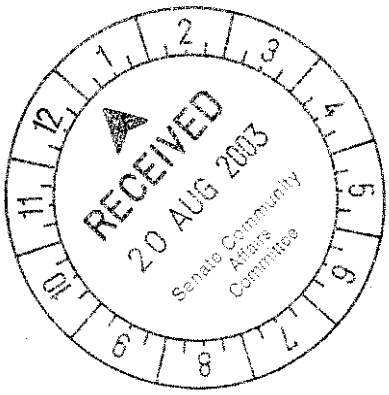
SUBMISSION

JUNE 2003

to

Senate Community Affairs
Reference Committee
Suite S159
Parliament House
Canberra, A.C.T. 2600



From

BRYAN HARTAS

Re the

Abuse and wrongful imprisonment suffered by me, whilst a ward of the state of Queensland between the years of 1952 to the 1965

My name is Bryan Hartas, I was born in 19.01.1944 in Townsville, Qld and was a State Ward resident of the Neerkol Orphanage at Rockhampton, Qld from my admission on 27.07.1952 until I was sent to Westbrook Farm Home for Boys at Toowoomba on 18.8.1960 where I was an in mate until 9.6.1961.

I am not able to write this submission myself, because during my time in the state care they never gave me an education and as a result of that I can't read or write but I can put my story across verbally, to my partner, who is writing this for me. I was born in Townsville Queensland in 1944 and for the fist 7 years of my life lived in our family home with my father, mother and brothers. I was happy in these early childhood years, in our home I had a strong feeling of belonging and of being part of the family and of being loved and cared for by that family.

I had a mother whom I adored and who, in return loved and cared for my brothers and myself.

Despite the fact that I have no photos or mementos of my family or my childhood, I do have happy memories of our time together when a family.

I remember the red bike that my brothers and I used to share and then when we go tired of bike riding we would take the tube from the bike, put into the casing of an old football and kick that round for hours on end.

I remember the Ice-cream man, with his horse drawn cart and bell ringing and the fact that my brothers and I were always given enough so we could buy an ice cream each. I remember the ice- men with his big tongs, blocks of ice and horse and cart and the foaming sea, at high tide washing across the flats and in to our yard and my mother standing at the boiling, wood fueled copper, using a wooden stick to stir the washing but most of all I remember the happy and contented feeling of being part of the family.

Despite the fact, that as I learned in later years, my father was a drinker, I don't remember or associate drinking, violence or fear with my first 7 years, the fear and violence only came later, after they took me form my family and placed me in the state (care?). Then, one day, when I was 7 my mother just wasn't there anymore. I have no memory of any incident occurring to account for her sudden disappearance and no memory of any one ever telling my brothers or myself why she wasn't there anymore. It was only years later, after I had left state (care?) that I was told that my mother had been heavily pregnant, with twins, at the time and my father had kicked her in the stomach, this had resulted my mother going into premature labour and dying after bleeding to death during the birth of these twins, one of which, also, died at birth. After obtaining my files in later years, through the F.O.I, I have learnt that my mother died on Christmas Eve 1951.

From memory life seemed to continue on relatively normally for a few months after my mother's disappearance, my brothers and I continued to go to school and play together as we had done before my mother had gone. I cannot remember any mention being made of the fact that she wasn't there or any explanation being given by anyone as to why she wasn't.

My next memory is arriving on the steps of St Josephs Orphanage, (Neerkol) Rockhampton; Queensland 500 miles form my home in Townsville.

I have no memory of how we got there, no memory of being told we were going on a trip, no memories of how we got there, whether it was by car or train or of who took us, all I remember is of finding myself and my 4 brothers standing on the steps of a large building (Neerkol) not even knowing what sort of a place it was or why we were there.

My admission to Neerkol

I was admitted to Neerkol, along with my 4 brothers when I was 7 years old, after our mother had died giving birth to twins, one of witch died during the birth.
On the day on witch we were admitted and as we stood on the steps of the orphanage the mother superior (Amelia) admired the ring I was wearing which my mother had given me (a gold ring with a red stone) she said "that's a nice ring" she then took it from me and I have never seen it seen.
From the day we were admitted my brothers and I were split up and actively discouraged from having any contact with each other or having any feelings of family towards each other.
All our clothing and possessions were taken from us and none of it was ever returned.
From that day on, starting with having my dead mothers ring stolen from my finger, I was repeatedly and continuously subjected to deliberate and callous cruelty, abuse, humiliation and depravation of the basics necessities of life – food proper clothing, medical care and education, not to mention the emotional and psychological necessities of a child of such tender years.
Neerkol and the nuns robbed me and my childhood and my ability to never live a normal life after leaving that hellhole.
In my childhood, in that hellhole on earth, there was no love, warmth or compassion, no one to trust or to turn to if I felt I need help or advice, no one to talk to or to just sit and listen if I felt lonely or frightened or sick.
There were no feelings, in that place of belonging or being wanted. In the midst of the cramped, overcrowded confines of Neerkol there was only the overwhelming feeling of being completely alone, helpless and defenseless and at the mercy of whatever cruelty the nuns wanted to dish out.
The only feelings the nuns, and their actions, engendered in me were feeling of sheer, sick to the stomach fear, humiliation and self-doubt.
I was made, by the degrading way they treated me, to feel like a worthless peace of rubbish that nobody wanted and this feeling, engendered in me, by them, followed and affected me long into my adult life.
There were 2 classes of children at Neerkol, those who were a good looking or who showed talent in either sport or music became the nuns "pets".
They did alright they got the good cloths, shoes (which I never had) fair treatment and were trotted out on display when the nuns wanted to show the home in a good light. Then, there were the rest of us, the one who didn't please the nuns with our looks; the one they said, "Couldn't bash brains into" though god knows it wasn't for want of trying, they bashed us with any thing they could lay their hands on and when ever they felt like it, there was no

one to stop them and no one, we children to turn to or complain to, about it. **They were the absolute authority,** in that place.
We, "have nots" grew up with the mentality of POWS, we had to, to survive that place no one else was going to look after us, we had to look after ourselves. I was starving, but I knew if I got to the table first I could get the "brodie" the biggest bit of bread, I knew I could sometimes find stale and cakes on their rubbish heap too and what sort of wild fruit and berries I could eat starve off the hunger. I also knew that if I was lucky, if I kept out of the nun's way, didn't do anything to get noticed, I might not get a bashing that day.
I knew not to get sick if I could help it, because if you did, you, you were left in the dormitory, alone, no food, no medicine nothing, just like you learnt to put up with trying to keep warm in freezing winters in shorts, shirts and bare feet, your arms an legs cracked and bleeding from the cold, pain every time you move and nothing you could do about it.

