

CONFERENCE OF LEADERS OF RELIGIOUS INSTITUTES IN NSW



Member of Catholic Church Religious Group
ABN 52 476 362 010

2nd February, 2009

Senator the Hon. Christopher Evans
Minister for Immigration and Citizenship
P.O. Box 1322
West Perth – WA 6872

Dear Senator Evans,

I write on behalf of the Social Justice committee within the NSW Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes. CLRI (NSW) represents approximately 3,500 Catholic religious, men and women, throughout the state, as well as many people working in organisations run by religious institutes.

I have written previously expressing our appreciation for measures already taken by your government with regard to refugees and asylum seekers.

I would like to express our present concern with regard to the people still held on Christmas Island. In particular we are concerned about the children among them. The stand taken by Liberal backbenchers in 2007, stand which forced former Prime Minister Howard to release children held in detention, was welcomed. I am aware that Labor policy is against children in detention. However, at the moment there are children in detention on Christmas Island, not to mention community detention in Australia.

Stated labor policy has assured us that claims to refugee status would be dealt with as quickly as reasonably possible. We are confident that these people who look to Australia for protection will have their cases resolved speedily and that their stay on Christmas Island will be a short one. We would very much like to see an end to detention of children.

Once again, I thank you for all you have achieved in the short space of time you have been Minister.

Yours sincerely,

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SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

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