



Submission for SUZANNE ISOBEL HAMMOND 21.5.1943

I, Suzanne Isobel Hammond am a Citizen of the Commonwealth of AUSTRALIA residing in Queensland .

As a citizen of the Commonwealth of Australia I have an inalienable right to protection under the Australian Constitution and the Common Law of this country.

As an Australian citizen, the Commonwealth affords me protection from the unlawful and harmful actions that threaten my right to life, liberty and justice from those who would deny me these rights, within and without, the borders of Australia.

In 1960 I was forced to leave my small home town by my parents to spend the next 7 months in the Church of England Home for Girls at 520 Boundary Road Spring Hill, Brisbane Qld.

My time at the home was extremely emotional due to the attitude of the Matron who had great contempt for unmarried pregnant girls. We were made to work long hours and treated badly most days.

I had monthly visits to the Women's General Hospital at Bowen Hills for medical visits but at no time did I receive any information regarding what to expect in the following months.

At the Home, I was never informed about my rights when the baby was born, even though I continually claimed that I intended to keep my baby. I never received any financial assistance and was not allowed any phone calls to my parents.

When I was due to go to hospital I was taken from the Home in an ambulance alone, and placed in a labour ward. I was treated with more contempt from the medical staff as my paperwork supposedly said "adoption planned".

The birth was an event that has left life-long scars due to the treatment at the hospital and I was not allowed to see or hold my baby once it was born. In fact, I didn't know what sex it was until two days later. I was placed in a ward with other mothers and their babies.

I fought to see my baby in the nursery but was banned from that area and eventually drugged to keep me quiet and asleep.

At the home I was given a drug to suppress my lactation but didn't know what it was. I was told by the Matron that it was to keep my baby healthy.

After two days, a lady came to see me, and her words were: "If you would like to name your baby, you need to sign this document." I gave her a name and I was told to sign so that my baby could have a name. At no time was I told that I had signed the adoption consent forms and I was told that when I signed the forms, I could see my baby. I was never informed that there was a 30 day revocation period as I still insisted that I was going to keep my baby.

At the hospital, the treatment I received by the staff was well below the standards of healing people and I was isolated at times when I tried to see my baby.

Following the birth, I was treated with drugs to keep me quiet, and eventually I was told I could go home and that my baby had gone. I wasn't told where she had gone, but I was so emotionally devastated that I had given up my fight. I never saw or held my baby and restrained from getting out of bed to go to the nursery to see my baby. At no time was I offered any information regarding the future of my baby. I claimed on many occasions that I intended to keep me baby.

I was continually told by the Matron at the Home that the plans had been made for the future of my baby, but I was never told what those plans were.

When I got back to the Home I was allowed one phone call to my mother to say the baby was born and gone. I was put back on scrubbing duties as I continually insisted that I wanted to keep my baby.

The Matron told me a few days later that my baby was officially gone to a good family.

My mother told me to come home and to never mention what had happened in the past 7 months and to forget about the baby.

For many years I ignored the pain in my heart until I began having nightmares that my baby was calling me in the night. I had an emotional breakdown in 1984 and that took me many years to recover.

1988 I located my baby and we had a brief reunion that didn't last for long. The sad news is she is suffering from secondary breast cancer and my question is, is it from the Diethylstilboestrol drugs I was given at the home?

The only papers I signed were to give my baby a name, or that was what I was told by the lady who said she was a counselor. I only saw the bottom of the piece of paper she had in her hands and I was told to sign the bottom of the page and put the baby's chosen name, which I did.

I have suffered tremendously over the decades to do with the welfare of my child and even though she had a comfortable life, I was denied the choice of raising her myself. I suffered another emotional breakdown in 1988 due to the emotional stress related to the adoption and had counseling on many occasions. The usual emotions of guilt, shame and heartache has stayed with me since 1960.

This is my Submission for the Inquiry.

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Signed_

Date

18. 1. 2011

Suzanne Isobel Hammond

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