Types of physical Abuse I suffered at Neerkol

Abuse started from the day I entered Neerkol continued through until the day I left. Day after day I would be bashed over the head, back, shoulders and legs with a cane, not once or twice but repeatedly blow after blow or smashed, full force over the back of the knuckles with a black board square repeatedly until they were swollen and bleeding.
There were other times when I would be punch around the head, shoulders and back with the nuns closed fist, not once or twice, but again over and over or had my head rammed in to my desk, repeatedly or grabbed by the hair or any other part of the body they could get hold of, and violently shaken until I felt dizzy and sick of thrown or push to the floor.
These were not isolated incidences that I could pin point but thing that happen day after day on a repeated basis, year after year, all the time I was there I was always sore, bruised and swollen and bleeding from one of the other bashings I would get.
The nuns would use anything they could lay their hand on to inflict these bashings- hands, closed fist, canes, sticks, straps, boots, black boards squares, black board dusters. They didn't administer their punishments in the cool, unemotional way that a normal school principal would, instead they would lash out in a frenzy, bashing or hitting seeming out of control. They seemed to enjoy seeing the fear and pain they could cause.
I could be standing in line and for no reason, other than the fact that I was one of the kids they didn't like, I would be bashed on the legs, repeatedly over and over, with a cane, in the same spot, until my legs were` so swollen in the same spots that the swelling would burst and bleed on other occasions, I would be thrown down and held across my bed, my pants taken down, my shirt pulled up and then repeatedly bashed and bashed with the cane, I would be agony for weeks after this.
Again, this was not an isolated incident but happened time and time again, my backside would be so sore I couldn't sit down for weeks, after wards.
As a younger child I was frequently bullied, punched and kicked (as were the other children) by the older boys, the nuns would see this but never do anything to stop it.
The nuns, themselves, would often arrange boxing matches, in a ring, putting big boys against girls and big boys against small boys. The nuns would force the bigger boys to

punch and beat into the girls and small boys during these matches and they seemed to take pleasure in seeing the hurt and fear these events caused to the younger children.
The physical abuse suffered by me at Neerkol occurred on an almost daily basis from the day I was admitted till the day I left, it just went on and on, making it impossible for me to list dates, times ect…, I could if it had involved isolated incidents. The abuses suffered by me in the dormitory were witnessed by all other boys who shared that dormitory and the abuses in he classroom by all other children in my class at the time.
The names of the nuns who abused me over the year's are-
Sister Sumpta,
Sister Ansulum,
Sister Joseph,
Mother Clare,
Sister Pius,
Sister Mercia,
Sister James,
Sister Bridget,
I was also physically abused on a number of occasions by Father Anderson who during these incidents kicked me up the backside and then repeatedly pushed, shoved and punched me.
The big boys who engaged in the bulling of the younger children (including myself) were Kevin Baker and his mates (Pets of the nuns). This bulling took place in full view of the nuns and they deliberately allowed it to go on.

Sexual Abuse

During my time in Neerkol I was also sexually abused. When I was 12 years old we were all lined up naked in dormitory (this was a common practice) one of the nuns came up to me and grabbed me hard on the penis, she then hit me hard, on the penis, whilst she still held it, she hit it again several more times before she would let it go. This was excruciatingly painful and also extremely humiliating, being done, as it was, in front of the other boys in the dormitory, I was in extreme pain from this for a long while after and, my penis was badly swollen and bruised but no medical treatment was given at the time.
I was also sexually abused a number of times by one of the older boys, who because he was of the nuns pets could do what he liked and get away with it. He also had unrestricted access to most part of the orphanage with nun's full approval. He came up behind me in the showers a number of times, grabbed me and held me from behind and did sexually movements against me, he would then grab hold of my penis and roughly pull it.
Also when I was 14 and still ignorant of sexual matters, I had a number of the older girls forcing themselves onto me in a sexual manner, touching me on the private parts and trying to lie on top of me.
No sexual education was given in the orphanage but I knew instinctively, at the time, that these things "weren't right)

Mental/Emotional Abuse and deliberate Humiliations I suffered at the hands of the nun's.

There was no love, compassion, affection or caring In Neerkol for me, there was no one to trust, to turn to for help or to just to talk to. All I got form the nun's was hate, degradation, humiliation and violent physical abuse. If they weren't bashing me they were humiliating me.

At school they told me they "couldn't bash brains into me" so I was sent out to spend all my time on the verandah. Other times I was forced to stand out there for hours, with my arms held above my head or out to the side, if I became tired and dropped them down I was bashed with cane, because they said they " couldn't bash brains into me" they repeatedly called me "stupid" "an idiot" "rubbish" and "a no hoper".

I was force to wet myself numerous times because they would not allow me to go to the toilet when I needed to.

If I wet the bed, as a young child, I was flogged and then forced to stand, for hours, with the wet sheets over my head the same happened when I was sick on the bed no sympathy or caring just flogging and humiliation.

I was also forced to stay out on the school verandah and go without lunch, (I was already starving) because they said I was stupid, another punishment I incurred was having my hair shaved off.

At other times I was locked in a cage at the end of the dormitory. We were all also forced, by the nun's, to stand in lines naked for lengthy periods of times before our showers, they seemed to enjoy the obvious humiliation and discomfort this caused us, then when it would be your turn, the nun's would roughly grab you by the hair and shove you into the showers. This was not done to all the kids, just the ones, like me, that they took a particular dislike to and whose lives they seemed, hell bent on, making as miserable and painful as possible.

Even when I was older and had been out working with employers, when I came back to Neerkol in between jobs, in was treated like rubbish, deliberately.

I was forced, by the nun's, to wait out side the dining room till every one else had finish, before I was allowed in to have my meal, alone, at the front table.

I was also, at this time, given no bed or anywhere to sleep, at first a slept in the shed then because the objected to me being in the shed I was forced to sleep on the verandah, like a dog, using potato sacks to keep warm.

Other Abuse & Deprivations I suffered at Neerkol.

Forced regularly to drink senna tea, salts and caster oil. If I refused to take it I would be roughly held and it forced down my throat.

Made to eat kerosene on, sugar, forced to clean teeth with charcoal using my fingers **never** had a toothbrush or comb whilst I was at Neerkol.

Forced, on hands and knees to scrub floors,

Had no warm cloths and shoes in winter. Repeatedly held across my bed and flogged, viciously flogged for not making bed properly, or other minor offences. Which, again, would result in my body swelling from the bashings to the extent where these swellings

would split and bleed causing me extreme pain and fear in seeing my body damaged and bleeding in this way.
Forced to have freezing cold showers in winter, forced to stand, alone out on the dormitory verandah, at night, as a punishment, forced to stand outside in the winter, in lines cold and shivering in light summer clothing for long periods of time.

Circumcised when I was 12 years old and left in pain with out and follow up medical treatment no fruit ever given to eat.
Repeatedly threatened that the "yard man" would be brought up to whip me I knew this had been done to other children whom I had heard crying in pain form it after wards.

