

House of Representatives Standing Committee
on Family and Community Affairs

HON. LARRY ANTHONY
MIN. CHILDREN & YOUTH AFFAIRS
PARLIAMENT HOUSE
CANBERRA A.C.T.

Submission No.

416

Date Received:

5-8-03

Secretary:

2600

10 DENT ST.
HORSESHOE BAY
MAGNETIC ISLAND @ 4819.

5th AUGUST 2003

TO FAX: (02) 62777440 PAGE ① OF ② PAGES.

DEAR MR. ANTHONY

I HAVE LISTENED TO BOTH YOURSELF, & THE PRIME MINISTER SPEAK ON DECISIONS IN THE FAMILY COURT ON RESIDENCY & ACCESS VISITS TO & FOR CHILDREN, IN THE EVENT OF A BREAKDOWN / SEPARATION OF PARENTS. YOUR STATEMENTS OF A 50/50 SPLIT SOUNDS LIKE THE WORDS OF SOLOMON IS CUTTING A CHILD IN HALF - OR PERHAPS LOBBYING FROM MEN'S GROUPS - BUT NOT REALISTIC OR BARRLED TOWARDS THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

ALTHOUGH I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN AN ADVOCATE FOR EQUITY FOR WOMEN, I AM COMPLETELY OPPOSED TO THE "MADONNA COMPLEX" WHEN DECIDING RESIDENCY FOR CHILDREN OF SEPARATED PARENTS. IT IS NOT ALWAYS AN EQUITABLE ASSUMPTION TO GIVE FEMALES ALL RIGHTS, ALMOST AUTOMATICALLY. RESIDENCY IS ORDERED WITH THE MOTHER. A VIOLENT WOMAN CAN BE, & OFTEN IS, MORE VIOLENT, MORE MANIPULATIVE THAN A MALE. WHILE I BELIEVE IMPLICITLY IN THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD, CHILDREN BEING ABLE TO USE THAT POWER, TO SAY CLEARLY WHICH PARENT THEY WANT TO LIVE WITH, IS IN FACT OFTEN NOT SUPPORTED OR ENCOURAGED - "THE ADULTS (LEGAL) ALWAYS KNOW BEST" ATTITUDE IS ENTRENCHED & NOT ALWAYS AN UNBIASED VIEW AT ALL.

FAMILY COURT WRITERS / SOCIAL WORKERS, GOOD, BAD, INDIFFERENT, DREADFUL, UNPROFESSIONAL, TAKE ON THE JOB OF REPORTING TO THE COURT, CHARGE HUGE FEES, WRITE "REPORTS" (OFTEN WITH PERSONAL BIAS) RECOMMENDING RESIDENCY, ACCESS VISITS ETC - WHICH CARRY A WEIGHT IN THE UNDER RESOURCED FAMILY COURT - FREQUENTLY WITH DISASTROUS RESULTS FOR THE CHILD / CHILDREN, BECAUSE OF THE CONTENTS / INTENTION OF THOSE REPORTS.

PROFESSOR JUDITH WALLERSTEIN* SAID " --- THERE'S TIME WITH DAD, TIME WITH MUM, TIME FOR THEMSELVES, BUT NO TIME FOR REGULAR LIFE - CHILDREN ARE LEFT WITH NO SENSE OF POWER TO BE ABLE TO MAKE THEIR OWN DECISIONS, SOME MAY NEVER REALISE THAT POWER, EVEN WHEN ADULTS"

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THE AUSTRALIAN PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY IS VERY DISTURBED BY THE "POWER" OF THESE SOCIAL WORKERS (I AM ESPECIALLY AWARE OF THEIR CONCERNS IN SOME GOLD COAST AREAS). THESE REPORTS ARE IN ALL PROBABILITY A LARGE FACTOR IN THE END RESULT OF RUDDERLESS YOUNG PEOPLE, WANDERING (THE STREETS) WITH NO OBJECT IN LIFE. THE DISRUPTIVE REGIME OF AN AFTERNOON HERE & THERE, TRANSFERS OF CHILDREN, ALONE IN BUSES, PLANES, TO A PLACE WITH DIFFERENT "HOUSE RULES" & OFTEN VIOLENCE - HOME TOO HATE FOR ANY HOME LIFE OR HOMEWORK FOR THAT MATTER, IN THE HOME CREATED BY THE PARENT THEY LIVE WITH BY CHOICE - (IF THEY ARE ALLOWED TO EXERCISE THAT CHOICE)

THESE "LOOSE" ARRANGEMENTS MUST BE STOPPED & A MORE IN DEPTH, HUMANITARIAN INVESTIGATION / QUESTIONING / HEARING, BY FULLY ACCREDITED PEOPLE, (WHO HAVE BEEN INVESTIGATED THEMSELVES) - TALKING WITH CHILDREN IN A GUILT FREE, NON INTIMIDATION ATMOSPHERE I.E. AWAY FROM PEOPLE (EVEN PARENTS) WHO CAN PUT FEAR INTO MISTREATED CHILDREN WHO ARE CAUGHT IN A DREADEFUL CRISIS, - SO THAT THEY FEEL THEY CAN TELL THE TRUTH. ADULTS CAN COPE & ACT IT OUT IF THEY ARE MANIPULATIVE / STRONG ENOUGH & CAN RECOVER, CHILDREN WHO ARE STILL TRYING TO FORM VALUES, OFTEN CAN'T RECOVER.

PLEASE PUT A STOP TO THIS DESTRUCTION OF CHILDREN. FATHERS FREQUENTLY MAKE THE BEST PARENTS FOR GIRLS OR BOYS - SO THIS IS NOT ONLY ABOUT MEN & BOYS - IT IS ABOUT YOUNG GIRLS & THEIR FATHERS TOO.

I COMMEND YOUR ATTEMPTS TO MAKE THE FAMILY COURT JUST THAT, A COURT FOR FAMILIES - A PLACE WHERE CHILDREN ARE GIVEN A CHANCE TO SURMOUNT THESE EXTREMES OF SELFISH ADULTS WHO HAVE FAILED TO BE RESPONSIBLE LOVING ADULTS, & SO PERHAPS THERE WILL BE A GENERATION OF RESPONSIBLE LOVING ADULTS IN SOME YEAR AHEAD

SINCERELY

Shirley Prout.
(SHIRLEY PROUT)

* JUDITH WALLERSTEIN IS CONSIDERED THE WORLD'S FOREMOST AUTHORITY ON THE EFFECTS OF DIVORCE ON CHILDREN.