

Dear Sir Madam

I read with much sadness the consequences and trauma suffered by these poor souls who have been abused while in institutions and other care facilities such as Foster homes.

These places that were deemed perfectly safe by Government departments at the time to give the love, care and nurturing to our most vulnerable children, many at a very young age. An age where they understood nothing of what was going on and why they were there. Asking themselves where were their Mothers, Fathers, Brothers and sisters.

I note that there will be public hearings on these matters in selected venues over the coming few months, unfortunately though there seems to be nothing here in South Australia and travelling interstate is just not possible. Therefore I would like to add an item for discussion to the agenda / table.

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There is much in the recommendations, rightly and deservedly so, of redress and support of these hurting victims. I am long term married to one.

However from what I read, those of them who are not Citizens of this country has been replied to by the Government as "noted". The first question is why?

Moral and human decency dictates that any and every child taken into care by the Government is equal. There is no discrimination of race, gender, Citizenship or otherwise. A child is a child period. They have no idea what any of it means. Is it expected that a child of 2 or 3 to know that they take out Citizenship before they are removed from a family environment?

Why were these children not automatically made citizens when taken into care in this country? Why did not the Foster carers take out Citizenship for them? Why did the Case workers not do the same? My guess is they did not care about each child. Only a number on the books or the extra income?

Moving on,

Unfortunately for the Government these events have opened a pandoras box. There is more than just the victims here. It is something that the Government is just going to have to face, accept and deal with without exclusion on any grounds. Bad systems, policies and decisions have destroyed the adult lives of far too many innocent and blameless souls, this we know and are happy that it has been acknowledged and apologised for. I can't and will not blame the individuals who made these decisions, we know they were made with the best intentions. It is the result of those bad decisions and policies that we are now left to address. The suffering, pain and tears and consequences of those now adults who's lives have been destroyed.

My submission therefore is;

Has there ever been any consideration for redress or support for the long term Wives, Husbands and loving families of these victims. Those who have also suffered as a result? Sure we did not suffer the actual abuse but we definitely suffered, if not more, from our helplessness for our partner. Our heartache, pain and many shed tears for what they were going through. Having your loved one, your life partner, the mother or father of your children going through such agony and all we could offer is the love and support that we could. We had no answers, we had no idea what to say, we tried many times to get help but got nothing, we begged for help from Government Departments but back then (10 –15) years ago it was not known about. We had never heard of the term “Forgotten Australians” or “Forgotten Children”. They were our loved ones who came from a broken home, that is all we knew.

Does the committee know what it is like to find your adult wife, the mother of your children curled up on the floor like a baby, balling and I stress balling her eyes out wishing she were dead? Asking us what we wanted from her? What had she done wrong? Nothing we did or said would convince her otherwise. All our love care and assurances that she was perfect in every way could not console her. We felt at times for her sake that her being dead would be better than her suffering. We were NOT going to let that happen, we were not going to allow her to take her own life.

Do these Government Ministers know what that is like? To see your long time partner suffer so deeply from the hurt , pain and hell? Reliving the horrors and the continual nightmares?

I am shedding tears as I write this. So cruel and heartless treatment of such a gentle natured, heart of gold individual. The best Wife and Mother any family could ask for.

So she is not an Australian Citizen, Emigrating as a 10 pound Pom as they used to say from England back in the early sixties as a 2 year old with the rest of her family, all siblings taken into care, charged as neglected and fostered to individual homes. She was an innocent child.

I am an Australian Citizen, our Daughters are Citizens as they were born here. So where does that leave us? No redress or support? The destruction of our Family? The pain and suffering that we had to endure? Does it mean that we as Australian Citizens get no help or support just because our partner is not? Help and support to keep our family together?

In my opinion this would be the lowest of lows, An abomination and an insult. The Government needs to give support and bend over backwards to help any victim to carry on and continue in a loving family unit irrespective of any injustice or consequences of these horrendous acts suffered by these victims whether it likes it or not.

No discrimination, non selective and unconditional.

As it has been acknowledged in the National apology, An “Ugly” chapter in this nations history. Let us not make it Uglier by helping some and abandoning the rest.

Regards