

From: [Min Marshall](#)
To: [forcedadoptionsinquiry](#)
Date: Friday, 26 June 2020 1:56:28 PM

To The Committee Manager,
Legislative Assembly Legal and Social Issues Committee.
Parliament House
Spring Street,
East Melbourne Vic 3002.

Dear Members

My name is Wilhelmina Marshall of

[REDACTED]

Dated 26th June, 2020

My son [REDACTED]

Born [REDACTED]

Adopted Feb 1970 [REDACTED]

Even though the above adoption occurred in Queensland, I wish to participate in this submission as a support to my Victorian sisters in Arms as well as nationally. I feel many issues that I will raise in this submission will be very informative and helpful.

Firstly, I was a victim of forced adoption, forced and co-hersed and bullied to sign legal documents, adoption papers, with hands shaking and tears streaming, a young frightened, vulnerable young girl with no support from anyone. The word duress is insufficient.

Just a bit of history, when I first found out that I was pregnant and told the father, Phil, he was upset and wanted me to abort the pregnancy.

I was dismayed, and decided against the abortion and moved to Queensland to start a new life with my child.

Unfortunately the QLD authorities, family services became aware of my situation and assured me how difficult they would make it for me if I decided to keep the child.

They even threatened me that they would make the child a Ward of State if I slipped up.

Please note also that during this almost 12 months period I lived off my savings with no financial support from anyone. Being 20, I had to give up a good job and therefore received no income for that period, there was virtually no social security benefits at that time.

I had a difficult 3 day labour, but the arrival of my beautiful son [REDACTED] was so worth it. I was fortunate enough to hold him before they so brutally took him away.

At the time of signing the adoption papers a few days later, I was told that there was a 30 day cooling off period, which gave me some hope. As soon as I was allowed to I flew back to Melbourne to meet up with [REDACTED] father.

We were able to work things out and decided to pick up [REDACTED] and get married.

I contacted the Department of Family services and I advised them of our intentions, (for it was still within the 30 days time frame).

I spoke to a [REDACTED], she advised me that it was too late, [REDACTED] had already been adopted out. I advised her of the 30 days and she replied no, 30 days or adoption which

ever came first.

She also told me that [REDACTED] had been adopted to a lovely young couple who had been waiting for a child for 6 years and that this was their first child, also, that he would be going to a very good home. No concern for my welfare at all.

Phil and I sadly didn't marry, the sorrow and grief of losing our son was too much of a strain and took its toll on our relationship.

Years later, 16 years later in fact, it was 1986 and after searching for many years I was finally able to receive non-identifying information on my son [REDACTED].

The letter from the Department of Family services stated that he had been adopted out to a couple in their 40's and he was their 3rd out of 4 adopted children! Plus the adoption date was outside the 30 days stated.

I was devastated!

I approached the Department and spoke to a [REDACTED] in the Adoption section, he was very sympathetic and apologetic when I told him about my case, but what he told me next shocked me. The officers in the Adoption department at the time of [REDACTED] adoption were advised by their superiors that the babies were not to be returned to their rightful mothers under any circumstances and tell the mothers any form of lies to make them go away, unbelievable!

[REDACTED] and I were reunited in 1992, we had an interesting relationship, we were close, but always on his terms.

10 years ago [REDACTED] health and mental health began to suffer and unfortunately and sadly he passed away January this year.

I did not attend [REDACTED] funeral as I couldn't once again cope with all the lies that would confront me.

[REDACTED] adopted parents are not alive anymore but he does have 3 adopted siblings who just took over funeral arrangements and virtually excluded me even though I was a large part of [REDACTED] life over the last 30 years.

It is interesting to note here that no death certificate can be issued without the original birth certificate. Also no passport can be issued without the original birth certificate, which in many cases for adopted individuals, was the first time they found out that they were adopted, difficult to cope with especially in your 50's and 60's etc.

As my son left no will, never married and had no children and his adopted parents had passed away I assumed his estate would automatically come to me, his closest blood relative. Not so, his estate is with the Queensland Trustees and I was advised that [REDACTED] estate will be divided between his adopted siblings.

Yet, I was told by a Queensland Estate solicitor if I was indigenous, and had my child stolen I would be entitled to inherit [REDACTED] estate.

I would like to see us mothers receive the same rights, this is bordering discrimination.

In closing, as [REDACTED] natural parents, we would also like to be able to place a plaque on his grave to acknowledge his true birth details.

History should be based on truth, not lies.

I would also like to see the relinquishing mothers receive the same rights as our indigenous

sisters who had their babes stolen:-
In forms of support and compensation.

I recognize that this is a strong statement but really, I ask you weren't forced adoptions
merely another form of legal human trafficking?
So sad.

Thanking you for all your support on this matter, and appreciate all that you are doing to
correct this.
Feel free to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Min Marshall.