

National Human Rights Consultation Submission

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Submission Text:

With the global extent of the clergy abuse crisis in our society and the inability of religions, governments to come together with the people to formulate and implement a unified policy to ensure the safety of children simply displays the failure of all religions and our current governments to adequately respond to normal human needs and brings the need for their continued existence in their current format into question.

For example; the leading light of Christianity (the Catholic church) is simply unwilling or unable to develop and deploy a single universal policy on child safety and protection in the light of the global clergy abuse crisis. Neither it nor any other religion is able to put aside their differences and disputes to come together to formulate a single policy to ensure the safety and protection of not only the children of their own religion but the children of all religions as well as the children of our society.

This church and others are unable to achieve balance on these basic human principals in the area of child safety, justice and humanitarian needs - child safety and protection is the prime force found in all humans as the need to protect and ensure the safety of their off-spring. When religions and governments fail in the face of that then they have failed to uphold this most basic of human needs.

When there is no call from religious or government leaders to come together to provide a unified approach to the safety of children, when there is no working party, commission or national debate then we are simply ignoring our childrens' needs to such a degree that this singular deficit can only be called failure.

Universal, total and complete failure in these most basic of human parental responsibilities - social responsibilities which are derived from the most basic of human rights, responsibilities which are near and dear both emotionally and biologically to each and everyone of us through our investment into the future via our children; when the childrens' rights and needs are put aside due to a plethora of religious needs, religious argument, practices, policies, financial wants or dictates or for whatever reason - regardless of the reason the lack of a singular policy is clearly and simply a comprehensive failure by all in positions of authority.

Is there room in a society for a religion to be permitted to preach that it holds the key and provides the path to eternal life and to put forth its myriad views in regards all things spiritual, parental, social, sexual and reproductive in our society whilst it is incapable of deploying what is universally understood to be the basis of good parenting and the first basic step or requirement in regards ensuring the protection and safety of children on a wider scale? These are issues for our politicians just as they are issues for each and every adult and parent in our country, these are not issues which should be left in the hands of one or two religions who have failed to achieve successful outcomes in the past and in the present.

No person respects the current response of the catholic or other church responses to the clergy abuse issue. No person respects the lack of response to this problem by our elected politicians and the leaders of our society.

Every individual with an interest in humanity can only point out some aspect where these responses can be or needs to be vastly improved or an

aspect where church or government has failed itself, Christianity, democracy, human rights and the individual men, women and children of each country on our planet and their future children. This issue is relevant and affects each and every individual one of us. These criticisms are universal and is a universal acknowledgment of failure of both government and religion on the specific issue of ensuring the safety and protection of our children from sexual predation inside and outside of religious dictates or wants.

What benefits can a failed church or religion bring to our society if it is unable to implement and uphold these few basics for the safety and benefit of our current and future children? What benefit does a mute and immobile government bring the people when it fails to act in the best interests of our children?

If church and others are unable to bring these few basic human things into our society should we permit them to continue to exist in their current forms? Or should we regulate them until they are able to act consistently in an appropriate manner.

Instead we have religious argument and political fear to act for the benefit of all of humanity. This situation permits such failures as the Australian Prime Minister who deals with different religions in regards abuses by and in religious institutions and their teachings with a differing approach thus bringing further dissensions and dis-order into our society through this public display of religious discrimination and the abandonment of the needs of children and those harmed by these atrocities.

The Australian Prime Minister on Islamic preaching in regards wife beating and rape.

"Under no circumstances is sexual violence permissible or acceptable in Australia - under no circumstances."

"Australia will not tolerate these sort of remarks. They don't belong in modern Australia, and he should stand up, repudiate them and apologise."

The Australian Prime Minister on Catholicism in regards children raped by Catholic clergy.

"This is a matter for the church and I respect the internal judgements of the church. I don't stand outside the church and provide them with public lectures in terms of how they should behave...".

This trafficking in the lives of adults and children and the inherent discrimination brings grave concern to the great majority of Australians who simply seek to live in a safe, peaceful and harmonious society and to be able to raise their children in a safe environment without the need to have concerns over the safety of their children with their clergy and the concern caused over the repeated failure of our governments to address this obvious social deficit.

Clearly a failed notion in regards equality, human rights, justice, human dignity, discrimination, our Constitution and our legal framework as well as our notions of fairness and secular governance.

In light of the public failure of religions together with the public failure of the Prime Minister, our Federal Government, State Governments, Labor, Liberal or other parties as well as those who failed to speak out when these criminal matters and the social failures which have been raised so often to come together to develop and deploy a unified policy for the protection and safety of our children.

While we have no stated plans and policies in regards the management of the failure of religions to self regulate in regards the protection from sexual abuse of children by clergy we simply fail the children of that religion and all children in our society.

While we have no policies in regards social justice, restorative justice, compensation and regulation within all areas of our society including within religions to ensure this never occurs again then we again are failing our own future and the future of our childrens children.

While we have nor stated plans and policies in regards ensuring the sexual safety, protection and legal rights to the justice we all deserve and expect for our ourselves and our children as a result of these social, religious and political failures then here too we will have failed and will continue to fail to provide the safety which they are entitled to and the safety we have a responsibility to provide to current and future children.

With no acknowledgement of the extent of the problem nor a co-ordinated and comprehensive understanding of the issues no time-frames can be set for the release of policies and their implementation to ensure that the rights of our children are never again held to ransom because of dysfunctional governmental and dysfunctional religious actions or notions.

If our priorities are as we say they are then we have clearly been failed by both our governments and our religions.

Only failed government, failed religion and failed leaders could produce such a failure as we currently have in regards our children and their safety - all that simply over developing and implementing a single unified safety policy to ensure the safety of children from predators in all areas of our society.