

Date: 9th June 2010

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE.

Submission to the Senate Inquiry on Government Compensation

Submission from: (Member of Stolen Generation /
Forgotten Australian – And CLAN Member.

My name is (nee , and while in CARE). I was born 1956 and I am now 53 years old.

I along with 3 other older siblings was placed under the CARE of the State of Victoria and made Wards of that State in late 1959. The reason by the courts “No Place of Abode” I am the only known survivor that I am aware of. I was placed into Alexandra Babies Home in Ballarat at the age of 3 yrs, and then I was fostered out to a family by the Victorian government along with my older half sister. This is where I stayed until I married at age 19. I was a state ward until 1972. I was abused daily for 15 years by the foster mother /father. I reported the abuse to the Welfare Dept and I was neglected and left within the same abusive foster CARE placement for my entire time in CARE.

I had no identity or known country of origin until I was 36 yrs. Below are some of the things that happened to me as a child (15 years of abuse) starting at the age of 4 years. Then a brief description of the impact of the abuse with dot-points as a teenager to early adult. Then again as a mature adult to this current time.

At the age of 4 – daily for wetting the bed I was tied to the bed posts stripped naked and whipped with a belt (both my arms were tied to the bed legs, I was spread eagle on the floor, I could not do anything except wriggle with the pain), I wasn't even allowed to cry or the whipping would happen for a longer period of time

I was told daily by the foster mother that I was dumb, stupid, ugly, a retard and I would never amount to anything

I was told daily by the foster mother that my parents never wanted me and neither did she!

I was never allowed to play as a child, I was a domestic servant

I never had toys, if I was given a present it got locked away in a cupboard

I was not allowed to play with, or socialise with other children

I was kept isolated from society

I was not given insufficient clothing / no clothing which enforced isolation

I was starved or given mouldy or ant ridden food

I suffered from worms , sores and boils because I would eat out of the dogs bowl, pick up food off the ground, I even tasted my own shit because I was so hungry

I never experienced a proper piece of fruit until I was fifteen eg: apple or orange, others in the foster family did, but my sister and I would fight over the peelings.

I was not allowed to play as a child or have fun – if I got caught I'd be beaten

I wouldn't speak out of fear of being hurt or make a sound

I lived in total fear, walking on egg shells so afraid I would trigger a negative respoce from the foster mother.

I was a domestic slave, if the job was not completed to the foster mothers satisfaction I would be beaten and have to repeat the job over and over again, then locked outside in the dark without any dinner

I was sexually molested by the foster father twice when I was 15 yrs

I was nearly drowned (twice) by the foster mother (counsellors, police & court referred to this as attempted murder)

I was forced to cold showers and baths

I never had a pillow or pyjamas for 111 years – everyone else did in the house hold except me (even prisoners in Pentridge had pillows)

I was treated like I was a leper and not worthy of anything

My sister was taught to burn me with cigarettes and bash me all the time

The foster families pet dog was taught to attack my sister and I constantly, we could move without the dog going for us

I was told daily that I was dumb, stupid, retarded and that I would never amount to anything

I was never, ever allowed to do school homework, I never handed in an assignment – no questions were ever asked by the school. I fail every test and subject every year and the school would just put me up to the next year – I was let down and neglected by the education department because they did react and CARE for my welfare as a student.

Constantly at the home at aged 10-13yrs I was stripped totally naked and forced to stand in full view of others within the house for hours totally unprotected. A total violation of my body, with exposed private parts – this is a form of sexual assault.

Many times at aged 10-13yrs I was stripped totally naked and locked in a room and whipped with the dog lead in the presence of their savage dog, then thrown outside naked in the cold darkness for many hours (this happened often) the foster parents would even go to bed at times and leave me locked out there.

In grade 3, 4 & 5 I was sent to primary school with no underpants on so I wouldn't be able to play any games. I suffered from being bullied and feared going to school.

I never experienced being hugged, cuddled – so as an adult I couldn't stand being touched or held or hugged

As a teenager and young adult -

As a teenager I would zig zag up the street, looking at the ground to escape walking past people because I didn't want them to be exposed to my ugly sight. I was so ashamed of myself.

I couldn't eat out socially as an adult until recently (50yrs) and feel comfortable.

I didn't know what love was, because I'd never been shown.

