

BBC Scotland

14 April, 2003

Dear Elizabeth McWilliams,

I am writing in regard to your letter of complaint against the *Frontline Scotland* programme *Secrets or Lies*.

The programme was not undertaken lightly nor without careful research. We are fully aware of the detail of all the charges against John and Helen Porteous. We spoke to many people who were children in Quarriers at the time the events are deemed to have taken place, as well as other house parents and people connected with Quarriers professionally. These people are located throughout Scotland and some, including ex-Quarriers children, now live in England. We also spoke to recognised experts in the fields of law and paedophilia. Through this research we decided that there was enough evidence to suggest reasonable doubt over John Porteous' conviction.

Sexual abuse of children is an extremely emotive issue and we endeavoured to deal with it as sensitively as we could. But we felt that we could not be prevented from examining a potential miscarriage of justice because of the fact that it concerned a conviction for paedophilia.

If you have any specific information regarding the conviction that you would like to pass on to us we would be most interested to hear it

Yours sincerely,



Sonya Rothwell
Producer
Secrets or Lies