

Submission No: 221

Received: 3-8-03

Secretary:

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Sunday, 3 August 2003 7:20 PM

To: Committee, FCA (REPS)

Subject: Submission . Child Custody Arrangements Inquiry.

Submission from. [REDACTED]

1984 I was a single parent with an eight year old son, I had been widowed in 1978 due to a yachting accident. I had owned my beach-side cottage at [REDACTED] for five years, I had a viable fuel delivery business and a [REDACTED] business, my house was fully furnished and I owned an eleven metre yacht. I met a woman named [REDACTED] with whom I developed a relationship. When we discovered a pregnancy in our relationship a marriage commitment was made. Between 1985 and 1992 three more pregnancies resulting in, a son named [REDACTED] and three daughters, [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. Also [REDACTED] from my first marriage who was seventeen years old in 1992 and no longer at home.

By 1993 my wife at the time, [REDACTED] appeared to be suffering chronic fatigue syndrome, was rarely out of bed, home educated the kids I now realize for convenience reasons, spending lots of money to beat depression and leaving the kids to fend for themselves. At this stage I had a yachting chandelery at [REDACTED] established for fifteen years and going well.

By 1994 the home expenditure, under [REDACTED] control was out of control. I could not see where the funds were being spent while at the same time [REDACTED] emotional state was fragile and, I was trying not to make unreasonable demands. After some tumultuous moves from my family home which by this time I had placed in [REDACTED] name to make her feel secure in the relationship, so she promptly advertised for sale and sold our home and then purchased the property [REDACTED] & I now live on in the mountains 100 kilometers from [REDACTED] with 60% of the funds the balance \$35,000- was hidden in a bank account I did not know about at the time. As we had now rented a family home in the mountains where [REDACTED] wished to live, I had to rent a unit in [REDACTED] and commute home when possible, usually for three nights per week.

On one occasion in around July of 1994 [REDACTED] and I came home to find that [REDACTED] had held a garrage sale and sold a huge proportion of our joint property, the balance of our property which included a full house of professionally restored antique furniture, wedding presents from my first marriage, all of [REDACTED] toys, new white goods and just everything else I had accumulated over forty years of life had either been dumped as rubbish or loaded into a furniture truck and disappeared.

[REDACTED] and the three girls also disappeared. As at this stage all my working capital, all of my assets and all of my reasons for working sixty hours per week for the past fifteen years disappeared with a consequential bankruptcy with a grosse loss of \$440,000 or more, which included all that [REDACTED] had skipped with. My total debt at the time was just over seventy thousand.

It was about six months later that we located them living at a caravan park on the [REDACTED] we located them by a fluke of the mail service and when we knew of their address we served Family Law Court documents on them concerning access. As a bankrupt I was regularly laughed at by legal aid servants as they claimed a bankrupt had no court rites of representation. I battled on, representing myself until I had court orders guaranteeing by-weekly phone contact with the girls and visiting rites for the three girls to visit twice per year. This Court Ordered access was

laughable because [REDACTED] only had a mobile phone which she never had turned on at the relevant times of contact and how on earth was I supposed to fly three little girls from [REDACTED] as a bankrupt on a sole parent pension. It should be mentioned also that [REDACTED] was severely [REDACTED] and diagnosed [REDACTED], all my time on a sole parent pension up to when [REDACTED] turned sixteen was spent home educating [REDACTED]. If I had had any funds available to fly the girls home for a visit, the insolvency trustees would have grabbed it anyway.

Since then I have had very vague contact with the girls, mostly due to them changing address very regularly and never getting a phone connected. As far as I know they have had very little schooling and have spent the past few years moving from one address to another around the fishing village of [REDACTED] lives with a well paid fisherman yet still claims the sole parent pension, The eldest of the three girls was made a "ward of the state" of [REDACTED] when she was fifteen years old due to drinking and sleeping around problems along with truancy. I was not aware of any of this when it happened, it was as if I didn't exist.

I know nothing of [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] other than reports of behaviour that would make any civilized person shudder. It was something about smearing human faeces on the internal walls of their schools office was one of the last things I heard about some ten months ago.

After securing the useless court order for access to the girls I then, still as a bankrupt started representing [REDACTED] in the matter of property in the Federal Family Court. By 1998 we secured the [REDACTED] property in [REDACTED] name. We have since then set up a viable poultry egg farm, now at a redevelopment, expansion stage. We have had virtually no contact with the girls for years now and are resigned to the fact that they are gone from our lives. This is an unbearable daily pain which [REDACTED] and I tolerate daily.

Concerning the Child Support Agency, how do I feel, being ordered to pay a proportion of any income I make to this woman who came into my life, financially destroyed me and then left with three of the most precious things in my life, plus all my worldly possessions, and skipped to as far away as possible, for no other reason I can see, other than spite. There was never any suggestion of any physical or any other kind of abuse or harassment during or after the relationship. I found out some months after the separation that I already had a substantial bill with the Child Support Agency because [REDACTED] had, unknown to me, been claiming a sole parent pension whilst being supported from the business and in the process of sucking any funds she could into secret bank accounts. I know for fact that she had some twenty five thousand dollars in her accounts when she left in the fairly new Pajero with all else and as mentioned earlier, leaving [REDACTED] and I with a small bag of clothes each. I still get regular bills from Child Support. I figure they get sent so as to torment me monthly and punish me for being a male. The above claims concerning the illegal pension claim can be substantiated by the fact that the expenditure ledger was handwritten by [REDACTED] showing weekly housekeeping deposits to her personal account. I have raised this with Centrelink, The Federal Police, The Child Support Agency all to no avail as it is too hard for them to follow up. After all, she is female with three kids, only two now. I make a point of living very meagerly, around \$4,000 for the year and all else goes to [REDACTED] or the business. I refuse to have available \$14.68 every month to send to this woman. [REDACTED] at this stage not only lives with her very financial boyfriend on a bush block in a caravan and at the same time claims the sole parent pension, she last year inherited a half share in a very valuable property, several acres

of flat land in [REDACTED] and yet I am still getting bills for child support for daughters who hardly know I exist.

I do hope that this submission is appreciated for whatever reasons as to sit down today and type it has taken three weeks of attempts due to the anger and pain which emanates from every thought I have on the subject. As I am now complacent in the knowledge that it is now in the past for me, I will never tangle with a woman again, ever, [REDACTED] has his life in front of him. [REDACTED] is of totally sober habits, a dedicated christian and has followed my lead in hard work deadens the pain, he wishes to become financially secure in diversified agriculture on a grand scale and will be a major asset to this country, also with the ethics and moral that seem natural to his character, he would be a wonderful husband and father one day. The great shame is, that now he is nineteen years old and can see no future in marriage and kids, if what has happened to us can happen again to him.

Laws must be changed before too many men become bitter and twisted like I am. Hesitant about any form of relationship as [REDACTED] now is, let alone my beautiful little daughters growing up in the gutter morals of their mother with no guidance education or future. The one thing that really hurts is to think that the Government I am sending this submission to is the same Government that has sponsored with their system, this whole situation. Yes some of the blame for this whole situation is yours Legislators. Any person who blocks changes to this system is a red neck because it is the 21st century and it is obvious to me, The World Has Changed, these changes, as sad as they are, must be accommodated.

All the information is, to the best of my belief and knowledge true and correct, please accept it in good faith and act on it.

[REDACTED]