



Department of the Senate  
 PO Box 6100  
 Parliament House  
 Canberra ACT 2600  
 Australia

Dear Committee

Re: Submission for inquiry Commonwealth contribution to former forced adoption policies and practices.

Please find attached the Submission for the inquiry forwarded from W.A.S.H (White Australian Stolen Heritage) Australia.

Including supporting letters from:

- : Professor Ian Jones, Executive Director Women's and Newborn Services Royal Brisbane and Women's hospital.
- :Meredith Hunter MLA, Member for Ginninderra.
- :David Gibson MP, Member for Gympie.
- :Peter Dowling MP, member for Redlands.
- : Uncle Max, Aboriginal Elder.

#### Terms of reference

**(a) The role, if any of the Commonwealth Government, it's policies and practices in contributing to forced adoptions;**

- . Unmarried mothers were not made aware of existing financial support and assistance by the Commonwealth govt.
- . The Commonwealth Government should have ensured that welfare practises throughout the states and territories were child focused rather than the needs and desires of adopting parents.
- . The Commonwealth Government should have insured that illegal and criminal practises did not take place in the pursuit to a child being placed for adoption.
- . The federal Government should have provided a national frame work, policy and practises that protected the child from harm by potential adoptive parents insuring that clear guidelines, checks and screening process were in acted and adhered to.
- . The Commonwealth Government played a pivotal role in allowing the adoption process to flourish unchecked and without accountability not ensuring that 'in the best interest of the child was served.'
- . That the Commonwealth failed to protect both mother and child as Australian citizens living within its borders and directly contributed to the secrecy and abuse of adoption.

**W.A.S.H;** is a support and lobby group formed by adoptee's that were taken from their mothers through the forced former adoption practises within Australia and placed with adopted parents that subsequently abused and mistreated them.

**W.A.S.H;** was formed by adoptee's in an effort to highlight the extent of the pain, suffering and trauma that abused and mistreated adoptee's have experienced not only as children

but as adults. To lobby for adequate response from Government and service providers, challenging the myth that all children taken from their mothers went to good homes. To seek redress, apology and compensation for such injuries insured by unnecessary, cruel, and traumatising removal of babies from their mother. To bring to the awareness the ongoing challenges experienced by abused adoptee's and their families such as; Mental health issues, physical disabilities, substance abuse, family and relationship breakdown, parenting, criminal, and problems of reunion etc; and to seek greater Government support for those affected by these issues.

**Adoptees seek greater recognition;** for the long term trauma and suffering experienced by being separated, (stolen) from their biological mother and deem their experience as similar to the Forgotten Australians and stolen generation. The same abuses occurred within the homes where they were placed such as; neglect, beatings, sexual, verbal and mental abuses humiliation and deprivation of food, lack of education and lack of medical care, segregation, brainwashing, exploitation, and secrecy.

**There was a systemic failure;** by Governments and providers to insure that adequate child protection and care was fulfilled by the adopting parents. There was no appropriate screening process of potential adoptive parents, there for exposing many children to predatory behaviour, undisclosed mental health issues, drug and alcohol abuse, criminal behaviour, marital and financial problems of adoptive parents.

**Government has failed to recognise;** that adoptee's have endured years of pain and torment at the hands of adopters as experienced by the Forgotten Australians and Stolen Generation. Our abusers were our adopting parents or close family members. At present we rely upon service providers who have little or no knowledge of this country's appalling history of adoption and the way in which we were treated. We are unable to find or afford skilled, therapeutic therapists that have extensive knowledge and comprehension of adoption and abuse that causes deep physiological scaring and manifests into complex mental health disorders that are often left untreated or miss diagnosed.

Adoptees are not being addressed to the level that substantiates our claims; because it is believed that we all went to good homes. This sentiment is quoted in the Western Australian apology and reflects the view of politicians overall. In this apology it was not mention once by any member, of any concerns as to the screening process of adoptive parents and even possible abuses. We the children were not mentioned as suffering equal to the mums.

