

On behalf of Origins Victoria members, we are citizens of the Commonwealth of Australia and are mostly residents of the State Of Victoria
As citizens of the Commonwealth of Australia we have an inalienable right to protection under the Australian Constitution and Common law of this country

As Australian citizens the Commonwealth affords us protection from unlawful and harmful actions that threaten our rights to Life Liberty and Justice from those who would deny us these rights within and without the borders of Australia.

The words in the above paragraph (in reference to what you emailed me) were written to protect citizens of Australia. My mother was entitled to this protection, and sadly did not receive it.

In 1950, at age 20, my mother was taken to 'The Haven', North Fitzroy, Victoria - an institution that was run by the Salvation Army. My mother's name was changed to _____ and she was approximately three months pregnant. Her daughter was born at 'The Haven' on the _____ July, 1952. My mother remained a resident in this institution until her baby was 6 weeks old. At that time, she had to 'hand' her baby over to the matron of the establishment and leave immediately, without any ongoing support. It was common place for girls and women to be sent to such places and treated with little compassion or dignity. Her local doctor in the town of Traralgon, _____, arranged this event to occur in my mother's life with her parents.

My mother lived in Traralgon and was taken for 'a drive' to Fitzroy North and had her name changed, as mentioned earlier, to basically turn 'shame' from her family and supposedly herself. The interviewing member from 'The Haven' was very happy that Mum was a nurse and asked questions about her nursing skills.

My mother lost her identity and lived this way for many months, never recovering from the shame and trauma for the remainder of her life.

Every day, while in 'The Haven', Mum would hold her tummy and say to herself, "Please don't be born baby, then they can't take you from me."

Mum's father paid the Salvation Army money on a weekly basis to pay for her board. Mum and the other girls worked every day, looking after children that had been left in the 'home' for various reasons. They also had to clean, scrub wooden floors, complete heavy domestic duties - right until the birth of their babies. Because mum had been training to be a nurse, she was put on night shift regularly so that she was 'on call' for sick children. The women and girls had to work shift work, looking after babies and toddlers that they were told people were coming back for. This was very difficult for the mothers of these institutionalised children, as they weren't allowed to take them from 'The Haven' until they could provide them with a 'stable home'.

During labour, there weren't any qualified staff with you to support you or help in times of emergency, only 'learning' midwives. Because mum was training to be a nurse before she came to 'The Haven', after her baby was born, mum was required to work in the nursery of the Commonwealth funded attached hospital at 'The Haven' where all the 'good married' people had their babies. Mum would feed her baby and when the baby fell asleep, would continue working in the nursery. She was reminded on a daily basis that those people were able to take their babies home because they were married and could provide everything a baby deserved that a single mother could not provide. Imagine dreading the time would come when your baby would be torn from your life, knowing that every passing minute meant time was drawing closer for you to lose your child and, to add insult and trauma, being made to work in the hospital where all the 'good' people could take their babies home.

During her pregnancy, Mum and the other 'inmates' were constantly shamed and told that if they truly loved their baby, they would not keep them. On Sundays, they were asked to lie at the church's altar and beg God for forgiveness - repent - because they were so full of sin. Incomprehensible.

On the last night, Mum didn't go to bed. She held her baby which she had named, _____, the whole night. At the age of 72, Mum could still see the girl who was on duty that terrible night. Clothes were sent to the nursery to dress _____ in. Mum said the clothes were nice but they weren't new. The clothes were brought in by the adoptive family. Mum had to dress her baby in these clothes. Because the clothes were not new, Mum spent every day for the next 52 years worrying if her baby had gone to a poor family and had therefore missed out on life's opportunities. All the other babies Mum had seen leave had been dressed in beautiful, new clothes.

Baby _____ was already smiling at Mum before she was taken from her. Imagine.... carrying your baby for nine months, breast feeding your baby for six weeks and then having to give her up because you had been told you were bad and full of sin, not worthy to be a mother. Mum was sobbing and shaking so much when she had to dress _____, one of 'The Haven's' staff members needed to assist her.

Mum had to go down stairs, walk across a yard, go to a bottle green door and knock on it. Even as I write this, I can scarcely imagine the pain she was enduring. The matron's arms out-stretched and took the baby. Mum had to leave the premises immediately. She didn't even remember getting into her sister's car as she was in such a state of trauma.

