

Committee Secretary

Senate Standing Committee

PO Box 6100

Parliament House

Canberra ACT 2600

RE: Senate Inquiry into Commonwealth Contribution to Former Forced Adoption Policies & Practices.

Dear Commissioners,

I, Merrial B Ehm, of Tallebudgera Valley, am a citizen of the Commonwealth of Australia resident in Queensland.

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 or without, the borders of Australia.

As the mother of a baby boy who was taken for adoption in 1974, I wish to bring to your attention a serious breach of Qld Adoption Policies of the time.

I have read hundreds of submissions preceding mine from people who have relived immeasurable heartaches to tell their stories. In doing so, many have also told mine.

I will instead address **The Commission's Terms of Reference.**

(a) the role, if any, of the Commonwealth Government, it's policies & practices in contributing to forced adoptions.

I was never informed of the legal 30 day "cooling off" period – a period in which, at any time, I was permitted to rescind the Adoption Order. Had I known this, I most certainly would have activated it.

My son's adoptive parents took delivery of "their " new baby when he was SIX DAYS old. Henceforth he became a part of their family & lives.

His amended birth certificate was issued after TWENTY EIGHT DAYS! We never had any chance of remaining together as every possibility of doing so was removed by Commonwealth employees.

As a clear illustration of a blatant breach of Commonwealth Adoption Policies, I will attach my son's amended birth certificate.

(b) the potential role of the Commonwealth in developing a national framework to assist states & territories to address the consequences for the mothers, their families and children who were subject to forced adoption policies.

Many thousands of lives have been irreversibly damaged & changed through the great 'baby grab' years from the 50s through to the 80s. Many lives were destroyed.

I believe an apology from Governments – both State & Federal – would bring some peace of mind to those affected by the disgusting practices of those years. Acknowledgment of the philosophies behind taking babies from their mothers, the lack of follow-up of those babies, the denial of services to the abandoned mothers & the almost smug protection granted to adoptive parents, should all be addressed publicly & openly admitted by the Commonwealth governing body. I believe only then can those affected by adoption begin to feel they are respected, accepted & acknowledged members of society.

I thank you sincerely for your consideration of my submission. I wish the Commission the very best of results as you regard the difficult & sad situations you are faced with.

Yours in faith,

Merrial Ehm