We are addressed as an after- thought such as the leader of the opposition Mr E.S. Ripper state.. 'We are not seeking to address the issues being dealt with by others-those who were adopted out, or the families and other individuals, who have been involved in the adoption process,' those issues are for another day.

Adoptees are shell shocked and numb by such statements. We the very children who were taken, are lumped in with extended family to be dealt with somewhere down the track? We are outraged that we can be yanked from our mother's arms, crying and wailing in trauma, denied bonding with our mother especially within those crucial first few hours and days of life important for our physiological development. Kidnapped and held against our will, abused, tormented, and driven to despair into adulthood and we are an afterthought? How

on earth can any person conclude this ridicules statement and then make recommendations for our good or purport any kind of apology?

It is our belief that many adoptees will continue to suffer insurmountable pain, trauma and suffering until this Government stops living in self denial pride and excuses. If Government is to effectively address the wrongs associated with our adoption it must accept accountability that we the children suffered alongside our mothers and have lived lives of great suffering, grief and pain. Failure to address such glaring truths will conclude that you fail us once again and knowingly contribute to our continued suffering.

We the adoptee's are outraged and hurt that you on the one hand agree that removal of us from our mothers was wrong but pat yourselves on the back and say, 'well it all worked out well, they all went to good homes'. We request that you refrain from such insensitive assumptions that only aid in disempowering abused adoptees from seeking help and assistance and perhaps life saving intervention.

Our Australian Government has failed to yet recognise the adoptees rightful claim of injustices that still continues and recommend that it must be addressed immediately and without prejudice.

**Our adoption illegal;** we were forcibly removed from the care of our mothers, many not knowing, or understanding that they had signed adoption forms. Our mothers were drugged into submission, bullied, threatened or tricked. As most of our mothers were under aged or under the influence of a drug, signing of any legal documents was in effectively making our adoption illegal. Again our mothers were not informed that they could revoke the adoption order within the thirty days and if they did they were told all manner of lies and deceit to thwart any recovery of their child. Even to the point of telling a mother her child died.

**Our human rights and that of our mothers were violated;** we the children suffer deep and lasting feelings of abandonment, rejection, shame and grief. Deception manifested into greater depths as lies were told to children that their mother died when they were born, or your mother did not want you. Our immense sense of identity and heritage has been lost, stripped of our rightful place within our biological homes, extended family and society.

**As we grew up;** Many adoptees received the scorn of societies cast offs. Children discarded by their own mothers, unlovable, unwanted. Left to survive perhaps years of abuse, living in a vacuum, of secrets, propaganda, deceit and lies. Believing we are less than deserving of respect, love, safety and truth we play the game of fitting in to survive. We adapt to our new environment pretending everything is okay for fear of again being abandoned and rejected yet again.

If we were not lucky enough to be placed in loving homes where our adoption was an open honest, transparent and loving discussion we were doomed to feel our adopted parents disgust of our mothers, societies scorn of us and us for ourselves. Many of us struggle to feel safe in relationships and to trust other's, we are conditioned to know rejection, and abandonment from day of our birth. We question love, acceptance and loyalty everyday of our lives whether we know it or not. Many of us will cling to the unhealthiest and damaging relationships no matter what the cost, for fear of being rejected and abandoned yet again. Many of us will instigate the rejecting time and time again, 'better for us to do it than to have them do it to us'!

Children who were adopted were also told that they were bad, worthless and in need of reshaping, 'we couldn't have you turning out like your mother now'.

Taken and removed from our heritage and extended family, which is just as important to the white man or woman. To mix with family to be able to discover and nurture familiar family traits. To follow in our fathers, grandfathers, mothers, grandmothers footsteps etc.. Denied natural progression of skills and abilities as passed down from generation to the next. Not able to share with our children the joy of bygone eras of accomplishments and accolades of our ancestors, we are denied our God-given path and ridiculed for our differences.

**Just like the Forgotten Australians; adoptees are great survivors.** Many with great strengths and often within those strengths we can retain childhood coping strategies that can make life with others difficult to understand. We can manifest a chameleon-like approach in an attempt to fit in often denying our own needs and desires. Others can be extremely demanding not just of themselves but of others in an attempt to test the validity of any relationship.