I **never** received and medical treatment all the time I was at Neerkol,
I was never given any treatment for the painful weeping cracks on my face, hand, feet and creases of my skin caused by being forced to wear summer cloths and no shoes in the bitterly cold winters. I would be in pain ever time I moved from my crack bleeding skin, no medical treatment given for a badly gashed toe which, because of the nerve damage, still gives me pain today.
No medical treatment given when I fell from a truck dangerously driven by an older boy. I received injuries to my shoulders, which **still** cause me pain and problems with movement today. X- rays of the shoulder, today shows that it was cracked.
No medical treatment for a badly sprained ankle caused when a nun flogged me and they pushed me down the steps, I was left on the ground, in terrible pain, alone, completely ignored by both nun's and other children and forced to drag myself a considerable distance tot the dormitory, up the stairs and to my bed.
No follow up treatment was given when I was circumcised at 12 years of age. I was in **extreme pain** after the operation, Hessian cord had been wound around the wound, which became infected and began to weep, as the wound began to scab over the cord started to heal in to the wound. I was left to deal with this horrible pain and humiliation entirely on my own, caring for and cleaning the wound myself, the best I could, no medical treatment given for toe nails which repeatedly ripped off, also opening up the toe of my toes, caused by lifting boards on to verandahs.
I also suffered a number of the usual childhood illnesses whilst I was in Neerkol. Again no treatment was given. I was simply left in the dormitory alone, with no food or no water, until I was well enough to get up again.

Education (or the lack of it to be more precise)

The nun's were continuously telling me that they would "belt me black and blue" and that I "was so stupid" that they "couldn't bash brains into me" when I was half way through grade 4 they said " it was a waste of time" teaching me, that I was "hopeless" "stupid" a "no hoper" they took me out of the class and had me on the verandah making cane baskets, for the rest of the year, when grade 5 started they had me in there for the first 2 months of the

year then, again, took me out of the class and had me back on the verandah making their baskets.
That 2 months in grade 5 was the last schooling I got when I was 13 ½ years old they sent me out with the man to ring bark, dip and cut timber for the home. I received no pay or pocket money for this work and even though I was doing a full days hard men's work I was still fed the meager food given to the school boys.
When I received my Neerkol file through the F.O.I, in 1998, there was **no documentation** showing I had been put out to work at 13 ½ years of age only an application and contract dated for the time when I would have been approx 14 ½.
Falsely implying that I have started working for them then, when in fact I had been working damn hard, for a full year before that. On the 4 separate occasions, from the time I was 13 ½, then on the 3 occasions, in between farm employers, I **never** received any wages or pocket money.

Deprivation of food whilst at Neerkol

The whole time I was at Neerkol I was starving, we kids never got enough to eat and the little we did get was rubbish on top of that I was often made to miss meals as a punishment and if I was sick I would be left alone in the dormitory without food or water until I was well again, also, on the occasions I was locked in the cage at the end of the dormitory, sometimes for a period of 2 days I was then deprived of food, as a further punishment.
In Neerkol I received 3 meager meals per day, breakfasts consisted of a brown, bird seedy type of porridge that was horrible or white, seeding gluey substance that we chocked on because of it's lumpiness.
Lunch was thick chunks of bread smeared with an amount of jam or syrup.
Dinner was usually a stew (very watery with little meat in it) sometimes we got a pudding of sago or junket. There was no morning or after non tea nor did I ever get any fruit, cheese or milk or eggs despite the fact that Neerkol was a fully functional dairy farm with the addition of hundreds of chickens. I never got any eggs or poultry, whilst in there I was so hungry I supplemented their meager meals with whatever I could find I ate a weed I called "wild gooseberries", "wild chinky apples", pig weed, the white root of caret like plant, flower buds, the skin and all of wild lemons and food form the scrap heap, plus fish I was occasionally able to catch myself and boil in water.

Abuse I suffered on Farm Jobs whilst I was still a state ward.

First Job- worked for Angus Stewart for 13 months. I worked alongside him, I was well thought of and treated like a member of his family.

Second Job-worked for John Warner, was staved and ill treated, physical, abused by his adult children. I was sent out to work all day without food or water, also sent out to blow wells, with Jack, using dynamite had no one to turn to or talk to about this cruelty.

I was completely at there mercy. I ended up walking off Warner's property after being there 3 months because I could no longer stand the cruelty and starvation.

Third Job- worked for Eric Willis Again I was starved and cruelly treated. All his machinery was run down in bad order. The horse he forced me to ride was blind. I was made to run the dairy single handedly Willis rarely came near it and never worked with me. Again there was no, one to tell of this cruelty children services **never** came near me. After working for Willis for 3 months whipped me then sacked me, (telling me to find my own way back to Neerkol) after I was unable to make butter with his run down butter- churn. When I told him it needed to be repaired, he whipped and abused me whist working on these 3 farm jobs I received no pocket money, even though I regularly signed the pocket money card, I was under the impression that I was signing for wages that were being paid in to the bank for me.
On the 4 occasions I had returned from work

I never received any pocket money or wages.

Details of my employ on these farms are in other documents, which I will attach to this submission, and to which I have added my own comments in red pen

Back at Neerkol after Willis

When I returned to Neerkol, after Willis, I told mother Clare of the way Willis had treated me. Mother Clare listened to what I had to say but showed no concern or Sympathy.
As soon as I returned to Neerkol they had me back out working- dipping, ring barking and cutting timber, for no pay.
I was allocated no bed and forced, like a dog, to sleep where I could, firstly in a shed, then when they didn't want me in there, I moved to an open verandah with a couple of sacks to try and keep warm. I was not allowed to eat with the men and other older boys that work and received reasonable adequate food, but forced to wait out side the dining room until the schoolboys had finished their meal and then told to go to the front table, by myself and eat the same meager meal that I had had as a school boy, even though they expected me to a full day of men's work. I was treated like a bit of rubbish that was not wanted and had no place being there.
Again, sheer starvation forced me to eat scraps from the dump; I was also again subjected to the bashings and abuse of the nun's and was bashed punched, kicked and shoved repeatedly.
After I had been back at Neerkol about 6 days I went to Mother Clare and then Father Anderson and complained about the behavior of one of the older boys – Kevin Baker Baker was a pet of the nun's, he had the run of the orphanage, including the girls dormitory and the nun's quarters and generally done what he pleased. He had been running amok, making sexual advances to both boys and girls grabbing and fondling them.

He had also grabbed me, also, from behind, held him self against me and made sexual movements and also grabbed and pulled my penis whilst I was showering. I explained all this to Mother Clare and then Father Anderson. They both listened by did not show any sympathy for my concerns, and Baker continued to run amok and do as he pleased forcing himself on the other children.

Also, around this time, during one of my confessions to Father Anderson, I confessed I was experiencing the very normal sexual feelings experienced by every adolesant boy. I confessed this with no hesitation because we had, as children in the catholic orphanage, been taught to be truthful and open when making our confessions. I believed I was doing the right thing.

