

**SUBMISSION:
SENATE INQUIRY ON GOVERNMENT COMPENSATION PAYMENTS**

APPLICANT: ELLEN LOUISE BUCELLO

WARD OF THE STATE OF NSW – FORGOTTEN AUSTRALIAN

NAME HISTORY:

ELLEN LOUISE – WARD OF STATE OF NSW – FROM AGE 5 TO 13 YEARS
ELLEN LOUISE – ASSUMED FOSTER PARENTS NAME AT THEIR REQUEST
ELLEN LOUISE (REQUESTED BY STEPFATHER)
ELLEN LOUISE BUCELLO (1ST MARRIAGE)
ELLEN LOUISE (2ND MARRIAGE)
ELLEN LOUISE (3RD MARRIAGE)
ELLEN LOUISE BUCELLO (REVERTED BACK TO 1ST MARITAL NAME AS OWN CHILDREN)

**NATIONAL REPARATION FUND
IN RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATION 6 – SENATE COMMITTEE REPORT**

I Ellen Louise Bucello (nee _____), have never made application to State or Federal Government for any compensation or reparation as a consequence of the sexual, physical, emotional abuse and neglect suffered as a Ward of the State of New South Wales. I would never be able to financially pursue such a claim as I do not have the financial means to do so. I am still seeing a Psychologist in Queensland who supports and encourages me to write about the events of my life in care, I bear the “privilege” of paying out of my own pocket for pharmaceutical, medical and counseling expenses. I receive treatment for depression and epilepsy as I have done since I was 14 years old. Over my life time these expenses has been a financial burden. I have tried to commit suicide 3 times and have been committed to Mental Facilities at the then Acton Hospital (J Ward) in Canberra, Calvary Hospital Psychiatric Ward for 6 weeks (Canberra), Cleveland Bayside Mental Health. Queensland. I have seen countless Psychiatrists and Psychologists.

The New South Wales Government seems to have turned its back on providing assistance – this is made even more difficult with persons who have shifted geographically from the originating State of abuse.

I find it incomprehensible to read that redress depends on which State of Australia a child was abused in and that further to that a cut off date exists for such a claim.

I only became aware of a support group such as CLAN after the National redress – which although opening old wounds has finally provided me with acknowledgement that my suffering was not done alone and that my case was not isolated and that perhaps now

someone will believe my story. Finding CLAN was like finding a family who cares, when everyone else turned their back and did/does not want to know.

In 1999/2001 whilst a resident of the Australian Capital Territory I submitted a Police Report to the Queanbeyan Police stating the horrific abuse, neglect and pain I suffered whilst in care at _____ in the then name of _____. Only to be told that the Department of Public Prosecutions could not proceed as it had a back log of cases where boys in Catholic Institutions had been abused and that they were a priority. Yet again, I was turned away. I submitted that on the advice of my then Psychologist.

I entered the New South Wales State Ward system at age 5 with my elder sister of 6 _____ and my younger brother of 4 years, _____.

I do not have precise dates as I am still waiting for my records as the department has a back log of furnishing requests.

My placements were:

Bidura Home in Glebe;

Heathcote – NSW to a foster parent;

King Edward Home – Newcastle;

Parkes - NSW to foster parents – only for one week – they returned me as they only wanted my sister and brother – not the middle child.

In between I was returned to State Care at King Edward or Bidura;

Guildford – to foster parents – 6 months approximately – then return to State Care.

– foster parents for 5 years (the most traumatic of all placements)

From the onset on being Institutionalized I was separated from my brother – I was not to see him until I was 17 years old after writing to NSW Government when I was reunited with him – he suffered his own perils and still does. Returned to my mother one week prior to my 13th birthday I was reunited with my sister.

I spent little time with my sister _____ as our paths criss-crossed throughout our childhoods – her nightmares are similar. She is submitting her own submission.

I was torn from the only love and family I had when separated from my mother, brother and sister.

My intention is to keep my submission as brief as possible but there are things in this paper that need to be addressed.

In Bidura and King Edward Homes I was visited occasional by my mother on met on a cold verandah environment. Any toys were taken from me and put in a pool so that no individual ever owned anything personal. I moved from placement to placement with the regulated small brown case with the issued 2 singlets, underpants a couple to dresses, shoes that were too tight, the standard wooden hair brush.