**Among the lasting effects are:** Lack of trust and security, lack of social skills, risk behaviours, inability to form and maintain loving relationships, inability to parent effectively, overcompensating, and maintaining abusive relationships.

**Mental health issues such as:** dissociation, Post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, Personality disorders, anxiety, self-harming behaviours, suicide and severe borderline personality disorder can plague an adoptee for the rest of their lives.

**Why adoptees find it hard to speak out and why you will not hear from them:** Adoptees are afraid to speak for fear of not being believed, because they know and understand that as a society a myth has successfully been perpetuated and still exists today. That myth is 'that all children adopted were deeply wanted, loved and cherished'. When we speak with claims of abuse or mistreatment we challenge deeply ingrained concepts about a group of people that we as a society have not dared to question before. Adopters are the nicest of people with only the kindest intentions. They are the gallant heroes of orphaned children from unloving, abusive, immoral parents. To actually break the code of silence and speak the truth of violent abusive adopted parents is one of the most daunting, terrifying and heartbreaking challenges an adopted child could make. Adopted children risk everything by speaking out. When people in power give unfettered confidence in a group of people without accountability it can and does result in abuses occurring.

Screening of potential adoptive parents boiled down to questions of employment, marriage status and living arrangements. No police checks, no psychological assessments just basic put your name here on the list and wait. If you're married you get a baby, simple. No counselling for the women to cope with being unable to have her own child. Or hubby not having the son he hoped to follow in his footsteps, the problem is fixed; an adopted child will solve your problems. We will place a child in your home that looks just like you no one will know the difference, not even the child. We recommend that you don't tell the child he is adopted, what's the point? He's yours!

Tell the child his/her mother died, she didn't want it anyway. Don't worry if she asks for him back within the 30 days we will lie and tell her the child died or that he has already bonded. There is nothing she can do. You are **untouchable**, once the papers as signed by a **Magistrate, no one** can do anything. The child now **belongs** to you, and the **law** is on your side. The child will **never** be able to trace her/his parents, everything is **locked away in secret** we have changed the baby's date of birth, changed his name, **not allowed** the father's name on the birth certificate. Our **Australian laws protect the adoptive parent** it is **illegal** for the mother or for any other family member to search for the child or the child to search for them. The mother can **never** interfere and will **never** find **your** child, go be happy and live your life you will **never** hear from us again.

As you can imagine once an adopted parent hears this type of support they believe that this child's rights were relinquished to them, they have the powers that be, on their side. If there was ever a time that there was a chance of any abuses occurring it was within the era when adoption was dealt with in this manner.

#### **What adoptees tell WASH:**

\*My mother's pain was somewhat diminished as she clung to the belief that I would have a good life despite being separated, to tell her otherwise, would crush her.

\* I was told that I was saved from a horrible, unfit mother who did not love me, there for I do not feel I have the right to say I was abused or mistreated to do so is to be ungrateful.

\*I must be eternally grateful to my adoptive parents despite the treatment I received because I am societies cast offs.

\* I did not deserve to be treated the same as everyone else and that I owe those that rescued me a great sense of loyalty due to their unselfish act of kindness of raising someone else's child.

\*Because I was taken and removed from my mother and family of origin, I have been raised differently, with different values, ideas, beliefs and concepts. So, even with contact with my mother and family I still feel as if I do not fit in. Leaving me unable to be secure of having a family intact once I tell.

\*I feel I have nowhere to go to feel safe, loved, accepted and believed.

\*I am often very afraid to reach out for fear of being rejected yet again.

\*I do not want my mother hurting again because of me, I am the reason for all her pain in the first place.

\*I believe my mother has suffered enough, she doesn't need to know.

\*Who would believe that an adoptive parent is capable of abuse?

\*I was raised to be eternally grateful and not question the way I am treated because I would have had it worse in the government homes or raised by my mother, because she was already deemed unfit to raise me.

\*I don't want to say anything to my mother to scare her away or think I am bad.

