Senate Inquiry into

"Commonwealth contribution to former forced adoption policies and practices."

Terms of reference
This submission will address

(a) The role, if any, of the Commonwealth Government,
Its policies and practices in contributing to "Forced Adoptions;"

I . Lee-Anne Doyle
Of
(...)
(...)
(...)

Make this submission to the above Inquiry

As citizen of the Commonwealth of Australia resident in New South Wales

I had an inalienable right to protection under the Australian Constitution and the Common Law of this country

As an Australian citizen, the Commonwealth affords me protection from the unlawful and harmful actions that threatened my right to life, liberty and justice from those who would deny me these rights, within and without, the borders of Australia

And as a Australian citizen my rights to be brought up with my own natural family were breached with little or undue consideration of my future welfare

I would dearly like to be able to present a more comprehensive submission to the above Inquiry but due to the emotional turmoil of addressing the most painful and traumatic events in my life, I am unable to do so

As an adopted person I believe that I may have been the victim of "forced adoption practices" at the time of my birth at Manly Hospital NSW on the 7th June 1975

I would like to ask whether the committee can determine that the consent to my adoption was given freely by my mother and with information of my legal rights to be cared for by her, as my sole legal guardian. In that:

- Was or /not allowed to see me after birth
- She was or/ not given information in regard to foster care until she was in a position to care for me?
- Was she offered information on financial benefits that enable her to keep me?
- Was she informed of any life long future regret if she surrendered me for adoption?
- Was she informed of the life long mental health and identity problems of adopted children known since at the every least 1942?

Please accept this as my submission

My adopted name is Lee- Anne Doyle the second child of the (...) (...) and (...) (...) their first child being their natural child. I don't know the reason for my adoption I could only estimate that it was due to the fact that my adoptive mother had serious heart problems. I believe that she would have been in her late 30s and my adoptive father would have been in his 40s

I was one month old when they collected me from Manly hospital and I was brought up around the Gosford area

Until the age of 10 I would have considered that I had a good childhood, and then my adoptive mother died leaving me devastated and traumatized and to a point where I reverted into a state of infancy to the point of carrying around a security blanket

I as not allowed to go to the funeral of my mother leaving me a sense of loss without the opportunity to say goodbye to her

My adoptive father remarried 6 months later to a woman who had 4 children and one whom was still living with her.

This event of him marrying so close to the death of my mother left me with a sense of resentment, anger and that he was being disloyal to the memory of my mother.

I believe that he did not want to adopt me in the first instance and that my adoption was the idea of my mother and his subsequent behavior after the death of my mother confirms this

My step-mother to say the least made my life hell as a child in mourning she deliberately isolated me not only from my older sister who left two months after the marriage, but also from any relationship with my adoptive father

At the age of 11 years old, and six months after the marriage, I came home from school and found my belongings packed in the boot of the car, with the explanation that I was being taken to stay with friends, instead I was taken to a children's refuge at Woy Woy

From then on my only contact with them was that Christmas and after having lunch and the opening of presents, and at the accusations of being an “uncontrollable child” I was packed up there and then and sent back to the refuge.

I spent that Christmas night on my own, the other kids being with their families, I the only left on my own to cry and think about the Christmases spent with my mother and sister

From then on it was all down hills to speak, my life went on to series of refuges, and foster care, and on occasions I spent time with my sister who’s own relationship was dysfunctional, and where I witnessed the attempted suicide of my brother-in- law this episode reinforcing my already entrenched trauma

My life has revolved around situations where I have witnessed murders, suicides, drug overdoses, I have been the victim of rape, drug addiction, abuse, neglect and I have been used by those who have taken advantage of my trauma

At the age of 17, I gave birth to my first child, a child born into a violent situation that saw my child’s father try to kill her, fortunately I managed to revive her.

I left that situation and went into an endless journey of homelessness, being grateful for anyone who showed me some kindness and a bed.

I was desperately trying to maintain custody of my child so that she did not end up in a situation of being taken into “care” as I was. I did not want to inflict the experience of my life onto my child.

At the age of 19 I met a man who promised me a new life and took to Queensland where I fell pregnant again, and once again was isolated and abused mentally where my sense of disentitlement to a happy life was reinforced.

On the birth of my son he demanded custody on the that he would not leave me and make my life hell I gave into his demands and he took my son to Dubbo where he grew up amongst the relatives of his father

After the loss of my son I continued to live in Queensland where I continued to live the life of a nomad. Subsequently I met up with another man and history repeated itself when I fell pregnant again with his child another situation where I was subjected to more abuse

We moved to one of the outer islands near Brisbane where I had my third child and eventually moved to Dubbo to be near my lost son, it was shortly after that, the father of my third child left, taking my daughter with him. Once again I was left powerless and without support to help me cope yet with another trauma

After a period of depression resulting in turning to alcohol and drugs to cope I ended up once again turning to yet another dysfunctional person who I could relate with, and once again another pregnancy, who also ended up in the custody of her father

My life has been one of a sense of abandonment and trauma. I have yet to meet the mother who gave birth to me. I have no sense of identity of whom and where I have come from, and have been told by many people that I have an Aboriginal background due to my appearance

So I guess my sense of restlessness comes from a deep seated sense abandonment of lost identity. I have lived a life reinforcing my sense of worthlessness and powerlessness and have gone thought life without a sense of trust in the people with whom I have come into contact with

I have lost three of my children and have watched my older daughter struggle with her sense of identity, this reinforced when she failed her subject because she could not provide information on her family tree, my loss of identity now being passed onto my daughter and hopefully will not be passed onto the next generation

I have survived cervical cancer and Endometriosis, and still do not know my medical history

I could give a thousand examples of the many times I have suffered abuse, rejection, abandonment, anxiety, self destructive behavior, identity confusion, lack of support and presently I am under the watch of the mental health system

My children do not understand the extent of what I have suffered and how can they? They have their own experiences to come to terms with. I am hoping that this submission will give some insight into my life so that they can at least know that it was not from the fact that I did not love them that I lost them, it was because I was lost myself. Hopefully from presenting this submission

What would I like to see come from this Inquiry

- I would like to be able to know my medical history
- I would like to get my records and not have to pay excess fees to be able to access them
- More support in the process of search and reunion
- More public information on forced adoption
- More support services for mental heath
- Reality based counseling
- Redress
- Acknowledgment of forced adoption so that my children and grand-children can gain an understanding of

These a few recommendations for the Commonwealth to work with the States to reconcile forced adoption issues

Please feel free to contact me if you need more information or if you wish to appear before the committee