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## The Greens are on witch-hunt against us: Exclusive Brethren

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The Exclusive Brethren has accused Australian Greens leader Bob Brown of vilifying its church and members.

Senator Brown yesterday urged the upper house to conduct a wide-ranging inquiry into the activities of the Exclusive Brethren sect, saying it had prevented thousands of young Australians proceeding to tertiary education.

But Exclusive Brethren spokesman Daniel Hales said Senator Brown's attempt to refer the church to the Senate's community affairs committee was based on a "fictional account" of the group's activities.

"Senator Brown's remarks in the Senate were characterised by many factual inaccuracies," Mr Hales said in a statement.

The Greens leader suggested the inquiry should examine \$10 million in government payments to five Exclusive Brethren schools throughout Australia, even though they had a total of just 2,000 students.

Brethren schools received funding in the same way as other non-government schools, Mr Hales said.

"Church members, their businesses and schools are subject to exactly the same regulations, laws and scrutiny by government agencies, tribunals and courts as other Australian individuals, businesses and schools.

"We obey the law scrupulously."

The Brethren called on Senator Brown to stop vilifying the church and its members.

The sect was embroiled in controversy before last year's federal election, when it was alleged it was campaigning for then-environment minister Malcolm Turnbull in his marginal seat of Wentworth in Sydney's east.



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### COMMENTS

- Wednesday, 27 August 2008
- “ If they have nothing to hide then what is the problem. I certainly don't trust this gang, I certainly don't think they should be allowed to call themselves a religion. ”
- Posted by: Graeme Henderson, Darling Downs [Reply](#)
- 
- Wednesday, 27 August 2008
- “ So much for the Greens and their human rights record. Don't forget Graeme, a "wide ranging enquiry" has to be paid for. There are certainly more important things to have an enquiry over. This one will just end up with nil and cost the people more money. Let's instead spend it on better roads, traffic flow, reduction in unemployment, better international competitiveness for Australian business, helping clean up the environment, reduce drug use and get people trained, working & off the dole. ”
- Posted by: Anonymous Ly, Syd [Reply](#)
- 
- Wednesday, 27 August 2008
- “ WHAT????????10 MILLION on 2000 children give me a break, ok i want to swear here but i cant. this is ridiculous. get this investigated quickly and let heads roll. good on you bob ”
- Posted by: Belinda Hummie, New lambton [Reply](#)

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