

# **Senate Inquiry into “Commonwealth contribution to former forced adoption policies and practices.”**

## **Preamble to Submission**

I ANTHONY RONALD NIX am a citizen of the Commonwealth of Australia  
resident 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

**This is the story of my abduction and the abuse I suffered at  
the hands of my abductors.**

## MY BIRTH AND ABDUCTION

My legal name is Anthony Nix; I was born at the Royal Brisbane Hospital at 6.15 am on the (...) of November 1966. My true and correct name is Anthony or Michal (...). I am the true son of (...) (...) and (...) (...). I was the third baby stolen upon birth from my mother at the Royal Brisbane Hospital. My mother was immediately admitted to a psyche unit, destination unknown. My adoption was illegal based on the fact that my mother was deemed psychologically unsound, and therefore unable to legally sign anything, and my father states “he arrived at the hospital four days later to claim me and was told I had died at birth and my remains disposed of”. My parents went on to marry and had three more children.

Condemning evidence is the paperwork that I have obtained in 2003 from Freedom of Information concerning my ‘adoption’. Amongst this paperwork are forms from the Royal Brisbane hospital and the State Children’s Department. The ‘History for Investigation’ form clearly shows my father’s name, what town he was living in and the fact he had an occupation. However, in the section it asks “Will he support child?” it states “No”. My father has told me that he was in fact financially supporting (...) during her pregnancy and was unable to obtain work in Brisbane so had no choice but to accept work in northern Queensland. Furthermore, when I was born he travelled back to Brisbane within four days and approached the hospital immediately to claim me; I was four days old when he arrived. The hospital staff told him that I had died. When (...) asked about my remains to give me a proper catholic funeral, he was told “they have been disposed of”. The consent order shows it was signed/forged the next day.

I was not rejected or given up by my parents; I was stolen from my mentally ill mother when she was vulnerable (records show that she was depressed during the pregnancy, DOCS 3/12/80), and from my healthy, committed and employed father, proof is that he later married my

mother. My mother was so ashamed or unaware of my abduction that she continued the belief that I had died, not saying anything different to my father for the next 22 years, even throughout their marriage of which three more children were produced. They later divorced due to my mothers deteriorating mental and physical health. Towards the end of (...) life, (...) friend (...) contacted me and explained that (...) wanted to see me. I was invited to her hospital bed where (...) introduced herself and then introduced me to my father (...) who was also there; (...) reacted with utter shock, anger, grief, denial and dismay.

I would also like to draw attention to the 'Form of General Consent by Parent or Guardian to Adoption Order' (signed 18<sup>th</sup> November, 1966) as to the difference in handwriting between my mothers signature and my mothers initials in the column. I suggest that the witness on the form (...) (...) may need to explain this and a handwriting specialist opinion be sought. An example of my mother's handwriting can be found on a letter she wrote to DOCS 21 years later showing her capital S leans backwards not forwards and her capital B's look completely different in both documents. (...) claims that (...) told him that her mother signed the consent form as she thought I had died. When she discovered the truth she did not know how to find me and kept the secret from (...)

Also in this letter written by (...) to DOCS, she states that she has no memory of signing the adoption consent and that she named me Michal (...) and was uncertain as to my birth date. In fact I was born on a different date and named Anthony (...) on the Consent order. So this suggests both her memory of my birth was clouded and that she was not in any state of mind at the time to sign legal papers which determined the rest of my life. It further suggests that she did not sign the papers at all.

## LIFE AS A WARD OF THE STATE

The first 18 weeks my life I lived in a ward at the Royal Brisbane Hospital until I was transferred into the care of The Matron, Warilda Children's home, Woolloowin. During this phase of my life, while my parents were grieving for their dead baby, I was being passed 'fit for adoption' and foster parents were found to accommodate me. The foster parents they chose for me were (...) "Deceased" and (...) "Deceased" and they were not suitable based on their older age, poor health and (...) history of physical and sexual abuse perpetrated upon their own children. It is obvious no investigation was done as to their suitability as they had adult children who would have been available to interview but were not. Furthermore, (...) was on epileptic medication that was prescribed to 'control his violent outbursts'. I was transferred to board with them on the (...) March 1967 at four and half months of age. After two years of fostering me (...) and (...) applied to adopt me.

(...) (...) relayed the story of my adoption as follows; (...) explained that he wanted a daughter and that he was told by DOCS that in order to obtain a girl baby he had to adopt a boy first, as there were an excess of boys and girls were in high demand. (...) was reluctant to adopt me due to my ethnic appearance however he did so in order to get a daughter. They adopted his much prized daughter around the same time, my sister who was then a newborn.