I now find, after receiving my file through the F.O.I, that from that first week after I returned to Neerkol, Mother Clare and Holbeck, of the children's services began, with the use of lies and falsified documents, to build up a false case against me as an excuse to get rid of me out of Neerkol. On my file I found 2 typed Apologies which I knew nothing about, had never seen before and certainly didn't type. These falsified apologies in my name contained words that I couldn't understand, let alone write, including the words "ultimo" a word frequently used by Holbeck and other officers of the children services, the apologies pertained to my leaving Willis and implied that I'd been sacked from there "for giving his wife cheek" ect, when as said previously he sacked me after he had whipped me because I couldn't make butter with his broken down butter churn.

There was another letter written by Holbeck, on my file falsely claming that on the day I left Willis he found me hitting his separator with a hammer another lie, there are numerous other lies in that letter which I have gone into detail in other documents of mine containing that letter.

Also on my file is a medical certificate, by Dr J. Bruce Gordon stating that I am "an unfit" boy to be in Neerkol. In all the time I was In Neerkol a doctor never saw me and Dr Gordon never even saw before writing out that false certificate. There are other letters on my file clamed that I misbehaved ect, again these are untrue, I didn't play up or give them any cause to need to get rid of me, but I realized reading all the lies written about me and seeing the falsified documents that after I came back from Willis they were building up a case against me.

Previously documents in my file bear this out showing that there were no complaints about my behavior or work period to this. Holbeck himself even says he had great faith in me but once I came back from Willis and showed that I was prepared to speak out about what was going on (Baker running amok) and had also been truthful at my own confession they were determined to get rid of me, so I could not speak out.

There are other letters on my file showing that my Father and Aunt both wished t take me at the time, but Holbeck refused to release me from state control.

In 1 letter Holbeck even admits that he **deliberately** didn't tell my further that I was being sent to Westbrook in several days, when he called at the home, to say my Aunt wished to take me. I realized now that they know that I would have told my relatives what was going on at Neerkol if I had been released into there care so they were determined to get rid of me to Westbrook where I couldn't speak out.

Even when we were small children and my father came to visit us the nun's always threatened us not to tell him about the runnings of the home and we were always made to sit under a tree near the office, when he visited us, to they could keep an eye on us and what we said to him.

Westbrook

I was **never told** I was being sent to Westbrook. Mother Clare told me I was going to a "nice farm" where I "would work and earn wages". And I was left to continue to believe this the whole train trip from Rockhampton to Brisbane.
Holbeck, of children services, who took me to Brisbane, continued with this pretence all the way to Roma Street, and then when we arrived at Roma Street we were met by the police. Holbeck handed me over to them and left without a word, to me.
I was stunned, beyond belief and terrified, I had no idea what was going on.
I had left Neerkol thinking I was going to a "nice farm" nothing had happened or been said to me, to change that belief, now I was in the hands of the police, who also wouldn't tell me where I was going or what was going on. I knew I hadn't done anything wrong and I couldn't under stand why Holbeck had handed me over to the police.
I was sick with fear not knowing what was going to happen to me. These police took me to the Toowoomba foothills where I was handed over to more police, I still didn't know what was going on or where I was going.
The sheer terror I felt, as a child coming from an orphanage and then being placed in this situation, without explanations, is indescribable.
When we got to Westbrook, I was taken to the office of the superintendent- Golledge. He told me " you'll tow the line" he bashed me across the side of my head, then said "get out" I was sent out to mingle with the other boys. I still had not been told where I was or why I was there, but I'd never seen so many boys, all together, in one place, in my life.
I found out that they were there because they had committed various offences- bashing, stealing, rape, ect and that I was effectively in a type of a prison. I knew that I had committed **no** offences and I couldn't under stand why I had been put in a place like this. For a week I walked around in a daze, **I knew I shouldn't have been there.**
I went to the superintendent to tell his that I shouldn't be there and to ask his why I had been put in there when, unlike the other boys I'd spoken to, I'd committed no offence. The superintendent wasn't interested; he abused me, belted me several times and told me to "get back out with the others".
West brook was another Hell- hole but much worse than Neerkol no humans being should ever have to go through what I went through in west brook, there were guards screwing boys, bashing, threats, older boys standing over younger boys, older boys used by guards to hold other boys down while, they, the guard, bashed them and boys taken away out of the dormitory at night to be used by the guards or the older boys for their sexual pleasure.

I would lie awake listening to other boys sobbing in misery and I cried myself to sleep every night in sickening fear knowing I shouldn't be in such a hell and waiting in terror for them to come for me. Most of the time I couldn't sleep, it wasn't possible to shower either.
In time I lost the count of the times I was sexually assaulted in the showers. The place was sickening the cruelty and violence coming from both the older boys and the guards.
After a week I simply couldn't stand the sexual abuse, filth and cruelty any longer, I walked out the gates, they brought me back and I was taken before superintendent Golledge. Golledge, then flogged me repeatedly with a cat of 9 tails until my hole body was bruised, swollen and bleeding he then had a guard secure my arms behind my back with a rope and a stick I was then thrown into a vacant room where I was left without food or water for a considerable period of time.
The cruelty, misery and depravity of Westbrook was horrendous and a hundred times worse than anything I'd suffered in Neerkol. On of the punishments for even the most minor mis nomeanor was to "walk the path". This punishment was given to me on a number of occasions it involved, firstly, being flogged then being made to walkup and down a line (the path) back wards and forwards, over and over until exhaustion, then when you simply couldn't walk anymore you'd be dragged off to the office to be flogged then thrown into a dormitory.
The guards also seemed to gain pleasure and peverse entertainment in watching the boys fight and when fights broke, out between the boys, instead of steeping in and putting a stop to it, as they should've, the guards would force and encourage the fighting to continue until the combat ants were bloodied and bruised and unable to stand through exhaustion.
There was no organized work or activities for the inmates of Westbrook and the boredom and lack of purpose, engendered in the boys, by this lack of activity or incentive, itself, result in causing many problems.
In the evenings from about 5 pm till 9 pm we were all forced to go in to the recreation hall. There was a ping-pong table in the hall but this was always taken over by the older bullies. The rest of the boys were forced to sit at trestle table for this 4 hours night after night, we were allowed to talk to each other but for a child like me who had no mates (there wasn't 1 person in west brook that I could look on as a friend) the only thing I could do was sit there for 4 hours and stare at the book that I couldn't read because I'd never given enough education, whilst at Neerkol, to enable me to be able to read even a very simple book.
To me this was sheer torment; sitting for 4 hours doing nothing except for knowing that after those 4 hours I'd then be sent to the dormitory where I'd lie in fear, for the rest of the night not knowing when or whether I'd be assaulted. Because of this cruelty and terror I escaped again, this time with other boys in the mass breaks of the early 1960s, in doing this all I wanted to do was to get away from the inhuman filth, violence, bashings, misery and sheer depravity of the place even the food was foul and uneatable and contained weevils, maggots and other grubs. After my escape this first mass brake I was again caught, brought back flogged and made to "walk the path".
I escaped, again, in the 2nd mass break, again, by escaping; all I sought to do was to get away, as far as possible, from the hell of Westbrook. This time I went with 4-5 other boys, boys that I didn't even know, we were cold, hungry, frightened and lost when the boys

