

Dear Senator Moore,

**Implementation if the Recommendations of the Lost Innocents and The Forgotten Australians**

I am one of the Forgotten Australians and I wrote a number of submissions to the Senate Inquiry into the Forgotten Australians. A significant number of my statements were also included in the final report. For your information my submission number was 286.

I was part of the "Stolen White Generation" and I was incarcerated by The Salvation Army in the Gill Memorial Home for Boys in Goulburn NSW.

There are three points which I want to emphasise;

I am particularly concerned about the need to fully address **Recommendation No 1** which deals with the need to issue and apology to all those thousands of Australians who, through no fault of their own were incarcerated in institutions.

The giving of an apology will give to many people closure from a past accentuated by abuse, horror, and feelings of worthlessness. It needs to be pointed out that it was not our fault that we were placed in these places; we were the victims of both State and the church and until the Senate Inquiry even though the churches knew of these happenings they refused to acknowledge them or accept any responsibility.

What also needs to be looked is the "White Stolen Generation" who suffered as much as the indigenous children. The Salvation Army in an official communiqué with me told me that they would take any child so long as the money to keep them was paid. There were no checks or balances and so people such as myself were sent to institutions such as the Gill.

An apology for the cruelties suffered by innocent children will enable people to move on with their lives.

This is also a moral issue and sadly the previous government seemed to lack the moral fibre or will to acknowledge that wrongs had been committed. As a *Forgotten Australian* I am asking that the Government assume some form of moral and ethical leadership and implement this recommendation.

There is also the need, I believe for **Recommendations 9 – 11** to be implemented. There is the need for some form of transparency to be initiated. There is the need for churches to admit to their crimes and then move on. They have to accept that they have done wrong and properly apologise themselves and accept the fact that their crimes need to be made public. It is nonsense to assert that there was no knowledge about these events occurring. Churches and the State choose to ignore those who sought to make these things public and then by the use of expensive PR campaigns tried to vindicate their actions as being the fault of the victims or the press for bringing these crimes to light. The Salvation Army for example said that it was the press fault that these crimes were exposed, and stated that their good work should be shown up and their abuses virtually ignored.

If religious groups do not have anything to hide then they have nothing to fear, but there is also the need for those who donate to these organisations to know their history and on – going culpabilities.

**Recommendation 20** deals with the need to fund CLAN. This quite simply is a necessity. CLAN is doing what the Government and churches won't do, and that is deal with those affected persons in a compassionate and caring manner. CLAN has assumed the role of dealing with a national problem with no on – going funding and it's importance as an organisation which deals with "homies" cannot be overly emphasised. Recurrent Government and church funding should be an on – going process for at least ten years. Proper funding for CLAN should enable the organisation to establish offices in each capital city with an allowance to enable representatives to also visit rural communities and cities.

As a person living in Queensland who was a resident in a home in NSW my only support group is CLAN. To date the Q'ld government will not fund a 1800 number to enable people to contact CLAN in NSW and it is a ludicrous assertion that people from other states are supported in Q'ld. Queensland seems to forget that people move and that with a moving population there is a need for agencies such as CLAN. I applied for funding from ARC for counselling and this dried up after a number of visits, so I depend on the support network

from CLAN. I would like to suggest that CLAN be funded equally for the next ten years by State, Federal and the various Churches who caused the problems in the first place. There is the need to provide yearly funding for a sum of one million dollars (min) with representatives in each state, and that a board comprising of Government, church and CLAN members administer the funding. At the conclusion of this time payment cease and CLAN operates free of Government funding. This is in reality a small amount of money, considering the enormity of the problem but it would allow CLAN to operate as an organisation whose aim is to promote the wellbeing of those who still suffer because they are Forgotten Australians.

James Luthy