

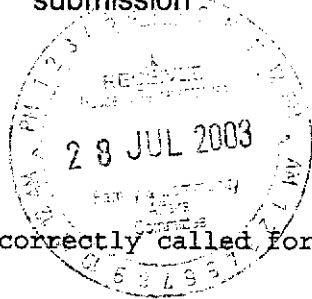
Submission No: 231

Date Received: 24-7-03

Secretary:

From: Ange Kenos [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 24 July 2003 10:43 PM
To: Committee, FCA (REPS)
Subject: submission

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Dear Honourable Members

The Prime Minister has correctly called for an Inquiry into Child Custody that is long overdue.

For far too long "we" have errantly accepted as fact the notion that a woman is best suited to raise children regardless of her own circumstances.

Yet clearly our Courts should consider whether or not either parent has a criminal record, a history of drugs, a life style in prostitution and so forth.

The best interests of the child must be paramount and that does not necessarily mean that the mother or indeed that either parent is automatically best suited to that utmost responsibility.

Access is another issue that needs to be ensured. It is unacceptable that some parents will seek to take their own anger and frustrations on their ex partner by denying them access to their child and thus the child attention from a loving parent. To this end there should be a legal requirement that any child subject to a custody order cannot leave Australia without the express permission of a judge and then only after a personal/ direct approach where said judge must meet and speak with all concerned.

There have been too many cases where a parent has effectively kidnapped their own children and removed them to foreign shores where there is no extradition with Australia. Mrs. [REDACTED] is one such victim. But others have resorted to the potentially very dangerous and legally questionable action of hiring professionals to re kidnap their child to return them to Australian jurisdiction.

To that end the Australian parliament and I mean all sides must work to establish extradition treaties with every country with whom we have any political and economic relationship. There can be no question that this should be a priority.

The print media have highlighted some exceptional parents who have shared custody of their children following a divorce or separation but these would be the exception rather than the rule. The norm is that parents fight between themselves and their children may even become more pawns or objects to divide rather than products of their former love, but who will always need that continued love even it no longer exists between the parents concerned.

Child support is also a pathetic joke as I know both as a teacher of VCE legal studies and through my direct knowledge of people who have been @through it¹. The Child Support Agency needs far more staff if it is to do justice to its duties. It is not a simple arm of the Australian Taxation Office or a government department. Its very mission statement demands far more and yet it has not delivered. There is no need to elaborate here as the media have correctly and accurately highlighted many cases of what I am stating.

IF the Treasurer and the PM truly care about Australians, about @the battlers¹ then the rhetoric will cease and positive action will begin.

Cynically that is not expected by this writer.

I could go on but I prefer to come to an abrupt halt here to emphasize that action is mandatory and now, not in the next decade.

Mr A T Kenos