broke the shops window and we all went in to the shop window looking for something to eat because we were cold and hungry.
At the time I was a naïve and unworldly child I had no sense of the rights or wrongs of going into this shop my only feelings at the time were that I was cold and hungry and frightened and the food now available in the shop at least presented itself as a feed which the other boys had no hesitation in helping themselves to.
Also during the 2nd mass break the group I was with came across a Ute, with the keys left in the ignition, we got in and one of the boys drove, in my eyes it seemed a means of getting further and faster away from the tortures of Westbrook, I didn't get to drive the Ute and again, had no real conceptions of the rights and wrongs of what I was doing. Later, during this 2nd mass break, we were shot at by police as we ran through long grass at night trying to get away. The police knew we were children from Westbrook because they called out, to us, before they opened fire. They fired approximately 12 shots which wiz zed past my head at very close range. I was only 16 at the time and count myself as being very lucky not to have been killed. We heard a rumor, much later, that one of the boys that was with us had escaped to Tasmania but given the closeness and number of the shots I now wonder whether he really did get to Tasmania or whether he was shot somewhere near us un the long grass and simply left there either dead or dying.
We were caught by the police and put into the Toowoomba watch house. The police wrote a statement out, in my name, putting in what they wanted, then bashed me, on and off, until I agreed to sign it. I was then taken before the Toowoomba court and sentenced to imprisonment in Boggo Road Jail, Brisbane.
24 other boys, who escaped from Westbrook, during this mass break, were also sent to Boggo Road.
I had just turned 17. Shortly after I was sent to Boggo Road an inquiry, called the "Swarten inquiry" was held into the reasons for the on going problems in Westbrook, including the mass breaks, as a result of this inquiry the Westbrook administration, including superintendent Golledge were sacked yet despite the fact that I'd been **wrongfully imprisoned** in Westbrook, in the first place, having been taken from Neerkol as **an innocent 16 year old,** deceived and lied to by the authorities and told that I was "going to a nice farm to work and earn wages" only to be taken to west brook detention center (a place the Queensland state government and the authorities and general public, of the day held to be a facility for the holding of Queenslands worst youthful offenders) and incarcerated alongside youths who had killed, raped and assaulted and been before the court and sentenced to terms of imprisonment, in west brook, for their crimes, I was, **not once,** before, during or after the Swarten inquiry **ever approached or asked** by the authorities **why?** I had run away from Westbrook or what were my reasons for doing so even through I remained a ward of the state of Queensland before, during and after my time in west brook and was, as proven, by the details recorded on my Admission form, to Westbrook, the only child imprisoned in that hell-hole, who, before his incarceration, was innocent of any crime, had not been charged or convicted of any crime and who not been sentenced by any court to any term of imprisonment.

I went into Westbrook an innocent 16 year old child believing that I was going to the "nice farm" promised to me by the state of Queensland (my carers?) I left that sickening hell-hole a convicted, criminal with a record for breaking, entering &stealing and car theft, which has followed me for the rest of my life, simply because I tried to escape the sexual abuse, bashings, filth, degradation, starvation, fear and cold of the place I should never have been in, in the first place.

Boggo Road Jail

After the Hell Holes of Neerkol and Westbrook I found Boggo Road a paradise. I felt reasonably safe. I had a cell of my own and could sleep at night without the fear of being attacked or raped.

The food was basic but a great improvement on Neerkol and Westbrook, I even got steak and sausages without the maggots that were throughout the food served in Westbrook, I even got eggs (I'd never even seen an egg in either Neerkol or Westbrook. I felt like a king in Boggo Road, I even got pudding on the weekends, plum duff and others that, to me, were absolute luxuries. I got porridge for breakfast every morning with milk on it, half a loaf of bread, a ration of tea, sugar and a peace of cheese the size of a match box once a month, a tin of golden syrup, to do with what I pleased, every 3 months and a ration of 1 oz of tobacco once a fortnight this was the old Boggo Road of the 60s, there were none of the luxuries that they have in the prisons of today. I had a small square cell to myself, there was no running water or sewerage, I had a tin in the corner to use as a toilet and a coconut fibremattress to sleep on, there was no TV or radio in the cell, like they have, now, but a speaker that played have what ever they had on the radio in the office, there was no gym equipment, like they now, no books and no courses to take, in fact there was nothing much at all, except for the cell and bed and toilet can, but I was still happier and more at ease in Boggo Road than I ever had been in Neerkol or Westbrook because even though rules were **very** strict in Boggo Road, in those days, there was a certain amount of fairness and also I felt safe, safer than I'd ever felt at Neerkol or Westbrook.

During the whole time I was in Boggo Road Jail I was never once sexually assaulted, nor was I ever flogged, ~~based~~ bashed or physically abused or humiliated the way I had been in Neerkol or Westbrook even though fellow inmates that I mixed with during my time in number one jail were adult murderers, serial rapists, pedophiles and other violent offenders, such as chris Christoffel who'd spent 30 years in jail, before I was in there, for sexually molesters school children he was in charge of my floor and gave me cigarettes yet never molested me or Leo Burns and Maxi Carter both violent murderers. I felt safer in the company of these convicted murderers in Boggo Road Jail than I had ever felt in Neerkol or Westbrook where I lived in fear of unprovoked and unwarranted floggings and abuses.

Twice, whilst there I spent time in solitary confinement, firstly for 7 days, after they found a small face drawn on my cell door, I hadn't drawn it and didn't know who had but I was blamed for it, then, the 2nd time for "speaking in line" when I answer someone who spoke to me, first, again I got 7 days. In those days solitary confinement "meant solitary confinement", for 7 days I was placed in a bare cell. The only other things in that cell were ½ a cup of water, for the day and a small, square prickly doormat to sleep on. This mat was

only the size of the ordinary doormat, making it impossible to lie on and it was made of the hard, brown, prickly fiber used on back door mats today.
There was no tin for use as a toilet, as in a normal cell, if I needed to go to the toilet I had to wait till they came in with a tin. I was put on ½ rations of food with this being pushed in to the cell once a day. My tobacco was taken away for the 7 days of the solitary confinement and not reinstated for 3 months after wards, I also lost all my privileges and remissions, yet despite the hardship and deprivation of prison I never once felt the over-riding fear or degradation that I'd endured in Neerkol and Westbrook.
The whole time I was in jail I had no visitors and when I had served my sentence and walked out the gates, I had no one to meet or help me. I was completely on my own, just the way I had been since I was put in to Neerkol when I was 7 years old, I was now 20 years old and had no life of my own up until then because I had been completely at the mercy of the nun's and the authorities and what ever they wanted to do to me. I walked out those gates completely alone, knowing nobody and not even knowing the area or where to go for work or accommodation because I'd been put in there from Westbrook and prior to that spent my whole life in north Queensland, most of it in Neerkol.

Summary & some of the after effects I still suffer today from my time as a state ward Queensland.