I didn't have any positive role models, I didn't have any parenting skills

I didn't know how to socialise, make conversation or how to make friends

I had no boundaries, so I would get ostracised by others due to my reactions and fears

I was confused; I live on the outside, I was different

I attempted suicide at 15 years; I just wanted the cruelty to stop

I have always experience relationship issues.

I have had two marriage breakdowns, lost two homes due to having relationship and communication issues

I was a dear little child who never deserve to have any of these things happen to me, the damage done and the impact all this and more has had on my life has been very sad.

I never had the opportunity to find my actualisation, my ability to strive for life's goals and dreams because I was just struggling to survive.

I am now on a Disability pension at the age of 53 unable to work due to ongoing depression

I have been down the road of going through the legal system. My file was not found until just recently, 24 years after I first asked for it. So all I had as evidence was one page of when I reported the abuse to the department when I was 13yld. I was compensated \$10,000, \$900 I had to pay back to Medicare for Counselling costs. Which was unfair. The State of Victoria government again showed me I was not valued. This legal case took seven years. I was forced to sign a deed of release under duress by the lawyers for a Out of Court Settlement. Victimised and Traumatized AGAIN.

I'll leave it there but there is much, much more (too upsetting for me)... as you can read from my dot points not only was I neglected and physically, sexually, socially, environmentally and emotionally abused and my body totally violated, it has been confirmed that the abuse I suffered as a child in legal terms as very serious allegations of attempt of murder, physical assaults and sexual assaults!

I accidentally came into contact with some of my other siblings when I was 36 years who were younger than I and I was told my mother had 15 children. All of these children were taken systematically and placed into SO CALLED CARE. All were abused also in CARE as state wards of Tasmania. They have received the Tasmanian State Redress and additional Redress because our mother was a known Tasmanian Aboriginal woman. Even though I am a known Tasmanian Aboriginal woman myself, I was told by the Tasmania Premiers Office that I was made a State Ward of Victoria so I was not eligible or entitled to any Tasmanian Redress – this is so demoralising to me as a person that I am still not see as being worthy and has further traumatised me.

All my younger siblings in Tasmania that received Redress from the State of Tasmania have all moved on in their lives. The Redress scheme showed them they were valued and the abuse they suffered as a child was not acceptable. The State of Victoria and New South Wales must follow and provide Forgotten Australians who were abused while in CARE with Redress and the Redress must be justly distributed depending on the amount of time in CARE and the severity of the abuse; physical, sexual, social and emotional. All these terms of abuse have devastating long lasting traumatic impacts and outcomes as a result.

I don't have access to a Redress scheme, yet I continue to suffer the wounds of my childhood to an extent that since the National Apologies I have not been able to work due to suffering with chronic depression issues, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Anxiety disorders, nightmares and the lack of being understood and being believed that the horrific trauma did happen and I have suffered with the consequences throughout my whole life. An Apology is not enough. An Apology does not replace all of my losses as a child throughout my child development years and my years of hard work paying my taxes to experience as a consequence of being neglected and abused while in CARE in Australia; 2 broken marriages, the loss of feelings emotionally plus self known ability of being able to be a true mother, a parent to my children. I have moved house 37 times in my life, I need stability. I had stability for the first 3 years of my life where I was loved, educated, nurtured, hugged and cuddled. The Australian Government took me away from that love of my family and placed me in the evil hands of the devil (the foster family). I WAS DISCHARGED FROM PRISON (Life sentence) AS A STATE WARD ON 9.11.1974 with no positive life skills. I could not read or write or hold a conversation. For Forgotten Australians/ survivors who were abused under the CARE of the States in

Australia it is too horrendous and re-traumatizing for each individual to take legal action upon the States. This action forces the survivors against their wish and will to suffer and re-live the trauma done to them of the past assaults.

Many of us survivors are elderly and it would be such a crime in itself to force us into taking such legal actions. We have SUFFERED ENOUGH and need and are entitled to live the rest of our years in peace.

The history of the Stolen Generations/Forgotten Australians of the country is the history of AUSTRALIA; not the individual States of Australia. There must be one redress scheme from the Australian Government to show leadership and make all States within Australia contribute to a National Scheme. The churches and other charities must also contribute. They were part of this problem and should be part of the solution.