

Shunned Parents To Meet Sect Leaders

Kristen Watts

356 words

9 June 1998

The West Australian

9

English

(c) 1998 West Australian Newspapers Limited, all rights reserved

PARENTS who claim to have been cut off from their children by the **Exclusive Brethren** have agreed to meet Church members.

Ken Wallis, of Dalwallinu, said yesterday a letter written to The West Australian by Brethren leaders failed to justify why the extreme Christian sect had banned his four daughters from making contact with the rest of their family.

"The letter said nothing about any of the real issues," the father-of-eight said.

Mr Wallis and his wife, Kerry, left the sect in February after becoming disenchanted with the group.

Their four older daughters decided to stay and, under strict sect rules, they are prevented from contacting those who have left.

The letter, written by the Brethren's Bruce Jackson and Bill Wallis, was partly published in The West Australian yesterday. It denies claims that the Church is responsible for splitting families.

"The assertion that we split families is completely untrue," it says. "The claim that children have been cut off from their parents is false."

Ken Wallis said sect members had contacted him and he had agreed to meet them to discuss the situation.

But he did not expect the members would be able to come up with realistic explanations for their actions.

He was not satisfied with any of the answers given so far by Church leaders.

"I have said it before, but these people do not stick to the truth," he said.

Mrs Wallis said she was still optimistic that her daughters would return home.

But she believed the letter lacked substance.

"It said just what I expected it to," she said.

Mrs Wallis was adamant that Brethren rules prevented members from driving red cars, despite claims by the Church in the letter that red cars were not banned.

"Even the red car business is ridiculous," she said.

"We used to have a red car but we got so much flak from the Church about it that we had to get rid of it.

"I even know of another man who spray-painted his car another colour because it was such a no-no."

Document twau000020010919du6900bvk