On being released from Boggo Road Prison, in my early twenties, I was completely institutionalized and a mental and emotional wreck. I'd been taken from my home and family, in Townsville, when an innocent and trusting 7 year old, thrust, with no explanation into the vicious and uncaring hell-hole of Neerkol. Separated from my family and alone, with no one top trust or turn to I endured the next 7 years in constant fear and torment suffering daily bashing, abuses and humiliation, other forms of physical abuse (as already detailed) sexual abuses, neglect, starvation, depravation of liberty, ~~dental~~ denial of education and any medical attention, at the hands of my so called "carers" the sisters of mercy.
Then, from the ages of 14 till 16 I'd been "hired out" by the state government to farmers, as slave labour. I was sent to 3 of these farms during this 2-year period, with brief stints back at Neerkol between each hiring out. On the first of these farms I wasn't treated too badly, the work was hard cutting and loading sugar cane by hand but I was treated fairly, I had a bed in the house and received decent meals and by and large was treated as a member of the family. I wasn't bashed, abused and humiliated as I had been in Neerkol.
I stayed with this family for 13 months until they sold their farm and moved into town, then, because there was no work in town for me they had no choice but to return me to Neerkol.
On the 2nd & 3rd farms, I worked on; I was subjected to extreme physical abuse, humiliation, starvation and neglect. I again lived with constant fear that had haunted me in Neerkol but this time it was caused by the terror of constantly wondering who or what

might come out of the bush and attack me when I was alone, miles from Warners house, with-out food or water, day after day working in the sheering heat bundling up branches and large roots to clear more farming land for Warners properties.
I tried, several times to return to the house for a drink of water because of thirst caused by the heat and dust but I soon learnt it wasn't worth the effort because instead of water all I'd get was a belting from 1 of the Warners adult children and the order to "get back up the paddock and do your work" I was in constant fear too, whilst at Warners of being blown up when made to help "jack" (a man employed by Warner) to blow wells, with dynamite, in search of water. Many times jack miscalculated the length of the fuse needed with the result that we would both be nearly blown it bits when I was forced to drag him from a well seconds before the dynamite exploded.
I faced further trauma and fear at Willis (the 3rd farm I worked on) where again, I was bashed, abused, starved and neglected.
I was forced to sleep on the open verandah, alone, night after night, where I would lie in terror not knowing what might come up onto that verandah after me be it animal or human. Also, at Willis I was forced to run his dairy single handedly working with equipment that was run down and in an extreme state of disrepair. Even the horse I was expected to ride was old, blind and its saddlery in tatters to the point that on one occasion the make shift rope saddle girth broke causing me to fall heavily to the ground losing consciousness and smashing my shoulder. When I regained consciousness staggered back to the house, where I was allowed to sit for a brief period of time before I was ordered "back to work" I was not given any medical attention for these injuries and still suffer pain and limitation in my shoulder today, 40 years later, as a result of the fall. Whilst at Willis I was treated worse than you'd treat an animal and rarely spoken to. I rarely ever seen Willis himself and after I'd been on the property several days and had been shown what work was expected of me, by an ex state boy (James Borgia) who also worked there the only communication I ever received were occasional, abrupt orders from Borgia. Whilst Borgia slept and ate in the house and appeared to preform the duties of a houseboy I was made to eat and sleep a lone on the open verandah like a dog, fearful that at any moment something would come out of the bush and onto the verandah, where I lay and attack me.
After leaving Willis farm I had a brief stint back to Neerkol. Again, I was forced to sleep on a verandah and use sacks as a cover because no bed had been allocated to me. I was given work with the men going out ring barking trees and cutting timber for the home. I worked hard and caused no problem for anybody but I since discovered (after received my Neerkol file through the F.O.I in 1998) 6 days after I arrived back at Neerkol children's services officer Holbeck began to trump up a false case against me as an excuse for my wrongful and deceitful imprisonment in Westbrook.
I am attaching, to this submission, a number of documents used by Holbeck for this purpose and I have included on them, hand written comments, by my partner, in red biro, to draw your attention to how Holbeck used these documents against me.
As detailed by me earlier in this submission I spent the next months in the dehumanizing and sadistic confines of Westbrook and then, for trying to escape that Hell-Hole was transferred to the comparative paradise of Boggo Road Jail.

On leaving Jail, in my early twenties, I had nothing and no body. I was over 500 miles from my family home in Townsville; released into an unfamiliar environment I knew nothing about. On my release I had no friends or family to meet me, no whereto go or live, no job to go to and no education or training to enable me to get one, I couldn't read or write and during my 14 years in state (care?) I received no training in the most basic of life skills or even sex education.

On walking out the gates of Boggo Road I may as well have been on another planet I went to a shop, bought some smokes sat down on the side of the road and longed for the safe and familiar surrounds of the Jail I'd just left. For a period of time after my release from Boggo Road I struggled to try to survive and make a go of my life but my life was a hopeless and meaningless vacuum with no apparent way of escape. I had spent 14 years in state government run institutions following routines and orders I was completely institutionalized and had no understanding or experience of living a normal life. I struggled on for some time then deliberately broke into a shop with the sole aim of being taken to court and convicted and placed back into jail.

As a result of my suffering whilst a state ward and the treatment handed out to me by the Queensland state government and it's employees I have **never** been able to lead what is accepted as being a normal life. Until the last few years, I have always lived my life as a loner, never able to settle down I would move form place to place, often sleeping in my car or in the open, for weeks on end ir I would be forced to share accommodation with so called undesirables or persons on the fringes of society because my own circumstances left me with no choice.

Whilst living in the state institutions I'd received no proper education which meant that I was unable to read or write added to this, was the fact that I'd had no training for any form of employment and I had a criminal record, beside my name, forced on me by the state government when, as an innocent 16 years old, I'd tried to escape the sexual abuse, cruelty, and filth of Westbrook all this made it virtually impossible for me to get or keep a job, sometimes I'd travel hundreds of miles if I heard a job was going in a particular area, many times I'd miss out, other times I'd get the job only to loose it again when the local police, of the area, found out I had a criminal record and let my employers know.

Because of the damage, done to whilst a state ward, my life had been, until recently, a long and lonely continuous struggle, I have no contact with my brothers or relatives, in fact, because of the deliberate policy of the nun's in Neerkol and the state government to separate families and to discourage any contact between siblings I have no attachments or feelings now of ever having had a family of birth or brothers or any other relatives.

I don't even have any mementoes or photos from my childhood, not even a photo of my dead mother. I am aware that many hundreds of children have gone into state care and past through orphanages but at the end of it all most of these, kids still have a sense of family and belonging and somebody albeit a relative or even friend of their family to turn to or to wait for them.

When I left Boggo Road Jail in my early 20s I had nothing or no one, I was a dispossessed person in the same way that the Jews were dispossessed persons on their release form the concentration camps in 1945 and again just, like the Jews, I was lied to and

deceived when the Queensland state government told me I was going " to a nice farm to work and earn wages" before they interned me In their concentration camp (Westbrook) in the same way that the Jews were told by the Nazis that they were "going to a nice place to work" if their treatment of the Jews in this way makes the Nazis war criminals, what does the Queensland governments wrongful imprisonment of me, when innocent of any crime, in Westbrook, make them ?

