

Senate Inquiry into the Implementations Of The Recommendations of the Lost Innocents and Forgotten Australians Report.

My Submission.

My Name is Rosemarie Lee. Aged 49

I was in state care in Sth Australia from 1964-1978.

**During my time in state care my childhood was like
Living your worst nightmare as a child.**

**The impact of this has followed through to my adult
Life in a big way. Children were used as tools in a
System that abused children in every possible way.**

**Then we were thrown out at 18years of age without
Any life skills and expected to function like normal**

People and to lead productive adult lives. No help

by the then Welfare System. Most of us had no real

Education, Our health suffered badly, We were broken

Children. No one believed us when we tried telling

people what had happened, and were threatened with

Violence, or in some cases death if we didn't do as we were told. Imagine being a small child being put into a situation ,quiet dangerous, that if you didn't do as you were told your brains would be blown out. No child deserves that no matter what. We were targets for people big time and it feels like children in state care wore a sign on their heads saying its okay to abuse me. That's not okay and these people need to be made accountable for their actions. I wrote a letter to his Excellency Mr. Kevin Scarce. Governor of Sth Australia and the Sth Australian premier The Honourable Mr. Mike Rann and put forth my views ,on how I felt our

Government could finally see what drastic measures are needed to fix a national child abuse catastrophe created by State Government agencies.

These are my submissions;

His Excellency Mr Kevin Scarce
Governor of South Australia
Government House
North Terrace
ADELAIDE SA 5000

Dear Sir

**Findings of the Honourable Edward P Mulligan QC
Children in State Care Inquiry South Australia
Submissions due in December 2007**

My name is Rosemarie Lee. I am a female now aged 47 years who was previously under the guardianship of the Minister for Community Welfare from 1963 to 1978. I am presently a Board member for Post Care Services operated through the Department of Families South Australia.

My reason for writing to you is to request a meeting so that we may discuss the findings of Commissioner Mulligan from the Children in State Care Inquiry of South Australia. Commissioner Mulligan's recommendations are to be presented to Parliament in December 2007. By way of background I provide the following headings with a brief further discussion in relation to the topics I would like to discuss at our meeting should you grant my request.

1. Healing Centre in South Australia (for all Australians)

I believe a community type centre where people are able to drop in would be of benefit to persons who have previously been in State care. That facility should also operate as a central point of referral for other necessary services required by former State Wards. I believe the centre should be open to all Australians, not just South Australians.

2. Access to Services

Many people who are formerly wards of the State have ongoing difficulties either physical or psychological as a result of things that have happened to them whilst in care. Such people also face significant socio-economic hurdles in accessing services. I believe such people should be provided medical services and in particular counselling and psychological services and other therapeutic services at no cost to them. I believe that such people should have access in the same way that war veterans do to such services.

3. Government Funding

Clearly there will be an expense in providing the services referred to in headings numbered 1 and 2 above. I recommend that the Government create a fund in which they invest sufficient capital that such services can be funded in perpetuity by the interest earned from that capital.

4. An Apology

I believe it is critical that there be a public apology on a nation wide level to all persons who have suffered abuse whilst under the care of State or Federal Government. I also believe it is critical that State Governments provide a written apology to each person who has indicated they suffered abuse whilst in State Care.

5. National Day of Recognition

I propose that there be a national day of recognition for all Australian children who have previously been in State care. I propose that such a day should also recognise the efforts of persons such as Commissioner Mulligan and Commissioner Ford from the Queensland Inquiry for Children in State Care.

6. Education for Post-Care Leavers

Many children who have previously been in State Care have had inadequate or no education at all. Almost all persons who have been in State Care have inadequate education. In order for those persons to now be able to contribute fully to the community it is essential that they be provided the education necessary to do so. I believe that all post-care leavers should have access to either free or inexpensive education options.

7. Education for Specialised Psychologists and/or Psychiatrists and/or Counsellors

I believe that additional funds need to be set aside by the government for training psychologists, psychiatrists and counsellors about the

particular impact of physical, psychological and sexual abuse upon children. Such persons are often the first port of call for former State wards to discuss what happened to them as children. It is critical that the appropriate response is given to those people when they come forward and on an ongoing basis by the appropriate specialists.

8. Memorial

It is important that a memorial be erected to allow people to reflect on the past abuses and problems within the State Care system. I believe it is essential that such a memorial be placed next door to or in very close proximity to the healing centre suggested in heading 1. The memorial will provide a place where former State Wards can reflect during times of difficulty. I am hopeful that such a memorial would provide some peace and tranquillity for former State wards.

9. Compensation

Many people who are former State Wards have suffered significant abuses and this has affected their ability to contribute fully to society as adults. As a result they have been clearly disadvantaged as opposed to other persons within our society. The only means by which such imbalance can be addressed in a financial sense is through some scheme of compensation. There have been several schemes both in Australia and throughout the world. There is presently a scheme operating in Queensland and there has previously been a scheme in Tasmania. There have also been similar schemes in Canada and Ireland. Having had the opportunity to review and discuss the various schemes I believe that the Ireland model provides the best balance of adequately compensating people and taking into account the differences in each person's story. The Irish scheme assesses compensation by reference to various criteria including the severity of the abuse suffered by people and the severity of the effect upon them. I enclose a brief outline of the scheme as it operates in Ireland for your consideration.

10. Review

I believe it is important that the parliament be required to reflect each year on the recommendations made by Commissioner Mullighan and whether they have been implemented. This will encourage the parliament to treat this process as ongoing and will prevent State wards from being forgotten for a second time.

If you would like to meet with me I would be grateful if you could please contact me and advise a suitable time. I advise that I have been assisted by my solicitor [redacted] in composing this correspondence to you. I

would also like for him to be present at any future meeting and I invite you to contact him with a suitable time also. [redacted] is presently involved in some common law actions relating to historical abuse of State Wards against the State government, including an action in relation to myself. It may be necessary that the Crown Solicitor's Office be notified that [redacted] is to attend any meeting with you before it occurs.

If you are prepared to meet with me then in time I intend to request a further meeting at which additional persons who were Wards of the State can attend. I think it would be most useful for both yourself and the Premier of South Australia to meet with those persons before making any decisions regarding the recommendations provided by Commissioner Mullighan. I would not see any difficulty in such a meeting occurring at Government House on any terms you may see fit. I would appreciate being able to discuss this further meeting with you if you grant our initial meeting.

I thank you for taking the time to consider the information above and look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully

ROSEMARIE LEE