\*To tell on an adoptive parent is to bite the hand that fed and clothed me and continue to support me in some capacity, even as an adult.

\*If I tell on my adoptive parent I risk losing all family and I don't even belong to my real one. So how can I tell? who can I tell that will help me and reinforce that I am not alone?

\* My mother rejected me and abandoned me and so did my Government who the hell cares about me? They put me there in the first place.

\* I was adopted to full fill the needs of others, that's my purpose.

- \* Adoption is seen as a right rather than a privilege and with this belief comes power to hurt me in a way no one can understand, other than maybe another adopted person.
- \* It is bad enough that I am adopted and different without speaking about the unspeakable.

Stockholm syndrome is when a kidnap victim allies him/herself with the kidnapper to survive. We the abused adoptees believe we are affected in this way and request that this issue be given immediate consideration to any form of intervention and assistance for adoptees.

**What is unique to adoptees;** Adoptees are forced to live a lie and be a member of the abusers family, for life. Those who were abused in institutions knew that they could leave one day and never return. Adoptees are bound to this family through legal documents that connect you to your abuser, even after death. You are forced to live prolonged trauma into your adulthood and frequently mix with those that hurt you in the cruellest ways. Many do not understand how the adoptee is uniquely tied to the abuser. Because of low self worth ingrained by stories of being abandoned by their biological mother, the abuser is able to gain even greater power and control over the adopted child and this results in them unable to report the abuses. 'We are of no real value, not even our mothers loved us' this is the constant message that beats at the core of our being. That's what we are told by society and by the parents we were given to. Those that have experienced abuse in its severest form often wait until the perpetrator is dead before speaking out and rarely ever report to authorities.

**Recommendations;** apart from those already mentioned we would like to see greater education and public awareness of the effects on us as the adopted child. We recommend that educational DVDs, books and pamphlets on the history of this country's former forced adoption practices and individual stories of survivors to include how it has affected them and how we can be empowered to help ourselves become easily accessible. Stories of hope, how best to survive our past how to best navigate reunions and ways of healing can only be of benefit to those struggling to deal with the enormous losses, trauma and pain of adoption. Other organisations would greatly benefit from such learning tools such as Department of child safety, mental health, community groups, counsellors, hospitals and medical staff etc... The adoptees greatest adversary is secrecy and rejection, learning to speak up, to be heard, accepted and validated without fear of rejection will go a long way in healing many hurting adoptees.

\*Adoptees should be consulted more readily by Government funded organisations set up to respond to those effected by adoption, as they are best suited to express their concerns that affect them directly. We are asking that a committee of adoptees be formed in consultation with Government to address ongoing needs of adoptees. That this committee to be consulted in all areas of reform and redress to adoptees affected by adoption whether past or present.

\* That an independent group of professionals, legal, and mental health and adoptee's with counselling qualifications be formed to provide a 24 hour hotline for adoptees who have experienced or are experiencing abuse.

- \* A national apology to Children separated by former forced adoption practices, including the acknowledgement of abuses after the child was removed from the mother.
- \* Compensation for adoptees who were abused and mistreated within the home of the adopting parent.
- \* Self help groups run by mothers who have lost children to adoption are not ideal for adoptees, nor are mixed groups run by Government funded organisations. We believe more funding and support should be given to help adoptees be supported through groups run by adoptees or only for adoptees. Adoptees and natural mothers pain is intermingled and complex and we find that each groups unresolved pain and suffering, can trigger deep emotional responses causing both sides to be re-traumatised.
- \* We would like to see a conference, held yearly for adoptees which would be rich in networking, educational and informative insights in all aspects of adoption reform, studies, strategies, and outcomes, giving adoptees a forum to address a range of subjects and issues collectively amongst their peers.
- \* Funding for healing retreats in each state, including workshops run for a series of days with a residential retreat, so adoptees can seek healing, help and assistance within a safe supported environment.
- \* Adoptees must be included and have equal recognition in any public apology or healing ceremony and not to be treated insensitively as in the Western Australian apology. If you were taken/stolen, from your mother and you not are non-indigenous and immediately adopted out you have not received any apology as the Forgotten Australians or Stolen Generation. As an adoptee if you were taken/stolen and stayed in a hospital for days or weeks and then adopted out you have at no time ever received any recognition nor have we been able to access any of the support or financial assistance given to those placed in institutions and foster care.
- \* Greater assistance for those suffering from substance abuse such as access to rehabilitations centres of no cost and specific adoption counselling and follow up.
- \* Adoptees who are incarcerated should receive immediate assistance and support to help resolve family reunions with specialised adoption trauma counselling.
- \* Adoptees' that have suffered severe abuse such as rape, torture, and slave labour to receive specialised trauma counselling as given to immigrants that enter this country fleeing war.
- \* Greater support and legal assistance given to Adoptee's who have lost or are at risk of losing their children/child, via intervention of the Department of Child Safety.
- \* We believe that statements such as 'we didn't know any better', or 'it was the social mores of the time', in any response to this countries past practises of adoption not be used. To do so is an attempt to water down our claims and is a poor excuse for removing the