What the Queensland state government did to me whilst to me in their **care?** Has ruined my life and caused me life-long and irreparable damage. They were my legal guardians yet they failed miserably in there duty of care for me whist I was an innocent and helpless child solely reliant on them for my welfare and well being despite the fact for the whole time I was in state (care?) they forced my father to pay the state £ 1 per week towards my upkeep and jailed him when he fell behind with the payments.

Please find following, in categories, just some of the long term trauma and damage caused to me buy my time in state care-

Emotional & Psychological Affects.

Over 40 years after I left Neerkol and Westbrook I continued to suffer from post traumatic stress disorder caused to me by what they did to me in those places and the sexual and physical abuse I suffered there.

I have difficulties in sleeping or even falling a sleep because of the continuous feeling of needing to be alert or be on guard for my own protection.

I find it extremely difficult to relax because of these feelings of imminent danger.

When I do sleep I frequently suffer from nightmares that cause me to wake suddenly terrified and soaked in sweat.

These night-mares always revolve around incidents I suffered, also, particularly at night of period of sudden blankness of a sudden urgent anxiety and terror coming over me, making me wonder who I am, what am I doing here, this comes over me if its quite I'm alone, usually if I enter a small place like a toilet, I will suddenly experience sheer terror and the need to "get out of there" there has been many occasions when my children have heard me call out in panic when experiencing this and numerous other occasions when I have been unable to force myself to go into the toilet to urinate and have, instead had to hide a bottle in the lounge room or the bed room, to use instead. I have often tried to overcome this terror by distracting my mind by taking a small radio into the toilet or by forcing myself to try and concentrate on a spot or mark on the toilet wall sometimes I succeed but many times I am forced to back out in terror.

I also suffer from panic attacks and agoraphobia during the days.

I don't go out unless I have to. I don't go to restaurants, theatres, large shopping complexes or any other places where there are large numbers or groups of people I simply would not be able to force myself into such places and never been able to do so. I also find it extremely stressful accompanying my partner on our weekly shopping trips for groceries but with the use of Valium tablets force myself to do so and try not to think about where I am.

Many times I have felt panic and fear or unwell ness in these situations and have just felt like getting out of there. I forced myself, again with the use of sedatives to attend necessary medical appointments with my doctor and psychiatrist and weekly parades at my 6 years old sons' school but it is hard and at times extremely difficult.
Because of the lies, decent sexual and physical abuse, humiliation and cruelty I suffered at the hand of the authorities.
I find it extremely hard to trust or build relations ship with other people. as stated previously I have spent most of life as a loner drifting from town to town with no feeling of belonging or attachment.
I have had several failed relationships, in the past and it has only been in the last few years that I have been able to settle and feel comfortable in a loving family environment with my present partner and children.
I spent most of my life feeling worthless and not as good as the next person because of the continual long term degradation and humiliation I suffered at the hands of, both, the nun's in Neerkol and the screws in Westbrook. If you tell a child over and over that they are ugly, useless, worthless, stupid, a piece of rubbish, ect, they will grow to believe it and that's how it was with me and it had a very detrimental effect on all aspects of my life.

Long Term Physical Damage and Effects

Throughout the whole time I was in state (care?) I never received and medical care for any of the illnesses or accidents I suffered and was always left to fend for myself, even as by me previously, after being circumcised at 12 years of age after being hit on the bare penis, by the nun's, with a cane, I was given no follow up medical care and was left to attend to the excruciating wound and primitive dressing of Hessian which was bounded around it and began to heal into it, myself. I found this, not only an extremely painful situation but also very humiliating given the fact that I was only 12 years old and the environment of Neerkol provided no privacy from the other large numbers of boys that shared the showers, dormitories, ect.
I still suffered, today, 40 years later, extremely pain and limitations of movement in both of my shoulders as a result of 2 separate accidents that I suffered whilst in state care and for which I received no medical attention for either.
The first occurred when I was 16 and hired out to work on Willis property (and referred to, by me, earlier in this submission).
All the equipment on Willis property was run down and in a state of extreme disrepair.
The horse I was given to ride was half blind and old and the saddlery primitive. The saddle girth was a frayed rope. One day the horse stumbled when I was riding and the rope saddle girth snapped this result in me falling heavily from the horse, landing on my back with a log wedge under my shoulders. I lost consciousness, I don't know how long for but when I came to I was in extreme pain and bleeding from my back shoulder area and had numerous other cuts and scrapes. I felt sick and dizzy and had extreme difficulty moving but felt an overwhelming feeling of panic and fear. I stumbled the distance back to the house, yet despite the fact that it would have been very obvious to Willis that I was in extreme pain

and quite badly injured nothing was done to treat my injuries and no doctor was called, instead I was allowed to sit and rest, for 10 minutes, before I was told to "get back to work" in the dairy, since I'd been at Willis it was my job to operate the dairy on my own, I now had great difficulty in doing so, I am left handed but was unable to use my left arm after the accident to put the milking cups on or tie the cows legs, to stop them kicking. X-rays in later years have shown extensive old break and damage to my left shoulder (the one that was injured in this accident).

Also whilst 16, but when back at Neerkol, after leaving Willis, I suffered another serious accident, after falling from the back of the homes truck which at the time, was being driven in a dangerous and erratic manner by one of the older boys, who without reason or warning, slammed on the brakes with the result that I fell heavily from the back of the truck to the ground, this time badly injuring my back and right shoulder attention for these injuries and recent X-rays had shown that this shoulder, also received extensive damage from this accident I also continue to suffer pain in my knuckles, in both hands, from the repeated bashings given to me, over 40 years ago when they asserted that they couldn't even bash brains into me because I was so stupid.

Several years ago, after noticing shortness of breath, on exhertion, I was diagnosed as having emphysema as a result of very heavily smoking, I began smoking at 13 ½ in Neerkol after the nun's decided they "couldn't bash brains" into me and took me out of school and put me out ring barking trees and cutting timber for the home I was regularly given cigarettes by the older boys and men I worked with- Trevor Tabby, Bill Kelly, and Tom Paddle.

The nun's were fully aware of my smoking and did nothing about it and simply turned a blind eye to it.

Mrs. Stewart, the wife of the first farmer I worked for from ages 14 ½ till nearly 16 also regularly bought me cigarettes. Then when I entered Boggo Road Jail, just after I'd turned 17 the authorities, themselves, provided tobacco to me and all the other inmates.

In Boggo Road Tobacco was used by the authorities as a reward or bribe. It was considered one of the privileges to be allowed Tobacco to smoke and it was one of the first privileges taken away for any deemed transgression or wrong doing which meant, in effect, that the Queensland State Government actively encouraged smoking in it's prisons by boys as young as myself (17) and who were supposedly wards in their care, not to mention the further enticement in prison to smoke by the sheer lack of alternative activities in the spare time given and the repeated inducements to smoke by tobacco advertising on the jails radio.

