

30/3/11

(...)

①

~~His~~ I did not really want to write about the atrocities that took place ~~before~~ before & after I delivered my little girl in 1968. I was told by my priest to go to St Anthony's home for unmarried mothers in Burwood, Sydney. To start off we had to have an alias name. It was considered ^{for privacy reasons} ~~or~~ we were treated like criminals. I & the other women were reminded at least three times a week that we were there as punishment for our sins. At one stage I was sent into the office to type envelopes & send brochures asking for donations for the home. In the afternoon I went to the bathroom & upon my return (we also had to print the incoming cheque details name, amount of cheque etc) the last cheque that I was entering in book disappeared. I told the nun & she was furious shouting at me & calling me stupid & more or less accused me of stealing. The cheque was made out to "St Anthony's home" therefore it would have been impossible for anyone to cash it. We were demeaned & ill treated. The meals were disgusting etc. I spent approx 8 days in St Margaret's hospital Darlinghurst. I was in fairly heavy labour upon arriving in the hospital & they gave me an injection to stop the labour until the morning when the medical students could witness the birth. About 6 to 10 students arrived gawking at me without my permission. When my little girl was delivered they held a sheet in front of me so I couldn't see my little one. Just before she was born I grabbed the nurse's hand (one who was holding sheet) & she threw my hand off in disgust as if I was a leper. ~~Wt~~ I tore alot of during the birth & had about 35 stitches. As the student was stitching me (under instruction) I groaned in pain. He told me to "shut up." After the delivery when I was in the ward they bound my breasts very tightly with calico. I intended to keep my child; this was very wrong. Also they put cat gut stitches in & when it was time to take them out it was extremely painful. One day I tried to see my baby in the nursery & just about reached

2

her crib when the R.N. came up behind me & said in a very loud voice. "What do you think you're doing in here? Get out this instant." I was so traumatised & down trodden that I meekly walked out. I went back to the home for another 8 or 9 days. When I tried to visit my child in the nursery I was permitted to watch the nurse feed her but was not allowed to hold her or have eye contact. The day before we were due to go the social worker said "We've decided to keep your child here for a while until you both recover." My daughter had a chest infection. But sign the adoption order in case you change your mind! And when you come back within the thirty days your baby will be here for you". I did go back within the 30 days. They talked to me at the door in a very unfriendly way & said you're baby has gone to a good home with 2 loving parents. I was stunned & just sat on the bus seat near the home for weeks not knowing what to do. They did not inform me that if I went to the equity court I could retrieve my child. What they did was highly illegal & cruel. My daughter & I would like some form of compensation for the harm they have done. I found out later from my daughter that she was actually in the home for three months. My daughter had a miserable life with the so called "adoptive" parents especially the mother. She did ^{not} on with the "adoptive" father. She said she's been depressed as long as she can remember. She cannot form close relationships with a normal life with a husband & children. She's too damaged. We are close & I'm fortunate & thrilled that she's always called me Mum + Hummy. She's a very helpful girl & helps her old mother when she visits. I love her dearly. She often says she wishes she had been spoilt like my 31 year old daughter. The whole experience never should have been separated. Sincerely,

25. She was never tucked in at night or kissed goodnight or ever read a bed time story. When I came to know her I read her bed time stories & tucked her in & kissed her good night. Was a long time coming.