Mum was told she must never speak of this 'event' in her life. The women were told they would go home and forget all about this baby in time. The opposite was the truth. Mum did not speak about this trauma for 52 years. She looked for the face of her daughter in the faces of others every day. Christmases, birthdays, weddings, etc always left a big 'hole' inside of Mum .., Infact, there was a permanent chasm in her soul - her beautiful _____ was missing.

As Mum spoke to me of the events of 1950, 52 years later, her hands were clawed across her chest, opening and shutting; she gave me no eye contact and the shame and trauma was crippling her more than ever. My daughter was brain damaged from pertussis vaccine - my mother blamed herself for that ... everything that happened to any of us, she blamed herself. As the bible says, 'Children pay for the sins of their fathers to the seventh generation' ... and Mum believed this is what she caused to happen for her future generations. 'The Haven' certainly did a good job in passing on their Christian values.

My beautiful Mum died on the 17th of January, this year 2011. She was the most gentle, sensitive kind person you could ever meet. Sadly, she never recovered from the shame that was poured upon her in 1950. She always thought she was less than everyone and her opinions meant little. Her body was wracked with pain and disease which I directly attribute to her experience of losing her beloved _____. I believe her immune system was compromised as a result of this trauma. There are hundreds of medical articles on ongoing stress and the effects it has on the body.

My family and I firmly believe that indoctrination was used on my mother in order to place duress on her so she would sign the adoption forms.

At 28, she was diagnosed with fibrositis (original name for fibromyalgia), had osteo and rheumatoid arthritis since her thirties, developed polymyalgia rheumatica at 63, had Bowen's disease (skin cancers all over her body), was on oxygen for many years, developed multiple myeloma - cancer caused from autoimmune dysfunction. Her final assault was bowel cancer. From her twenties, Mum also had muscle pain and wasting which progressed over her life. Yes. Mum had her own slow crucifixion and yet she was a source of enormous, unconditional love to those who knew her.

Interestingly, my son and I also suffer from autoimmune disease. I wonder how much study has been done on the emotional and physical health effects that occurred to relinquishing mothers and their future generations.

No one ever told my mother there was a Commonwealth benefit she could have received to

support her and . She never received payment for the nursing care she provided at 'The Haven'. Just before Helen was born, Mum received a small payment from the Commonwealth Government through the Department of Social Services which she gave to 'The Haven' so her dad wouldn't have to pay any more money to the Salvation Army Institution.

Adoption can be based on a person's sorrow and tragedy. Another set of people are excited and full of joy, buying or making baby clothes, setting up a room; counting down the days to when they get their new 'bundle of joy'.

The human being who carried her baby, who felt every kick, a soul growing inside her body, gives birth - an enormous labouring - knowing that her child, her own flesh and blood, will be mercilessly 'removed' from her, without a word of support; a word to make her feel valued; words to carry her through a down-spiralling void that will never be filled as long as she lives... a lonely, fragile girl faces and carries the largest 'cross' of her life.

Her mind has been filled with propaganda - if you love your baby enough, you will give her to a husband and wife; people who can give your baby what she deserves - you will be able to walk away and forget about your baby. You can start a new life; have other babies. You will forget. LIES!!! - all cruel, devastating lies. And your baby you were forced to relinquish, is told you actually died at birth!!!!

Forever you live with a hole bored through your heart and soul; you search for the face of your precious baby in the face of others every day of your life; you silently weep on her birthday, Christmas - any time when the waves crash Time does NOT heal these wounds.

Even if you find your precious baby, you are faced with a new multitude of feelings; an extreme dichotomy - your shame, loss, turmoil and tragedy gather intensity.

NOTHING appeases or softens the pain of your stolen baby.

What kind of game of charade have you had to play all your broken years - just to fulfil the needs of a society, people, religious leaders - who crushed you with all consuming judgement?

Yet Jesus said, "Ye who is free from sin, cast the first stone."

The story is much bigger than I can describe at this time.

I await for your reply.

Pamela Carmichael

An item of interest, adoptive mother, in her old age, would sometimes cry out in panic about finding enough money to pay 'The Haven' for her new baby. I wonder what that meant?