By the time I first left jail in my early 20s I was thoroughly addicted to nicotine and continued to smoke heavily (approx 3 packets a day) up until 1989. Prior to 1989 I tried numerous times to give up smoking, I hated the smell, dirtiness and sheer expense and waste of time involved in smoking but because I was badly addicted, because of the heaviness of my smoking I was unable to do so. Then in the late 1980s when health warnings started to be issued and even put on to the packets I made the very definite decision that I "wanted to be around to see my children grow up" it took me a great deal of will-power, relapses and praying to god for the strength and help before I was able to finally give up, but slowly cutting back, using nicorette gum (which was not, then, on the

N.H.S and I had to pay for at $40 a packet) and praying to god, in a genuine way, for help, I was finally in 1989 able to stop, but, unfortunately, not before I'd done irreparable damage to my lungs causing emphysema which was diagnosed several years ago, long after I'd given up the filthy and dangerous habit introduced and encouraged on me by the state government who were supposed to be my guardians and (carers?)

Education & Employment

When I was finally released from state (care?) in the mid 1960s I had no education, no life skills and no chance of employment.
For the short period of time I attended the school in Neerkol the nun's bashed, thrashed, flogged and humiliated me. They repeatedly told me they "couldn't bash brains" into me, that I was stupid, an idiot, worthless, ugly, ect, then when I was in grade 5 they decided it was a waste of their time to try and bash brains into me they put me out on the verandah to weave baskets, then, from 13 ½ I was sent out to work with the men to ring bark and cut down trees. Because of this I still can't read or write today, I have to have my partner do all my reading, writing or filling out of forms for me. Even signing my name is difficult because of the bashings I received to my left hand, by the nun's to try and force me to write with my right hand when I am left handed. The only way I can sign my name is by turning the paper side-on before signing it.
This lack of education has cased me extreme difficulty over the years and has denied me the opportunity to gain most jobs when I was wrongfully imprisoned in Westbrook, when I was 16, they took me to the school for the 2 days and gave me scholastic test of grade 4 standard. When I received my file through the F.O.I in 1998 my partner found the result of this test which states that I was weak in and had difficulty with even grade 4 work, my scholastic ability has not improved even by today, over 40 years later.
Another letter my partner found in my Westbrook file claimed that I was "back at school" at Westbrook, this was a load of rubbish, the only time I ever saw the school in Westbrook was for the 2 day I went there for the grade 4 test, I never went there after that, despite the fact that I was supposed to be engaged in work in the dairy at Westbrook, this was not the case, I spent most of my time in Westbrook, like most of the other boys there, in aimless wandering around and in trying to avoid the sexual, physical and emotional abuse that permeated every aspect of daily life in there.
A further bar to my gaining of employment was the criminal record I had ~~organist~~ against my name forced on me by the Queensland state governments wrongful imprisonment, of me, in Westbrook detention center, when I was an innocent child of 16 and hadn't committed and offences or been before any courts. When I entered Westbrook I was an innocent boy from a catholic orphanage but when I left there at 17 years of age I was a convicted criminal with a record, simply because I had tried desperately to escape the rapes, bashings, floggings, cruelty and filth of a place I should never have been in, in the first place. The Queensland state government, itself designated Westbrook as being a detention center for **convicted** boy criminals, of the worst type, yet, that same Queensland state government **My Legal Guardians** had taken me, whilst an **innocent** child and incarcerated me in a filthy Hell-

Hole alongside rapists, murderers and other convicted criminals, there-by irreparably damaging my life and any chance I may have had to lead a normal life. Even today, 40 years later, on a number of occasions when I have been a witness for the crown, as the victim and plaintiff, in several court matters, I have had the defendants counsel throw up my past record, in my face, in an upsetting and humiliating attempt to discredit me before the court and so cast doubt on my reputation and evidence.

There is not one aspect of my life nor one waking or sleeping moment of my life that is not dominated and over-shadowed by what I suffered whilst a ward of the state of Queensland for 14 years, for me there is no escape nor will there ever be any.

My partner and I have made numerous approaches and written hundreds of letters to the Queensland government, since the forde inquiry, re what that government did to me and asking why I was wrongfully imprisoned in Westbrook but we have found their responses to be totally unsatisfactory, also since the forde inquiry, we have repeatedly sought an appointment with premier Beattie to discuss these matters but he has refused to meet with us, despite the fact that he has had meetings with more recent victims of abuse whose cases attracted considerable media attention and despite the fact that Mr. Beattie was very vocal in his crit. isism

Of the Governor General Peter Hollingsworth re matters of child abuse and urged **him** to meet with the victims Mr. Peter Beattie's only response to us has been to fob us off to his families Minister Judy Spence who had shown a rude and arrogant response to my concern and now refuse to response to our letters, at all.

I currently have a writ lodged with the Brisbane supreme court seeking damages from the state of Queensland for what they did to me but I am aware that the state will do everything in it's power to block my matter from going to court or being successful. I have made applications for legal aid for this matter but they have been refused.

I am also aware that other Historically abused ex-state children who have taken their cases, against, the state government, to court, have had their cases blocked from even getting into court because the state repeatedly relies on the Limitation of Time rule, to have the matter thrown out before it even goes to court.

Despite the fact that the state government hypocritically signed an Apology admitting and apologizing for the abuse it's state wards suffered it has shown that it has no genuine concern or sympathy for it's victims. The Forde Inquiry of 1999 was a toothless tiger and gut-wrenching media stunt by the Beattie Government when it felt under media pressure to make it appear that they were doing something in response to undeniable accusations of abuse against them. All the Forde Inquiry did for us victims was to again cause trauma and upset in having to recall the abuse of our past whilst the Bettie Government spoke A few Sympathetic platitudes and then sat back and refused to implement Ms Forde's Recommendations.

One of the main out comes I would like to see from the senate inquiry is that Legislation be introduced Australia wide so that victims of state government abuse can take our cases to the courts with the assistance of Legal Aid and with out the constraints of the Limitation of time.

In this submission I have tried to give you some idea of the trauma and suffering I went through in my years in state care and of the ongoing anguish and damage this abuse has caused to me but it is impossible to convey in the written word, in Limited time and space the reality of what I suffered but I hope that this will be of help to you to understand the feeling of a child who was abused, tortured and wrongfully imprisoned, in his own country, his only crime being that his mother died in childbirth.

Finally I would ask that I be allowed, along with my partner, Mrs. Victoria Hunt, to give a personal submission to your inquiry when you visit Brisbane in the future. I would also like to make you aware that I did make a written submission to the senate inquiry into Migrant children and you may find reading a copy of this submission, which your committee would already hold on record to be of interest.

Please also see now attached documentation.

Yours Faithfully

Bryan Hartas

27.7.'03

Bryan Hartas