

Carolyn Brown (nee Ayers)

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

Dear Committee

I would dearly like to be able to present a submission to the above Inquiry but due to the emotional turmoil of reliving the most painful and traumatic event in my life, I am unable to do so

I would like to state that the consent to the adoption of my child was given without information of my legal rights

I gave birth to my son at Crown Street Hospital, Sydney NSW on the of January, 1969.

- I was allowed to see my child after birth
- I was not given information in regard to foster care for my child
- I was not informed of any life long future regret if I surrendered my child for adoption
- I was not given information on financial assistance that would enable me to keep my child

Finally I would like to say that:

As citizen of the Commonwealth of Australia resident in New South Wales
I had an inalienable right to protection under the Australian Constitution and the
Common Law of this country

As an Australian citizen, the Commonwealth affords me protection from the unlawful
and harmful actions that threaten my right to life, liberty and justice from those who
would deny me these rights, within and without, the borders of Australian

Please accept this as my submission
Yours Sincerely

wait someone would be in to see us, (I remember that room even today it was very sparsely furnished only 3 chairs, no table and that long black lounge chair, while waiting in this room all we could think of that something dreadful had happen)

3 people came in, I don't remember them introducing themselves, we asked where he was and if everything was alright, we were informed bluntly that he had been adopted .

They presented forms that they said I had signed . I said that I didn't sign any such forms., they said that I had agreed to adopt my son. (I was 17 years old and was under the impression that I couldn't sign legal documents without my parents consent.)

They said that my mother had given them medical information in reference to this adoption, I remember my mother saying that yes she had given them medical history but at no time was she told that this was for the adoption of her grandson.

I remember crying most of this interview and my parents arguing with these people.

They kept on saying that we were not in a position to look after a child, how much pressure it would put on the family and me, about the stigma of being an unwed mother, my prospects of finding a job, a husband and how people in society will look down on me and my family.. My parents said that all this was true, but it didn't matter we would manage. They then informed us that, the matter was out of our hands and theirs anyway, because he had already been adopted .

They went on to tell us that the family he went to were a lovely Australian couple, who would give him a good home, a good spiritual and academic education and were in a better position to do this than we were.

My parents took me home, all the way home I remember my parents discussing all that had happened, I remember feeling an sense of shock and lost.

Not really knowing what was happening.

All I could think of , was what they had said, and can still remember it, (as clear as if it happened today).

That if we were to continue on this line that my son would be taken from me anyway, placed into a state home and grow up unwanted and unloved, you wouldn't want him to go there, would you, at least this way he will have a chance at a better life than what you or the state can give.

At home, the argument continued, I know that this was the first time in my life that I had heard my parents argue, even my grandmother waded into this

argument, my mother wanted to fight but my father and grandmother said that it would cost a lot of money, because the people at the hospital had told him that it would, my father even asked our local priest to come to the house to give us some counselling. He said that there was nothing we could do, as [redacted] had already been adopted and going on what the hospital had told us he would be in good hands because they had put him into a good Christian family who were not blessed with children of their own. maybe this was for the best.

My mother wouldn't accept this so unbeknown to my father my mum made an appointment with the family solicitor [redacted], because he was on holidays she couldn't get an appointment with him until the end of February.

We went into see [redacted] explained the story as to what happened, **He advised us that yes there was a case to answer because he had been adopted before the month period but as this had now expired, we would need to take this to the High Court, which would take years, also while this process was happening that my son could stay with his adoptive parents or the state could take him in, until such time the Court made a ruling in the matter. He also asked me could I face this, as there is no guarantee that I would win also the emotional turmoil that my son, my family and the adoptive family would have to deal with.**

After this, I resigned myself to the fact that I would never see my son again.

I never forgot him I was always looking and wondering if he was alive or dead. From then on every time I saw a baby, little boy and even a grown up in the street, I would look to see if I could recognise him, these memories have never faded, we always **celebrated his birthday**, even when I married and had my other 3 children, everyone knew that I had a son and that they had an older brother.

Thirty eight (38) years later my son and I were reunited and we have a great relationship, but not quite what we would have had. He missed out on knowing his grandmother, grandfather, his great-grandparents and all his extended family.

I have since found out that the couple that had adopted him didn't formally adopted [redacted] until the **13th November 1969**, **some 10 months after he was given to them.**

Changing his name from [redacted] with the Birth, Deaths and Marriages on the **27th November 1969.**

I also found out that the family who adopted my son were **NOT even**

Australians, they were migrants, which at the time he was given to them, the _____ would have known, so at the time they were telling us that my son had been adopted he actually wasn't and they lied about the adoptive parents.

I have found out from my son that he was not given any religious education, that he was not confirmed and as far as he knows not even baptised. His father was very anti religion.

The father had numerous jobs in the time they were in Australia before the adoption and from what my son has said his adopted father was very racist when it came to anyone who was not from the mother country this included Australians.

As well as having him put on **drugs** and **shock therapy at a very early age.**

I know by telling you my story and hope that by other people telling their stories, even though each one will be strikingly different though generally the same. That what happened to me and the thousands like me can be assured that you will legislate and pass a law to make sure that every government in this country be it State and Federal are accountable.

And please make sure that what happened to us will never happen again.

As this has had a long term effect on me and my family both physically, emotionally and spiritually.

There is a lot of questions that need answering and I hope for past and future generations that by you holding this inquiry these questions will be answered.

Yours Sincerely

Carolyn Brown