

Anton Heyneke

Tuesday 10 April 2007.

Committee Secretary
Inquiry into Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs Legislation
Amendment (Child Support Reform Consolidation and Other Measures) Bill 2007

To the Committee Secretary,

I write in relation to the above mentioned inquiry.

I am a child support payer and a victim of the Child Support Scheme listed in the document "Every Picture Tells a Story" as being 'fundamentally flawed.' I have three children, two subject to the Child Support Agency (CSA) and one that is not.

[Photo provided]

I include a picture of the three children and ask the Committee to point out who is who. I ask this as it appears that the CSA using the legislation as it currently stands believe that one of them is different and not subject to the same standard of living as the other two.

Using the legislation, the CSA is willing to allow the third child to go without so that its 'fundamentally flawed' assessment can be used to calculate my child support liability. This assessment includes my ex wife being able to earn upwards of THREE times the amount of income I can before child support is reassessed. This assessment includes the theft of tax returns (under the basis of 'debt to the Commonwealth') even when the alleged arrears are disputed using the same acts.

Considering the other adult in my household (now forced back into fulltime work to help with the expenses) my annual income to spend (that is post child support and tax) is some \$28000. This includes family benefits.

At the same time, my ex wife will receive from a modest working week the equivalent following welfare payments and child support equivalent to approximately a \$26,000 per annum salary. Toss in the health care card for some cheap utilities, medical, medicine and she is comfortable.

The current system is a farce. It promotes the custodial parent to not work. It promotes reward for removing children from their father's lives (and as such increasing the amount of child support received.) It promotes and enforces inequality thru legislation.

As a example, how soon would the CSA make my life difficult and assess me on a 'capacity to earn' if I chose to take on a role as 'stay at home Dad?'

The legislation promotes individuals within the CSA to act as Judge and to determine the acts as they see fit under the pretentious view 'best interests of the child.' The CSA staff includes many that also receive child support, a definite conflict of interest. These same

individuals then use the same fundamentally flawed acts to hide behind digital signatures and not openly put their names to their decisions.

The concept of child support appears to be based upon my experience of the current legislation is that as long as the father lives then he can pay a percentage of what he has, no matter what. As an example, the CSA will pursue arrears based upon an income. The children are viewed as needing a percentage of the money the father earns. The hypocrisy happens when the father cannot earn anymore. If he dies, the Government does not support the children to the same level. In essence, they receive only family tax benefit and some parenting payment. The government has set this as an amount to support children. Anything extra is spousal maintenance. In addition as it is determined from pre tax income it is a form of taxation.

The child support scheme and the resultant CSA are in need of severe reform. In addition, it is in need of open and public scrutiny into the manner and means by which it is administered. Anything short of this is to cover up the 18 years before changes to the legislation in which the CSA acted with impunity. I am sure from experience that if the public could see how the CSA act they would revert to a more equal system without hesitation.

The CSA and its legislation need to be fully dismantled and rebuilt with emphasis on equality and accountability for decisions. The act should openly highlight the duty of people to maintain themselves and link it with what the Government deems a sufficient amount to support a child (family tax benefit.)

If you require further information to highlight my points please feel free to contact me at your discretion.

Kind regards,

Anton Heyneke.