## MY CHILDHOOD

I was told the story of my adoption throughout my childhood by (...) with vehemence he would state "I only adopted you because I had to in order to get your sister" He also referred to me constantly as "(...) by name, (...) by nature." It was not until my natural mother found me, and I realised her maiden name was (...) did I understand how he was using knowledge of my heritage to abuse me which now makes me ashamed of my true name.

During the first five years of my life living with these people, I was put to work on the family farm. At the age of three I was expected to chip weeds, hoe earth and construct boxes for packing vegetables and to supervise or spy upon the employee's. I was expected to work from sunset to sundown and during this time of my life I was threatened and bullied by workers for reporting their work progress to my adoptive father, as (...) expected me to do. During this stage of my life I was not allowed to enter the family home except to eat and sleep. One example of the consequences of entering the house during daylight hours was when I snuck into the house to watch Humphrey B Bear. (...) came into the house and grabbed me by my neck and beat me with closed fists. I was then forced down into the shed to continue making boxes. After two natural disasters impacting the family farm at Manly West, Queensland, my adoptive parents decided to give up farming and move to Beenleigh where I lived until I was 14. By this time I was about 5-6 years of age and had endured strenuous adult work hours of which if I did not achieve I would be punished with beatings.

By 1971 (...) health was deteriorating. She was about 58 years of age and had suffered with heart problems and arterial sclerosis for several years which was becoming critical. She spent a great deal of time in hospital. (...) ability to cope was decreasing and he expected that I take on the care of my mother and also assist him in his work at an abattoir as well as attend school and do chores at home. On one occasion my disobedience was punished by being hit across the skull with a piece of 4x2 wood by (...) I was left unconscious under the back verandah for an unknown amount of hours until I came too and found my way to bed in the dark of night.

My chores within the home by the age of seven were to; wash the car weekly, mow the lawn, help to renovate the house and to work on the vegetable gardens. I was also expected to remove the washing from the line and cook dinner for my family while my father worked.

During the episodes when my mother was in hospital I was also expected to work at night until 12 pm in the abattoir in the cry vac room helping my father to fully clean the room as he was a night cleaner, while my adopted sister was babysat and excluded from any responsibilities.

Meanwhile I was constantly bombarded with (...) violence for any mistake I made. One example of this was when I was seven I took milk money off the front step and snuck to the shops to buy lollies. (...) found me in Beenleigh town and chased me home smacking my bottom. Later that night when my father discovered my 'crime', he took upon me in my bedroom with a cane to my back, buttocks and legs. When that broke he then whipped my back and legs with a jug cord. By this stage (...) had felt I had enough and came into the room begging him to stop. She was rammed against the wall and choked by him and then she retreated in fear as my father returned to beating me with his fists. I remember feeling dissociated from my body during this assault, due to shock and pain. For a least a week I was neither allowed to nor physically able go to school due to the extent of bruising and cuts to my entire body.

The canes my father used during his assaults on me were purchased from the Brisbane Exhibition with a lot of consideration and testing as to their flexibility and strength. My father would take my sister and myself to the exhibition for the sole purpose of purchasing several of those dolls on a hooked cane that were available in those times. My father would remove the dolls and hand them to my sister and demonstrate in front of me whipping movements of the cane, flexing of the cane and he would gaze down the length of them to measure their straightness. Then he would hand the stall holder his money and we would leave. These canes would be hung over a kitchen chair as a constant reminder to me to not upset him, which was impossible. My sister of course would love her new dolls.

Being the carer of my mother I rarely slept due to my mother often getting up in the night

and collapsing. I would lie in bed in fear of her dying. Many times I would hear the thud of her falling and find her unconscious and not breathing. I would have to call the ambulance and watch them perform resuscitation upon her and care for my sister while my father made his way home from night shift. These experiences of abuse, neglect and the fear of my mother dying created in me constant anxiety and the inability to concentrate at school. Consequently my school life was a failure both socially and academically. Furthermore, my father had the school convinced I was a disobedient child and I would often receive the cane or strap there as well. I had no safe place.

During the extended periods of times my mother would be admitted to hospital my sister and I were sent to live with (...) and (...) (...) was heavily involved within the Baptist church and would often have many children at his residences. During our stay with them Both my sister and I were molested. Furthermore, his son (...) violently sodomised me so severely I ran away to a local creek to sit in it to soothe the pain he caused me and allow the blood to wash away. These incidents happened in various homes that this family resided in during my childhood including homes in Sunnybank, Buderim, (...) and in Melbourne.

(...) (...) has been imprisoned for the crimes he perpetrated upon my sister however the crimes he and his son perpetrated upon me has not been investigated. I feel unable to follow through on making an official report to the police out of shame and fear of reliving the story.

