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3 August 2006

Dear Baroness Cumberlege,

Thank you for the Commission's invitation to send evidence regarding the implementation of the Nolan Commission.

Over the last few years, we have been asked by religious superiors to provide sanctuary for clergy against whom allegations have been levelled. Usually, these persons have arrived in a very fragile state and have required much support. I have little to comment upon in regard to the general workings of the Nolan Report - of the sound protection it has afforded victims and the satisfactory safeguards it has established. I am more concerned about the treatment of the alleged clergy perpetrators. They have often been uprooted from their homes and positions with little warning and told to go elsewhere, with no information of the allegations levelled against them. They would appear to be in a far more vulnerable position than civilians against whom similar allegations have been levelled. In one case, whilst harbouring a diocesan priest awaiting the outcome of investigations, and concerning whom I had not the slightest anxiety that he would misbehave with children whilst here, he was forced to leave because of an outside threat that if he did not leave immediately, the media would be informed that the diocese and abbey had consented to allow an abuser to remain here, in a place, that is, where children and young people are welcomed to various events. In the light of all this, I would ask the Commission, therefore, to examine again the procedures relating to the protection for and support given to alleged clergy abusers.

Yours sincerely,



Abbot Geoffrey Scott