rights from one group of people and giving it to another. We ask that no excuses be made or attempted. If those involved at the time did not know they were doing wrong why have people gone to great length to keep it secret?

We believe that the true numbers that reflect the abused adoptees will be difficult to calculate due to the extreme complex nature of why we don't tell. We suggest an urgent, sensitive call for Government to address how adoptees can speak out, to seek help and assistance and to be able to feel safe, believed and validated whilst still being a member of the adopted family. Reporting abuse is difficult enough but when understanding the depth of the pain and suffering of adoptees we are able to better understand why adoptees do not report not naively conclude that they have not been abused. The Inquiry into children abused in Foster care in Australia should have revealed that, whatever screening process was in place at the time it still failed to protect children from abuse, let alone the nonexistent screening process of adopted children.

Quote: The secrecy in an adoptive family and the denial that the adoptive family is different builds dysfunction into it, "While social workers and insecure adoptive parents have structured a family relationship that is based on dishonesty, evasions and exploitation. To believe that good relationships will develop on such a foundation is psychologically unsound'..(Lawrence).. As John Bradshaw well renowned therapist says, 'A family is only as sick as its secrets.'" Secrets erect barriers to forming a healthy identity. Sealed records implicitly asks for an extreme form of denial. There is no school of psychotherapy which regards denial as a positive strategy in forming a sense of self and dealing with day-to-day realities.

Quote from the book: 'The Primal Wound' by Nancy Newton Verrier PhD  
 ....Adoption is a psychological burden to the adoptee. The Primal Wound reveals the effects of adoption on the adoptee and believes that the nine months in utero is a profound connection and that severing of that connection in the original separation of the adopted child from the birth mother causes a primal or narcissistic wound which effects the adoptee's sense of self and often manifests in a sense of loss, basic mistrust, anxiety and depression, emotional and/or behavioural problems and difficulties in relationships with significant others.

... Verrier has been criticized for her work, but her response says it all, 'The only people who can really judge this work, however, are those about whom it is written: the adoptees themselves. Only they, as they note their responses to what is written here, will really know in their deepest selves the validity of this work, the existence or nonexistence of the primal wound'

**Please note:**

We the abused adoptees acknowledge that not all adopters are guilty of abuse and realise that our claims are disturbing and upsetting. But we the adoptee who were, abused and mistreated cannot stay silent any longer and in no way do our claims reflect badly on those adopters that sought the greatest good for the children they adopted.

**In Summary;**



Adoptees deserve greater recognition and this can only be accomplished when we are given the same support and understanding as the Forgotten Australians and Stolen Generation. We deserve the same wording, as is in their apologies' and the same recommendations. We suffered the same fate, same sufferings and same trauma. Any apology or response to us must acknowledge and include that we suffered the same abuses. We cannot accept anything less if we are to find healing and acceptance within the society we live in.

The members of WASH thank you for this opportunity to speak on behalf of the adopted child/adult and ask that our submission be viewed as an urgent call to address our concerns in the sincerest manner.

Kerri Saint

(...)