To demonstrate the hopeless situation I was in where I had no protection I will outline another story of when I was approximately 12-13 years old. (...) called DOCS and asked them to come and get me as I was a 'bad child' and he stated to me because "he does not want me". A Ms. (...) (...) attended our home from the department to whom I explained the abuse that I was experiencing. However she showed no interest in believing my stories and consequently nothing was done to help me. I never heard from a social worker or child

protection officer again and the abuse continued and I knew there was no salvation for me. To make life even more difficult I was diagnosed with adolescent arthritis and both my legs were put into plaster casts making the ability to defend myself impossible.

By this age I was also starting high school. I was experiencing bullying at school and also corporal punishment from the faculty due to my inability to control my 'temper', but I remember it as self defence. Violent altercations with students and teachers started to be a problem for me due to the feeling of needing to be on constant alert, highly defensive and intolerant of any slight injustice I may perceive towards me or other vulnerable students. I continued to have social problems and could not make friends nor could I impress my teachers. However, even if I did do well in school it would be useless as my destiny had already been decided upon by (...)

(...) literally attempted to throw me out of the house at the age of fourteen, midway through year ten, once again using excessive violence and force. He explained to me that he refused to keep me in school as I was "never going to do any good" and that he would not waste money feeding me anymore as both him and my mother were already on the pension. In that moment rage welled up inside me and I king hit him in the face and knocked him out cold. My mother begged me to leave before he came too and that is how I was initiated into the adult world of 'independence'.

#### LATE TEENS / EARLY ADULTHOOD

I went to (...) biological adult son's home to ask for support and was allowed to stay with him. I wrote to DOCS at this point asking for identifiable information with regards to my "real mother and father" and received very limited information which did not help me find them and therefore realised I must find a job. For the following year, at the age of 14-15, I worked as a jackaroo on a farm out west. I was forced to live in a small shanty alone when not out rounding

up cattle on horseback. During that six months I suffered severe lacerations to my legs from being pushed against barbed by my horse. I spent two months in hospital with a staff infection in the wound and it kept opening up and requiring restitching on several occasions. I was discharged with no where to go and wandered the streets until a priest found me and arranged with my mother for me to be placed on a train and return to the family home. I stayed in the family home for a few months until I started a mechanics trade and once again was told to get out, this time I moved in with workmates. I managed to support myself for the next few years until I finished my apprenticeship. However I was excluded from any meaningful family involvement. I felt totally alone.

(...) died when I was 20 years of age, my father informed me she had died by knocking on the door to my share house in the early hours of the morning telling me blankly “Your mother is dead” and he turned around and left. When I attended her funeral I was not acknowledged as part of the family whatsoever. The only person in the world that showed me any type of love, in her feeble way, was dead. I faced the world now with no sense of identity, love or acceptance. Consequently, I became entangled in relationships with women much older than me. Prior to this I felt unable to form any other type of relationships with women as I was extremely shy and fearful of rejection. I met a 30 year old woman at the age of 20 at a bachelor party who was the ‘entertainment’ and I married her a few months later, none of my adopted family accepted an invitation.

When I was in my mid 20’s (...) my real mother made contact with me. When I met her she was very ill. However she took the time to explain to me that when I was born she was told that I had died and she was admitted to a psychiatric unit. She said she had no recollection of signing adoption forms. I was introduced to (...) my natural father, who confirmed her story

and explained when I was born (...) called him from the hospital saying she had the baby and he was dead. (...) died less than two years later and I continue to remain in contact with (...) I have also met my other six siblings, however only two wish to know me and one has recently been diagnosed with a terminal illness. Late last year I spoke with my sister for the first time and she died 12 weeks later at the age of 39 due to complications of diabetes and depression also caused by a life time of abuse and suffering. All of my siblings were either stolen from (...) and adopted or removed and placed in foster care. All have suffered severe emotional and physical abuse.

My first marriage was wrought with abuse. My first wife was a drug addict and sexual deviant. After ten years of vicious arguments, infidelities and drug and alcohol abuse I could not live with her anymore. However I found I could not leave her either as I was terrified of being alone more than I was of being in an abusive relationship. During these years I could not seem to hold a job for very long nor stay in one residence and we were often moving. Eventually in 1999 at the age of 31, we settled in (...) Queensland where I met another younger woman and consequently found some self esteem and the courage to leave my first wife.

I have been with my current wife for 12 years now and we married in 2003. When I met my wife she already had three of her own children and we now also have two children together. Although my wife has been extremely supportive of me I feel the abuse I have suffered in my life has given me behavioural and emotional problems that have manifested in being abusive myself. I do not feel like I can trust anyone and often suffer paranoia of others motives including my own family. I find it difficult to internalise what is happening around me or find strategies to improve my life. I will externalise blame upon others in order to lower my anxiety and feelings of vulnerability and I remain hypo-vigilant. I continue to be socially insecure and have no friends.

