

To whom it may concern Senate enquiry for Compensation for Forgotten Australians

24/11/2010

Sir/ Madam,

I am writing for my Husband and Brother who are Forgotten Australians.

My husband is now 56, he is in very poor health, and most of this can be attributed to his 16 years in Victorian institutions,

He was placed in there as a 3 month old, his brother was 2 years. As with most family's placed in institutions, they were separated and placed in different homes until he was about 8 YO.

Doug has never meet his father, no one from the homes or governments tried to find either the mother or father , you have to ask why ,I know Doug surly ask this all the time.

He was put in touch with the mother about 20 years ago , this did not go well , we have found out that Doug has 16-17 sibilings , unbelievable - How does this happen.

Do the senators have any idea of the trauma caused to someone was placed in care as a baby, to never have a memory of being held, cuddled, kissed , loved , really felt safe ..... What happens to those children who never knew love , who are never shown love ... most only know rejection, pain , always asking ... what have I done wrong , is it my fault... was I naughty .. It must be me. I am Bad ...

Imagine senators ..... seeing some of the other Kids ... getting excited on visiting day... We are going to see Mum, or Dad, maybe Grandad, Aunt, uncle ... Imagine the pain and confusion... When you do not have visitors EVER, you do not know Mum, Dad. Anyone at all ... No one tells you anything... so you wonder ... what I have done wrong .... Am I naughty ...?

Why didn't the government find some family, where was there Duty of care to these Children...

Doug's Father placed the 2 boys in the home, he said he would pay????? .

He never came back ... The home St Pauls did try to get the father to pay; they sent a few letters... The father was in the Army, they implored the father to visit the boys, and they asked the army to get involved. NOTHING.

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They begged DHS to make the boys wards, so that they could provide better clothing ECT, this went on for years ... Where was the Governments Duty of care. Why didn't anyone try to find the mother or other family?

Imagine Senators the Fear that these little children felt when they heard the footsteps at night .....Oh no, not again, is it my turn, WHY ME, IS it my Fault ..... Why does no one hear , why was NO one there to protect these children from the beasts that were there protectors and so called carers .

Both Doug and by bother talk about the sexual and psychological abuse that was inflicted upon them... Doug tells a story of a memory... The boys are lined up in the bathroom - naked - The Perpetrator - Lets call him Ken, picks out a young boy, makes him have a shower, then whilst he is wet beats him with a cricket bat -- Doug talks of hearing the bones break... The crying, this went on day in day out... WHY SENETERS WHY WAS NO ONE watching, how could this happen, they were children, not prisoners of war.

Senators ... WHERE was the Government's Duty of care, why wasn't anyone listening

Imagine the insecurity that these children felt , never knowing when you were going to be hit, abused , other Kids always coming and going , never any explanation about were ' John ' has gone .... So many children.

For most of these children that sense of insecurity never leaves them, it is there always... it does not matter how many times I tell my husband , I will

not leave you , I love you , that insecurity , loneliness , darkness .. Never leaves. How can it ...

Doug was thrown out from the home when he was 16Years old; he was placed with a lady whom he did not know with another 4 boys from the home. He was given an apprentice in a factory , as Doug tell it, no body ever asked what I wanted to do , I was just told , when I got my first pay cheque , the lady took this ...

Can you imagine , these boys has never handled money before , they has never been on a train, tram , never knew how to shop , never been into a bank, had never prepared a meal , been able to choose their own clothes to wear .. We are only talking about later 1960's

What did they think would happen to these children ...? In Doug's case he ran away - ended up in Kings Cross NSW - then at 16 was picked up by the police , charged with varrrgrancy as they did not believe that he did not have any family , he was locked away in Long bay gaol for 2 months , as if he had not endured enough.

Doug went on to a life of darkness , depression , attempts to take his life , Drug & alcohol issues , time in prison , this would be the story for many many forgotten Australians ... what did they think would happen ..

Where was the government's duty of care to these children, the government took this responsibility when they were made wards of the state. The governments assured the role as carer... I ask you where the care was, there is very little evidence of this.

For many children who were never made wards, their fate was far worse, if this was possible, as they were really invisible, no body cared...

Senators if you could be a fly on the wall at some of the gatherings of forgotten Australians ... to hear the stories, to listen to the tortured memories ... Children should never ever ever have to ensure this.

Doug is now in poor health , he has had 2 liver transplants , was diagnosed with leukaemia ( 5 years ago) has diabetes , high blood pressure , twisted

bowel He has not been able to work for 12 years , will never work again .

In reality, he feels he is just waiting to die.

When we think about compensation, you just cannot put a \$ cost, you all have difficult decisions to make, I know what ever you recommend, some people will never be ok.

Speaking for Doug, if he could just have enough to have apace to call his own , as with so many Forgotten Australians , we have not been able to buy a home , we rent , we cannot even get social housing as I work , why should I have to go on income support to get access to secure housing for us .

For my brother, he was made a ward at the age of 12, he went to turana, then was placed in the Salvation Army box hill Victoria. My brother is 58 years ols; it has only been the past 4 years that he has been able to even talk about what happened to him.

He was sexually abused by a paedophile, this was all done with the knowledge of the department and Salvation Army (he has had a payout - hush money), even this process was distressful,

We were placed into care as my mum was having some problems, she had recently left our Dad, and he was not paying any money for child support. We have since seen many letters from my Mum begging for Alan to be returned home. However the department though they made a better parent.

This childhood trauma has had lifelong issues for Alan. As I write this, we are preparing to travel to Canberra next week to hear the Salvation Army apologise the very many people whose lives have been so severely impacted by the acts of those who were charged with caring for these Children.

I implore you senators , when you are making your recommendation ,  
PLEASE LISTEN TO THE CHILDREN , hear the stories , see the tears ,  
feel the pain , imagine the terror - Try to imagine - If this was your child -  
What is Just - What can be done to help now.

I thank you for taking the time.

Regards