Chairperson and founder of WASH  
White Australian Stolen Heritage  
Ph 07 54845949  
55 York Street Imbil, 4570  
Queensland 4570

(...)

(...)



Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital  
Metro North Health Service District



Queensland  
Government

Queensland Health

Enquiries to: Professor Ian Jones  
Women's and Newborn Services  
Telephone: (07) 3636 8781  
Facsimile: (07) 3636 7798  
File ref: GK:2009/0/35

To the White Australian Stolen Heritage (WASH) Group and all Adoptees seeking an apology

Dear Friends,

Thank you for meeting with me at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital and sharing your experiences of being an adopted one. I was saddened to hear how half truths, lies, feelings of abandonment, lack of knowledge of your origins and the missed opportunities to grow up and be with your siblings, have and continue to adversely affect your lives, and many other lives of those who are near and dear to you.

Our open, honest and obviously painful discussions have helped me to understand how you have been denied the right to experience the natural relationship between you and your mother, your siblings and extended family because of the practices in place at the time of your birth. Some of you were subjected to many different types of abuse; from being denied contact with your mother and by the family in which you were placed.

In this regard on behalf of the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, I acknowledge the hurt and suffering you have described and sincerely apologise for any ill treatment you experienced while in hospital by being taken and denied contact with your mother at the time of your birth.

For similar reasons I also apologise to those families who have experienced hurt and suffering through the tragic and harmful effects caused by adoption.

Yours sincerely,  
(...)

Professor Ian Jones  
**Obstetrician and  
Executive Director  
Women's and Newborn Services  
Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital  
12/11/09**

---

Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital – we don't smoke here anymore

Office  
Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital  
Butterfield Street  
Herston

Postal  
Post Office  
Herston 4029

Phone  
(07) 3636 8111

Fax  
(07) 3636 4240



**Meredith Hunter MLA**

ACT Greens Parliamentary Convenor

Spokesperson for Treasury, Education & Training, Children & Young People, Women,  
Community Services, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs

---

MEMBER FOR GINNINDERRA

Kerry Saint  
88 Mapleton Rd  
Nambour QLD 4560

Dear Ms Saint,

Thank you for your letter of 12 November 2010 concerning forced adoption practices. My apologies for the delayed response.

This is certainly a very complicated and difficult issue that has profoundly impacted upon a great number of people throughout Australia. As you and your organisation are probably aware the Senate Community Affairs Committee is currently undertaking an inquiry into the issue and will report by 30 April 2011. Details of the Inquiry are available at [http://www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/clac\\_ctte/comm\\_contrib\\_former\\_forced\\_adoption/index.htm](http://www.aph.gov.au/senate/committee/clac_ctte/comm_contrib_former_forced_adoption/index.htm)

As the ACT was administered by the Commonwealth during that period covered by the Senate inquiry, the findings of the Committee into the Commonwealth Government's role are particularly important before we can proceed any further here in the ACT. In relation to the scope of any apology I agree with you that it is important that we recognise the full scope of the harms that were suffered as a result of these practices and that we do have a thorough understanding of what happened to the children involved.

I am very pleased to hear that you feel that we have made a positive contribution and assure you that we will continue to work on the issue and address the suffering that you and so many others experienced. If you have any further concerns you would like to raise please contact my office again.

Regards.  
(...)

Meredith Hunter MLA  
19 January 2011

Phone: 02 6205 0106  
Email: [Hunter@parliament.act.gov.au](mailto:Hunter@parliament.act.gov.au)  
Post: GPO Box 1020, Canberra ACT 2601

COPY



Gympie Electorate Office  
82 Monkland Street  
PO Box 1277  
GYMPIE QLD 4570

Freecall: 1800 812 919  
P: (07) 5482 3651  
F: (07) 5482 5711

**David Gibson MP**  
MEMBER FOR GYMPIE

[gympie@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:gympie@parliament.qld.gov.au)

Wednesday, 28 April 2010

Hon P Reeves  
Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Sport  
GPO Box 806  
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Dear Minister,

*Phil,*

I have been referred from the Social Development Committee to your office to address concerns brought to my attention by a constituent of mine who is involved in the White Australian Stolen Heritage (WASH) Group.