I was bathed in a tub with all girls standing naked ready to access the bath and be scrubbed, deloused. I ate the basic foods of tripe, sandwiches whilst the staff always had

good substantial meals.

I was beaten and threatened by senior girls if I did not make their beds, or stand below whilst they stood on the toilet seat and I masturbated them.

One of my many jobs was to clean some 30 pairs of schools shoes, polish and buff. I spent countless hours walking around the quadrangle as I am pigeon toed and have a curvature of the spine - the staff said I had to learn to walk tall with feet straight not like a duck.

No one ever praised me, loved me or encouraged me – I was told repeatedly that my mother and father did not want me, and that I would never amount to anything.

When placed with my foster parents at Guilford I learnt how to clean, wash, polish cutlery and was told I get less to eat because the government does not pay a lot for my keep, I was 7 years old.

I decided then at that placement not to have any friends because I had to keep moving away from them and the loss already experienced from being away from my sister, brother and mother was too much to cope with. I did not want to loose anyone else – I became detached.

I never had any school reports or toys to take with me when I left – just the issued brown case with the issued clothes.

My experiences of abuse up to age 8 years old, on a scale of 1-10 was about a 6 until I entered the so called “care” of foster parents when placed at

. This was the worst 5 years of my life and the events are nothing short of a horror story. This period on top of the abuse already suffered, I believe was the catalyst to my life long mental health issues and feeling of detachment and feeling unworthy,

I will not be able to include all events as this report is meant to be concise and short, to the Committee.

On arrival at foster parents – my foster parents had one child and in the next 5 years they had 3 more children.

I became the cleaner and nurse-maid. The cruelty I suffered was always at the hands of my foster mother. My foster father never knew of the abuse – he never touched me.

Although I had visits from a State Ward Officer, I was always told prior to his visit by my foster mother in a threatening way – always remember I will get to you first before they get to you, so don't tell them anything.

Any gifts sent to me by my natural mother (I was to find out later) where always given on my birthdays and or Christmas as seemingly have come from my foster parents.

On one occasion I received a letter from my mother with a picture of my new step father

and my sister in the picture, when I took it to school to show my teacher a picture of my mother, the picture was taken off me – torn up in front of me, I was told I would never see my mother or sister and that my mother was a drunk, did not care for me, that's why I was a State Ward.

I had two rulers strapped to my back like a cross to go to school – this way she claimed I had to walk straight as the ruler would stick into my flesh if I bent.

My State Ward issued wooden hairbrush became a favourite belting tool of hers and I went to school on many occasions with welts and blisters on my bare backside, upper thighs and back. One day the teacher said Ellen sit, I explained Miss I am too sore. She took me into the adjoining storeroom of the class. After looking at my welts took me to the Headmaster who looked at my bare bottom and legs. I remember a discussion followed about how they don't get involved, as it was not their problem.

I was also hit repeated with a whip like rope. I had things thrown at me. On one occasion my head was split open, blood pouring from my head, as she had thrown a tin of Johnson Baby powder at me. She then with the pram walked me to the school – I minded the baby whilst she ran in to tell the teacher I was sick because I fell and hit my head. I was told that I was not to tell my foster-father of this and for keeping my mouth shut she would make me a red velvet dress. I got stitches and I got the red velvet dress. I would have been too scared to say anything anyway.

At times when I came home from school she would stand me in the corner. She said I am going to ask you questions and I must not answer with a "yes" or "no" reply or I would get the end of the broom shoved into my stomach. So she would ask questions that had no other reply than a yes or know; like did you go to school today, with the YES the broom handle was shoved hard into my stomach, this went on four about an hour each time this happened. And there were many, many times.

When my foster-father was admitted to Liverpool Hospital I slept on the front verandah – she threw my clothes out with me – told me to go, I did not know where to go so slept on the verandah – in the morning she said oh are you still hear – pity.

When John F Kennedy was assassinated I had a major belting because the neighbours told her about the event first and she believed I should have told her first – she was hanging the washing on the line when the news came on. I didn't really know who he was anyway. But it seemed her pride was hurt. So it was my fault because I did not tell her.

