

From: [Christine Cole](#)
To: [undisclosed-recipients:](#)
Sent: Monday, April 28, 2008 11:39 AM
Subject: Apology Alliance: Adoption Awareness Week

Hi all,

I have had several emails from mothers very distressed by the ongoing campaign waged by the pro-adoption/anti-family forces led by Deborra-lee Furness. Specifically there is now going to be a National Adoption Awareness week which will be “celebrated annually from next year, beginning each Mother’s Day.” The article in the Sunday Telegraph on p. 36 goes on to state: “ Attorney General Robert McClelland has pledged support to the initiative, which is aimed at celebrating the lives of children, and also highlighting the inadequacies of the current system.”

Anyone not fooled by the smoke and mirrors campaign of “saving orphans” the adoption industry ran might be interested to find that Furness confirms your suspicions by revealing its true agenda when she states in the article that she wants the waiting time for children shortened to: “Gestation, nine months.” That possibly coincides with the time Furness waited for the babies she adopted as according to the original newspaper article written about her adoption experience, she was waiting at the foot of the bed for the newborn to be delivered to her and either she or Jackman cut the cord. This is hardly “saving orphans”.

Many mothers find Mother’s Day a very difficult time as it is, so to have an entire week devoted to “celebrating” adoption after Mother’s day is deeply insulting and totally insensitive. What of the pain and grief of the mother who has lost her child and of the child who has lost not only its mother but its extended family, community and heritage. And to those who continue to harp on about ‘saving orphans’ it might be pointed out that the Law Reform Commission Paper No. 34 (1994) noted that in fact there are very few ‘real’ orphans in the world, children without any living relative, and further, that there are not enough ‘orphans’ to satisfy the need of Westerners wishing to adopt.

Meg Lewis emailed to let me know that she is writing a letter on behalf of ARMS SA to the Attorney General voicing her objections and asked if others would do likewise. Meg states:

“I am going to send an email to Ms Furness (orphansinoz@gmail.com) stating my concerns re this and a letter to the Attorney General The Hon Robert McLelland Parliament House Canberra ACT 2600 asking he reconsider this ill conceived plan.”

I would urge everyone to get pro-active and tell your relevant AGs and the Federal AG how you feel about Furness’s plan and how it is going to impact on you and your family, otherwise we are going to have to put up with “celebrating” our lifelong loss for a whole week in May, what a horrendous thought!

"Adoption Loss is the only trauma in the world where the victims are expected by the whole of society to be grateful" - The Reverend Keith C. Griffith, MBE -

In this case we are expected to celebrate it!

Additionally for those who want to educate your local MP or relevant AG about the devastating effect intercountry adoption has on families in developing countries you might find the following links useful:

<http://www.lawlink.nsw.gov.au/lrc.nsf/pages/DP34CHP12>

The above link is to the Law Reform Commission's findings from their intercountry adoption inquiry. Most notable in the document is the quote of Maria Josefina Becker that intercountry adoption puts pressure on poor families and rather than supporting them severs them. She also states that the children on the streets do have families but they are poor and are victims of the economic conditions - these children are not orphans. Damien Ngabonziza of the International Social Services states that the real problems of the children are ignored and that adoption is a band-aid solution for a few children. And that the real problem, the poverty of the family, is forgotten because of the DEMAND for children.

To cite the Report:

There is an "inherent danger in the demand for children in Western nations. "By virtue of their relative wealth, Western nations and their citizens are placed in a powerful situation in relation to poorer nations and their people. This power may be used to secure what Western couples desire - adoption - and this may sometimes be at the expense of children." (p. 279)

And the demand for babies "increased the pressures favouring a rupture between the poor child and his or her family rather than strengthening the ties between them ... In this way conditions encouraging the "production" of abandonment are created, apparently motivated by the assistance and protection of the child, which in reality serve the interests of adoptive parents." (p. 278).

"..some Western couples and organisations have a vested interest in believing that children need adoption rather than aid, because it satisfies their desire for children. Some Western couples want to believe that there are "thousands of children in need of families" in poorer nations because this seemingly increases their chances of being allocated a child and also legitimises their desire to adopt from overseas. "

See points 12.12 and 12.13 re the demand and its effect. The "demand" for such children in the US, Europe and Australia is much larger than their "availability".

The UN Special Rapporteur also noted that whenever there is an increasing demand by wealthy Westerners for babies a black market is created to satisfy that demand

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

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RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Report submitted by Mr. Juan Miguel Petit, Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography in accordance with

Commission on Human Rights resolution 2002/92

GE.03-

<http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G03/100/90/PDF/G0310090.pdf?OpenElement>

IV. OTHER ISSUES IN FOCUS

A. Adoption

110. During the course of 2002, the Special Rapporteur received many complaints relating to allegedly fraudulent adoption practices. Where such practices have the effect that the child becomes the object of a commercial transaction, the Special Rapporteur, like his predecessor, considers that such cases fall within the “sale” element of his mandate. The Special Rapporteur was shocked to learn of the plethora of human rights abuses which appear to permeate the adoption systems of many countries. The Special Rapporteur considers that the best environment for most children to grow up in is within a family, and the adoption by a parent or parents of a child who does not have a family able to look after him or her is a commendable and noble action. Regrettably, in many cases the emphasis has changed from the desire to provide a needy child with a home, to that of providing needy parents with a child. As a result, a whole industry has grown, generating millions of dollars of revenue each year, seeking babies for adoption and charging prospective parents enormous fees to process the paperwork. The problems surrounding many intercountry adoptions, in which children are taken from poor families in undeveloped countries and given to parents in developed countries, have become quite well known, but the Special Rapporteur was alarmed to hear of certain practices also allegedly occurring within developed countries, including the use of fraud and coercion to persuade single mothers to give up their children.

It seems that intercountry adoption in Australia is now on the verge of becoming a service for needy adults wishing to adopt rather than its supposed purpose: a service ONLY for children and only after all other avenues to keep them with their immediate and/or extended family and all efforts to place them in their own countries has been exhausted.

Kind regards

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