



4/6/2010

To: The Committee Secretary, Senate Legal and
Constitutional Committee

Re: Submission for Compensation whilst being in Government
Care as a State Ward.

My name is Judith Mitchell (Baker) Ward No. 87952.
My 4 younger siblings (Colin 9, Marie 7, Kathleen 5, William 4)
and myself aged 11 were taken away from our parents and
put into welfare at Allambie, Melbourne. Then we became
wards of the State and sent to St. Cuthbert's Home, Colac.
The government became our guardian. The definition
of a guardian is someone who has been legally appointed
to be keeper, protector, defender, one having custody of a
person. Well, the government let us down and many
other children down on all accounts. It neglected us
by not keeping, defending or most importantly of all,
protecting. We were dropped off and forgotten about
and left with people that preyed on and abused
children physically, sexually and mentally.
I had never witnessed children being abused until we
went into the Homes. I was physically and mentally
abused that still haunts me. It destroyed myself
worth as a person. The abuse was a daily event,
we went to bed in fear and woke up in fear.
You hoped it wasn't going to be you but, if wasn't you
it could be your ~~brother~~ brother or sister.
If anyone from welfare came we were warned
not to say anything or else there would be consequences,
we all knew that meant the leather belt.

Who could we tell? Who was going to defend us?
Who was going to protect us? Who could we trust?
It certainly wasn't going to be anyone from the
government to trust as they were the ones to allow
children to be physically, sexually and mentally abused.
I spent 6 years under government care it destroyed
my self worth, destroyed our family unit.
What price do you put on a child's innocence and
the feeling of belonging to a family?

Children deserve to grow up to feel safe
and protected not to be abused and abandoned.

JUDITH MITCHELL