

To: The Department of the Senate
PO Box 6100
Parliament House Canberra, ACT 2600

From:

19th April 2011

Dear Senators

Re: Commonwealth of Australia Enquiry into former forced adoption policies and practices.

I am a citizen of the Commonwealth of Australia and I am a resident in the state of New South Wales. As a citizen of Australia I have an undeprivable right to protection under the Australian Constitution and the Common Law of this country from those who have and would subjugate me to unlawful and harmful actions threatening the rights, of myself and my child, also to the life, liberty and justice we were entitled to.

In 1964, I found myself pregnant at the age of 15, I was sent to a Salvation Army home in Burwood (Sydney) for unmarried pregnant girls for a period of 3 months, the girls there had to help feed and look after the elderly ladies who were resident there too. We were entitled to a small amount of sickness benefit for a short time during the pregnancy and we had to sign over most of our benefit as our board and we received nothing in return for looking after the elderly. I returned home for about 4 weeks then was further sent to The Royal Hospital for Women in Paddington in Sydney, they had a section of their hospital set aside for unmarried pregnant mothers when they had 6 weeks left to await their confinement.

At no time whilst staying in these two places was I told of the material and financial support available that I have since became aware of only recently.

My child was born on November 1964 after a 48 hour labour which ended by a full

instrumental birth and my baby weighed 9lb 4oz.

I took my baby home with me I was supported briefly by my mother and when we went home I was expected to go to work and my mother looked after my child, after a period I was kicked out of home (by this time I was 17) so I looked for a place where I could have my 11 month old child with me and when I went home to get my child she was not there she had been hidden from me.

The following week I had a visit at my place of work from the child welfare officer (from Springwood, his name was) and he told me that my child had tonsillitis and asked me to sign consent papers so she could have an operation when it became necessary, I was soon to find out that the papers I had signed were to make my child a ward of the state I had been tricked by the child welfare officer, and once again he at no time gave me any idea that I had options available to help me. This happened 46 years ago and I have since become aware of the Child Welfare Act and the Child Adoption Act 1939 that outlines the help available to young unmarried women in my situation being the same entitlements as the Widows Pension less \$1 and other material help as available from the hospitals involved and I also became aware of this enquiry.

So in my case breaches of the law were made by the Salvation Army, the Social Worker at the Royal Women's Hospital Paddington and also the Child Welfare Officer who tricked me out of custody and then further let me believe that process could not be reversed. If I had been in receipt of monetary support it would have made so much difference to the outcome of my life and the life of my child, I spent 5 long years in psychiatric therapy as a result.

Even though the Parliamentary enquiry into adoption practices 1950-1998 concluded that agencies operating at the time acted "unethically and in some cases illegally "to date no-one has been held accountable for these crimes.

Hopefully those responsible for the heinous and unlawful practices that have damaged the lives of 100,000 girls then add the children and let's not forget the fathers around 300,000 people in all probably more, maybe this enquiry will see fit to bring those responsible to justice.

Yours sincerely