When I have made friends over the years I end up destroying the relationship.

In 2003 I wrote to the Post Adoption Services asking for compensation, reinstatement of my original name and birth certificate, investigation of my adoption, an apology, free counselling and archived paperwork on my adoption. A case worker (...) (...) was instated as my case worker and attended my home. Through Freedom of Information I was given some historic documentation regarding my adoption but I was told that the rest was destroyed in the 1974 flood. (...) (...) (...) (...) (...) , wrote to me explaining the Department has no funds for my purposes requested and that I would need to seek legal advice “about any potential claim you wish to make against the Department”. Furthermore, (...) (...) , ‘Statement of Reasons Freedom of Information Act 1992’ outlines I am not entitled to a “Report on potential foster parent” or the “Personal affairs of Mr and Mrs (...) relating to matters prior to my adoption as it is not relevant to my adoption. Therefore I have questioned the validity of (...) and (...) suitability to foster and adopt me and I am told it is none of my business by Governmental departments.

(...) died in June 2007 but prior to his death he found inventive and cruel ways to further abuse me. Regardless of this ongoing abuse I continued to try to find some type of approval from him and would take him on holidays with my first wife and my current family. I would tend his gardens and mow his lawn when it became overgrown and I attempted to care for him in his last few years by having him stay with us on occasions. In 2002/2003 (...) transferred his house deeds and all he owns over to my adopted sister and stated on the transfer “for the natural love and affection for his daughter”. I was left no inheritance and no recourse to fight my sister in court due to lack of funds.

Emotionally this final rejection haunts me and I focus on this trauma and my abusive

childhood on a daily basis. Currently my sister lives in a big home at flagstone and purchases her children expensive items like cars and I have nothing. I worked as a beaten child slave to help that adopted family accrue a home and I was left with nothing but disturbed thoughts and scars. Regardless, I was the person who had to pay for my father's funeral. My sister has grown into a greedy, selfish, disturbed human being. The product of being adopted by these so called eligible adopters! I have suspicions that she was sexually molested by (...) or possibly (...) or (...) adult sons, but she has not revealed it. However she did receive criminal compensation for the rapes she suffered at the hands of the (...) family. Regardless we are now estranged as she no longer seems to have a conscience.

My adult life has been a continuance of failures. I have gone from job to job trying to find my place in this world with no success; consequently I have lost count of how many jobs I have actually had. In 2007-2008 I had stomach surgery to repair damage caused by chronic reflux due to a life of anxiety. My business at the time went broke and I suffered a mental breakdown and attempted suicide. I have not been able to pull myself together to provide for my family of seven and I am currently bankrupt and facing homelessness as we are unable to maintain rent. So here I am waiting for public housing and writing this submission and asking the Government for the same things to be done now as I asked for in my letter to Post Adoptions in 2003.

**My findings suggest that my adoption was improper because:**

- (...) did not have the mental capacity to sign the adoption consent.
- (...) was available and ready to care for me and when he came to the hospital was told I was dead. The Consent order was forged the next day.
- My Foster/Adoptive parents were not properly screened. They were too old and with a history of abuse and illness.

- The Queensland Government encouraged my adoption via using me as an incentive for the foster/adoptive parents to gain a daughter.
- I was not unwanted or 'chosen', I was abducted and disposed of and the government still denies me. I and others like me are the countries dirty little secret.
- The Queensland Government failed in their duty of care to check on my progress in the two years I was in foster care.

#### MY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Abducted Children be reinstated their real birth names and birth certificates and have fake birth certificates made null and void. Free of Charge.
- To have our biological fathers placed on our birth certificates if they were known.
- A redress compensation scheme for the Mothers, Fathers and abducted children; including free life time access to psychological help made available through Medicare.
- Free Genetic Testing available to give peace of mind to parents and abducted children when requested if reunited.
- Complete transparency of all documents relevant to the abduction and adoption of children upon their request. Including relevant records pertaining to the adopters application to their adoption.
- For the Government to take full responsibility for the abduction of babies from their natural parents.
- The Government to acknowledge their lack of care and duty in ensuring these children were safe.
- Federal and State legislation to be changed to ensure the practice of national and

international adoption of babies, children and embryos is eliminated thereby children can retain their true identities.

- Transparency and access for all parents, children and siblings to historic, current and future personal records pertaining to removal of children so as they may locate displaced family members separated by the practice of adoption or fostering.

#### ATTACHMENTS

- Adoption of a Child Form
- Letter from (...) (...) to DOCS
- Authority to Receive a Child Form
- Personal History Form
- Adoption Certificate
- History for Investigation Form
- Government Reply 2003