

Rayeleene C O'Hehir

To the Committee Secretary

I am Submission to the Senata inquiring that I spent time in a orphanage Mater Dei at Narrellan N.S.W. 1955 - till 1959 in September, there was three of us all sisters Diane Venella, and my self Rayeleene, We came from Balmain Rodney N.S.W. I was one of six children, my two brothers went to a boys home Bunkon Hills N.S.W they were younger than me, my little brother part-way on 10th January 1960 it was only a short time since my Sister Rhonda got me out of the home, that my sister and I had to addenterfine him, when him when was dead he was drowned in Bobben head River 1960, January 10th

We had so much love in our



3

home, with Mum and dad Rhonda Diane me and Kenneth Gordon John, in two bed room house, I love Balmain, guess it was the last time we were one big happy family, it would never happen again as it took a long time to hug and kiss each other all together, never again for my little brother John and Rhonda two to three year after we got out of the home she died of cancer of the blood only 22 years old, I just got to know her again, how hard can life be,

~~Balmain~~

Then one day we where told we were going away to a home I felt to sick and sorry think of being away from my darling mother and big sister Rhonda and my brothers Gordon and John. I was so shy and to think they would not be at my side to help me grow up and keep me safe and as we were walk up the street in Balmain Diane and I Diane told me not to look back at my brothers as we were going and



I went too because I did not ~~not~~ no  
When I would see them again, and  
we had to catch the train with  
my big sister Rhonda as she was  
taking us to the home,

We arrived at the home, all quite  
and Tessie's eye, and wondering what was  
happening next. We all stood in a line  
and Rhonda hugged and kissed each  
other then she went on her way.  
What a sister.

When we unpacked a bag and  
went in side it was so different  
it was so much like a Prison  
do this do that no one ever smiled  
look after this we were to scared  
to love each other or to look at  
each other because you would get  
in to trouble, one day I got in trouble  
and one of the nuns was going to  
give me the strap roll where her  
never went and pin her nail back  
and hit me with it so I punched her



4

got out the window climbed the tree, I told them if you can catch me you can have me, I stayed up the tree for hours I felt safe there no one can get me, I wish that I could stay there for ever, I felt so free, all we did was cook in the kitchen, polish floors and scrub floors milk cows and feed chooks and make butter,

We only went to there 3. 4. class after that, we had to go back to eat a rat how in brassing, my education just washed down the drain, I suffered eating disorder I just could not eat much just want to curl up in a ball and go to sleep and not wake up, I don't think there's a word: will live me, I just feel the damaging and the suffering will be with me and my sisters for the rest of our life,

but I kept telling my sisters that



<sup>by</sup>  
we came from good stock as my  
family tree goes

When my big sister got me  
out of the home, she got me  
the best job it was first class  
dress making in the city at St James  
7th floor, then my sister found out  
I could not read and write, she  
went crazy went to curer house  
mad a nurse so she sent us to  
bournemouth to be tort and she had to  
pay for it and she was only nineteen  
my sister and I,

Why has all the other stats  
get redress, others miss out even  
if they suffered the same abuse

When we got married we were  
only married for six weeks and  
my husband had a accident  
all been damage I was carry a baby  
now help what so ever my daughter  
was not even compensated all she  
I could not read and write.



I am so prouder my two girls & made ~~sure~~ sure they get a good education they both don't drink or smoke the same as their mother and they are beautiful girls

When my husband had his accident it took me twenty year to get over it, and not still ~~not~~ there yet

hope you can understand what sauernt of life it has been for me with now education

We have been to staff learnt dress making and reading and spelling since we came out of the orphanage to try to improve my self it been a hard road

Thank Adele to here from  
you

you soon  
as this has been Rayelene O'Keefe  
very painfull, and taking a long time to do



P.S.

I for got to say about being in charge of a child of eleven year old she was verry back woods ~~she~~ had to put inlets on her leg and dress her in the morning put a nappay on in the night make shoe she had a glass bottle I all so had to wash her shots if thay were denty with wee or pee it made me sick, I was only 11 or 12 to my self, I was very scard of her cos she would scream or shout at me if I did not keep her clean I would have to answer to the nuns.

No one cared about us we were left be hind to look after the nuns and retarded girls no one to look after us or help us now edukation after the onthefenage changed to a retarded school it was horrible