

REBUTTAL OF FALSE ALLEGATIONS MADE AGAINST BRETHREN

ON AUSTRALIAN TV CHANNEL 9

A CURRENT AFFAIR, 11 AUGUST 2014

ALLEGATION		RESPONSE
1.	Brethren prevent son from attending mother's funeral. Craig: "They told me I'm not allowed to go to the funeral service, that I'm not allowed to go to the cemetery."	Craig's father invited him to the burial service, without reference to anyone outside the family, on the understanding that he show respect. Craig emailed and advised his father he would not be attending.
2.	Pictures of candles and music with religious overtones	Images and sounds were not of the Brethren. This was a digital mock-up and is both false and misleading.
3.	"Craig has been cut off from his family, And today, he's been banned from attending his own mother's funeral"	See above.
4.	"Craig has been cut off from his family, his church"	Craig chose not to attend church for many months before making his decision to pursue a different lifestyle to that in which he was brought up by his parents, and had lived with his wife and family for 55 years.
5.	"Craig has been cut off from his family, his business"	As a result of his actions his wife divorced him which resulted in legal proceedings for the purposes of separating their assets, including the business. He was given the opportunity, (documented by written

ALLEGATION		RESPONSE
		offer), on more than one occasion, to purchase the business and he did not avail himself of that opportunity.
6.	“Bruce Hales ordered him to sell his business”	False.
7.	“and the millions he receives in tax-free donations from his followers in white envelopes”	False.
8.	“If you’ve disagreed with Bruce Hales – which is very rare, because of the consequences – you will be withdrawn from in due course”	Excommunication is extremely rare and is based on holy scripture. After extensive time has been taken in pastoral care then it is the responsibility of the local congregation. Even after someone has been excommunicated, pastoral care is available for counselling. At times in very serious and rare breaches of loyalty to the brethren fellowship, summary action by the local congregation has been required. In the case of Craig Stewart, Mr Bruce Hales neither advised or was asked for his consent or approval in relation to his ex-communication. Mr Hales was overseas.
9.	“But I have repeatedly asked for current photos of my grandchildren. They will not give me anything”	The inference is that the Church has directed the family to withhold these, which is totally false. The family has chosen not to give Craig photos of their children because they do not want the photos to be given to the media.
10.	“Right now, the body of Craig’s mother is in there, his father’s house, but Craig is being made to	The first time Craig arrived at his father’s house he was granted immediate access along with his companion into his father’s house. He had unrestricted freedom to view his mother’s body as he

A worldwide christian fellowship represented in Australia, New Zealand, North America, Canada, Argentina, Europe, Scandinavia, United Kingdom and the Caribbean

Also known as The Exclusive Brethren, Plymouth Brethren IV, or Brethren

Plymouth Brethren
Christian Church

ALLEGATION		RESPONSE
	wait outside in his car”	wished.
11.	“Mr Bruce Hales will be saying what’s to happen...He will know what’s going on and he will be saying whether it goes ahead or not”	Mr Hales had no involvement or knowledge as to the funeral arrangements.
12.	“A week later, we return to the cemetery to find that Craig’s mother has been buried. He wasn’t told.”	Craig emailed and advised his father he would not be attending, further to this Craig’s father informed him his mother had been buried.