody tragedy.**

In 2005, at the start of my grieving, I wrote a letter of complaint to the Diocese of Grafton telling of the abuse I suffered. My sometimes graphic and appalling details must have moved Reverend Pat Comben to write to me so quickly. I was humbled by his response and his words gave me hope.

Mr. Comben wrote: "I am unable to adequately express my personal feelings of revulsion, sorrow and helplessness which the letter raises inside me. While the Bishop is presently away I have no hesitation in speaking on behalf of the diocese in saying that we will do all we can to assist you to move beyond the pain that was caused in an Anglican place that should have been safe, but which was clearly not."

However, in 2007, in a scurrilous move by Mr. Comben, while being questioned by a journalist from The Australian newspaper to why he had wrote those meaningful words and didn't enforce them, in an instant, he rebuked what he had written. His reason being, he was unfamiliar with the history of the home when he originally wrote to me.

**That was the day Mr. Comben lied to deny the truth. That was the day Mr. Comben lied to deny me of my rights.**

I trust you will take my problems to the 'highest level' of the Anglican Church to stop the superiority of Bishop Slater and Mr. Comben. We have had correspondence from Bishop Slater, some which was intimidating, unfair and uncaring. When Suzanne and I wrote to him about that, he avoided our inquiries.

\* Below is an extract from a letter I wrote to Bishop Slater on October 15, 2007. It is based on information CA and I gathered in the form of documented evidence; it is based on what we know and what we feel in our hearts.

**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, Mr. 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 you, Rev'd Pat Comben, will not accept that 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 many 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 who committed the acts of cruelty are still alive and one is known to be still working for the Anglican Church.**

**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.

Dr. Aspinall, it is important that the Anglican Church Diocese of Grafton be honest about this. It is pathetic if they don't. They have to face up to these serious problems and stop hiding behind the truth.

There were 41 people, all of them children once, abused in the North Coast Children's Home who has come forward and sought compensation -- and respect. There are at least another 10 people that I know of, and spoken too, who were abused in the home, but are not eager to get involved. A few do not have trust in the workings of the church and some said the pain would be too much to bear. I understand there are at least another 40 to 50 people who were in the home to find, which I intend doing.

Please find in your heart that piece of love, caring and understanding that God gave you, and believe what I have told you.

I am willing to sit with you and explain what I am going through. I would appreciate significant answers. I await your reply.

**P.S.** I am still waiting for Bishop Slater to honour his promise of Mr. Comben. He has disobeyed that promise and broken the Ninth Commandment. Can you please follow this through?

Kind regards,



**Richard 'Tommy' Champion**

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c.c: CLAN