

**INQUIRY INTO REPARATIONS FOR THE STOLEN  
GENERATIONS IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date received:** 9/03/2016

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Partially Confidential

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2016

Hi

Re: Stolen Generations Parliamentary Inquiry

Sorry for not being able to come to the table with the Stolen Generations Parliamentary Inquiry in last month, I felt I was not ready to stand in front of people such as yourself and tell my story. It is a personal thing, I tend to get very upset and feel like wailing as my heart breaks a little bit more each time I talk about it. I hope you don't mind me writing some down so you can have an understanding of what The Stolen Generation has done to Aboriginal people, especially my family.

My name is

I was born in a small country town called \_\_\_\_\_ in 1960. This town is in \_\_\_\_\_ New South Wales in Australia and I am a part of the Stolen Generation.

My people are from the \_\_\_\_\_ (maternal side) and \_\_\_\_\_ tribes (paternal side).

My \_\_\_\_\_ brothers and \_\_\_\_\_ sisters and I were all taken away from our community of \_\_\_\_\_ in April 1971. We travelled to Sydney on a train I used to call The Iron Horse with just one little old lady as our escort. I was the eldest and my youngest brother \_\_\_\_\_ was only 6 weeks old. We were then all split up and taken to separate childrens homes.

I spent over a year in 2 separate childrens homes firstly at Glebe and then at Mittagong in the southern highlands of NSW. I felt lonely and I yearned so much for my sisters and brothers, my mother, my old grandfather, old aunties and uncles, cousins and extended family. I yearned for living the cultural way, old people taking me and trying to teach me what was right and wrong. Tried to teach and show me who I was. I felt lost and desolate. In August 1972 I was sent to live with a non-indigenous (white) family in Parramatta NSW. I remember I found their way of life and living was completely different to how I knew it but I soon adjusted quite quickly but I still missed my family and community. My foster mother would not let me watch anything on TV that was about Aboriginal people. She said to me one day when the foster father and I were watching a documentary on Aboriginal people and how they lived, she said "Turn that off, those people are dirty and no good, I don't want you watching that rubbish". I felt sad and angry at the same time, but I was only a child, I had nothing to say. Religion also played a big part in my life in this time, it was almost like I was being saturated with it. Sunday school, morning church, night church then youth group on 3 days during the week. Needless to say I am an unbeliever now. During this time some major people in my life had passed on but I didn't know until I was back with my mother in 1978.

In April 1978 just before my 18<sup>th</sup> birthday I was given the opportunity by the NSW Government to reunite with my mother in another little country town called \_\_\_\_\_ which is 2 hour drive from

where I was born and where all my people were still living. I was only meant to be here for 2 weeks, but I had a choice whether I wanted to go back to Parramatta or stay in . I chose to stay in with my mother and I am still here to this day. Sadly my mother passed away over 10 years ago, but I did get to spend time with her unlike most of my brothers and sisters. My brothers and sisters are not in the best frame of mind as being suddenly taken away from parents, family members, country, community and culture has had a detrimental affect on how they feel and who they are, basically destroyed them and their identity. We all have our demons such as alcohol dependency, drug abuse, prescription & not, gambling etc and try to deal with it the best way possible. Sadly, we are a broken family, we are brothers and sisters only by blood and name now, there is no real family sibling bond between us all. This was taken away from us by the government at the time. So was our cultural identity.

Here I am now getting on with my life and trying to claw back some form of cultural and spiritual knowledge from those around me (have been for many years) but it is not the same as being taught from the beginning. I have had children of my own and been a long term guardian aunt to my nieces. But even at my age now and after all those years there is still that sadness, loneliness and emptiness from not having those many close relationships with the people you should love and do love, not being able to be taught cultural knowledge from elders and learn the ways of our people, not having the family bond with brothers and sisters and the fact that we have black skin and white ways...NO ONE CAN prepare themselves for a disaster like this, black, white, yellow or red, it is truly sad it happened to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and my family who are forever having to pick themselves up after many onslaughts from many people and organisations in NSW and nationwide and who are still paying the consequences for what the government did.