WASH is a support group for those who were abused by their adoptive parents physically, sexually and emotionally, and have lost mothers, fathers and families to past adoption practices.

WASH comes under the umbrella of Apology Alliance which consists of many other adoption support groups around Australia.

In 2009 the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital became the first hospital in the Country to acknowledge the past practices carried out in relation to adoption laws in Australia and issued an apology to WASH and all adoptees.

In my meeting with the members of WASH, they have brought to my attention that adoptive children have had to live their lives often believing that they are unlovable resulting in a diminished sense of self-esteem, self-worth and an inability to form trusting and loving relationships.

In Queensland, WASH is making a request of the Queensland Government

*"to apologise to children who were abused physically, sexually and emotionally by their adoptive parents and to acknowledge their failure to fulfil their duty of care and responsibility in appropriate screening of potential parents;*

*for their failure to exercise any ongoing accountability to the children that were coercively removed and left to fend for themselves without a voice, without support, or care or ensuring that the children were given maximum opportunity to develop a sense of belonging and value within society in general;*

*to acknowledge their failure to respond to mental health issues that have accrued as a result of the adoption. Also to commit to future change and to address ongoing funding needs for target groups and services providers on request;*


*to acknowledge their failure to support and respond to the fact that some adoptive parents need support as well, that was not offered in relation parenting other peoples' children;*

*and finally to apologise to our mother and fathers for lack of duty of care”.*

As a result of the concerns raised with me, my constituents have asked that I make representations on their behalf to ascertain if you would be willing to undertake an enquiry into the issues faced by adoptees in Queensland from the past adoption practices.

I have enclosed a copy of the letter received from the Social Development Committee to assist you in responding to my enquiry.

I would appreciate it if you could consider this request and advise my office accordingly.

Yours sincerely,   
(...)

**David Gibson MP**  
**Member for Gympie**

Enc.

Electorate Office  
Suite H20  
Cinema Building, Victoria Point Lakeside  
11-27 Bunker Road  
Victoria Point Qld 4165

Postal Address:  
PO Box 3667  
Victoria Point West Qld 4165

Ph: 3207 6910  
Fax: 3207 6897  
Email: [redlands@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:redlands@parliament.qld.gov.au)  
Website: [www.peterdowling.com.au](http://www.peterdowling.com.au)



## *Peter Dowling MP – Member for Redlands*

---

25th March 2010

Kerri Saint  
White Australian Stolen Heritage Qld  
88 Mapleton Road  
NAMBOUR QLD 4560

Dear Kerri

Thank you for your letter dated 18<sup>th</sup> March regarding your organisation, the White Australian Stolen Heritage (W.A.S.H.) Qld Adoptees Queensland.

As a parent myself I strongly support the sentiment that one of the worst things that can happen to you as a parent is to have a child taken from you.

I cannot imagine the anguish suffered by mothers and children who were separated by the practices of the time. The adoption practices between the 1940's and 1970's in retrospect were flawed and this has caused great anguish for a great number of mothers and children who have suffered as a direct result of this separation.

I believe the recognition of this tragedy is as important as the Apology to the Indigenous Australians and forms an important element of Australian history, one that should not be repeated.

Thank you for writing to me about this matter.

Yours sincerely

(...)

Peter Dowling MP  
**Member for Redlands**  
*Member, Environment and Resources Committee*  
*"All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing." (Edmund Burke)*

To Whom it May Concern

As an Aboriginal Elder, I fully understand the pain and suffering that has been done to my people in the past, and the traumatic times that we have endured.

I applaud the Prime Minister's apology to our mob. But what about the white Stolen generations that has suffered the same fate.

I know many white people who has went through the same pain.

So why can't this government do its healing again, and apologise to the white Stolen generation to bring closure to all their suffering.

As we walk the same land,  
Breathe the same air  
Drink the same water

Signed (...)

(...)

2/11/09

Yuin Elder Mrs Dulamunmun Harrison