One Saturday it was a day of Federal voting, my foster-mother's friend and came to visit. I had to call them Auntie and Uncle they were not related but was a friend of my foster-mothers. My foster-mother, father and , took the other children to go to vote. I was left alone with . He told me there was a reason I was left alone with him – because like all beautiful flowers he had to make me into a beautiful flower. He showed me the garden the violet patch that I loved so much. He explained that like all beautiful flowers that grew from seed that I to had to be seeded to be made into a beautiful girl flower. He took me to the Green House – put me on the potting bench, pulled down my pants and thrust his penis into me – I was 9 years old. It hurt so much, I was told I was

not to tell anyone for they would not believe me anyway, and the beautiful flower would wilt and die – from that day something in me did die. I never told anyone until I saw Psychiatrists and Psychologists.

4 months prior to my 10th birthday my foster mother gave me the section of Menstruation in the Encyclopedia Britannica to read. I did not understand the words – she did not explain it to me but said all girls go through bleeding. One week before my 10th birthday I woke up with blood on my pants. She said “well stupid girl you know what to do, put on the belt and attach the pad” awkwardly I did. She told my foster-father who said well congratulations – today you are a woman.

I got beaten if I was late coming home from school, I got beaten if my step-sister was late out of class because we got home later. My foster brothers and sisters were never beaten.

I minded the children when she was late getting home from work – she worked at _____ at _____. I was told I am never to tell the Welfare that she is working.

I went to tennis on Saturday mornings and Sunday School on Sundays – I went alone, when I asked her why they don't go to church she said “its part of my contract to have you here – you must do one sport and go to church – I don't have to go to church – if I don't send you I won't get the money for you”.

When I had an Appendix attack at school I was rushed to Liverpool Hospital – I had to have them removed. For the days I was in hospital I had no visitors. Upon being released from hospital I was made to walk home with her to _____ then go to the school for an event. I remembered being so very sore after such a long walk. But knew I was not allowed to complain, the stomach pain was little suffering compared to the beltings.

Many, many other tortuous events happened over the period of my stay at _____. I became detached, I don't ever remember a happy event. I was never loved, never hugged, never told I was pretty I was told I would amount to nothing, I was a nobody, I would end up a drunk like my mother, or a prostitute or bar-maid.

I happened to be awake the night of one Christmas Eve when she came in to put the pillow slips on the bed. She dragged me out of bed saying now that you know there is no Santa you can help with the wrapping.

I found out when I went home to live with my mother one week prior to my 13th birthday that all the gifts had been given to me from her where from my mother. I never received any money that my mother said she sent to me. I only ever got that one letter which was torn up with the photo of my sister and new step-father.

I had to leave all my belongings (toys, reports, trophies) behind she said they do not belong to you – and you are too big for toys so your foster sisters and brothers can have them. My step father went back for a push bike that was given to me.

I remember wishing in those years how lovely it would be to die. As church always told

me that God was waiting to hold me, to cuddle me, as he said “come to me little children who suffer”

And I ask the Senate Committee when WILL the Government take responsible and lead all Care Leavers no matter what State or Territory to a **fair and equitable payout to compensation to all children who were wards of the State, irrespective of where they happened to live? Or do they say “this is not my problem?”**

I would like to see all those identified as Forgotten Australian’s have their own defined disadvantaged group under legislation such as Person with a Disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

I would like to be afforded the opportunity to a Scholarship, to free medical, dental and pharmaceutical benefits to access free counseling, long-term. Not unlike Veterans receive entitlements.

I would encourage the Government to education the medical profession of “The Forgotten Australian’s” because my doctors and Allied Health workers were unaware of the apology or the significance. This needs to be covered through all tiers of government, not just at Federal level and resources and information be available to them to understand the suffering of this identified group.

I am 59 years old, I have carried burdens for much of my life. I became an Epileptic at age 15 years. The doctors believe the traumatic events leading to my puberty may have been a significant factor to that condition. No one else in my family suffers from this condition. I have had depression since that time as well. Similarly my sister and brother have endured their own nightmares and consequences of their time in so called care of the State of New South Wales.

Conclusion of Submission

**Australian Born
Australian Bred
Australian Citizen
Australian Fairness
For an Australian Child**

**Ellen Louise Bucello
1 June 2010**